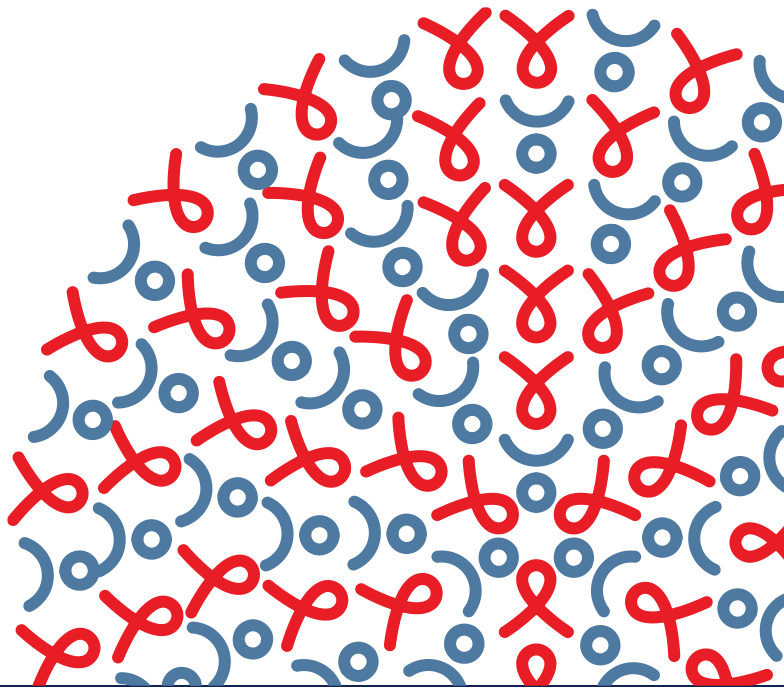


MEETING TARGETS AND MAINTAINING
EPIDEMIC CONTROL (EPIC) PROJECT

Call for Expressions of Interest (EOI)

GRANT TO IMPLEMENT COMMUNITY-BASED HIV
PREVENTION, CARE AND TREATMENT ACTIVITIES FOR
KEY POPULATIONS IN THE KYRGYZ REPUBLIC





NOTICE: Bidder's Questions

- FHI 360 will accept requests for clarification submitted by email at the following address: procurement_EpiC.kg@fhi360.org.
- Questions must be received by 6:00pm Kyrgyzstan Time (KGT) on February 23, 2024.
- Responses to questions will be shared during an online bidder's conference via Zoom on February 27, 2024, at 3:00pm Kyrgyzstan Time (KGT).

I. Background

Meeting Targets and Maintaining Epidemic Control (EpiC), primed by FHI 360, is an eight-year (2019–2027) global project funded by the U.S. President’s Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) that is dedicated to achieving and maintaining HIV epidemic control. The EpiC project in Central Asia has been implementing HIV activities since 2020 and aimed to further address remaining gaps in the cascade of HIV services for key populations (KP).

This announcement is a call for expressions of interest (EOIs) from local Kyrgyz non-governmental organizations (NGO), civil society organizations (CSO) and other legal entities to implement interventions improving access of key populations to quality HIV prevention, care, and treatment services for a 6-month period beginning April 1, 2024, until September 30, 2024, with the potential for extension pending performance and continued donor funding. Through this competitive process, EpiC intends to select and award grants for direct services and technical assistance to those organizations in the Kyrgyz Republic that meet the criteria outlined in this document. In the Kyrgyz Republic, EpiC began implementation in August 2020, utilizing the HIV continuum of prevention, care, and treatment cascade (Figure 1) as the overall strategic framework for program implementation.

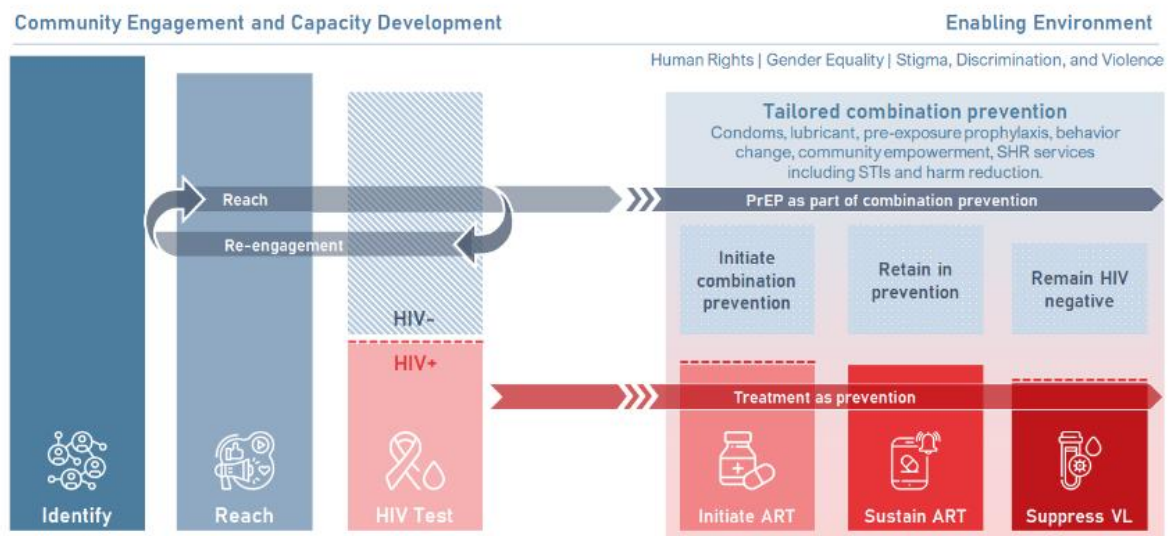


Figure 1: EpiC HIV Prevention, Care, and Treatment Cascade

II. Scope of Work

The objective of the EpiC program in the Kyrgyz Republic is to reduce HIV incidence and mitigate the impact of HIV among the most at-risk KP by utilizing a client-centered community-based differentiated service delivery model that provides a comprehensive package of services and interventions for KP, ranging from hotspot-based coverage within geographic locations to virtual online-to-offline approaches. EpiC Kyrgyz Republic aims to fill critical gaps, reduce bottlenecks, and eliminate barriers across the HIV prevention, care, treatment, and support cascade (identify, reach with prevention services and commodities, link to HIV, STI and Hepatitis C (HCV) testing and counselling, wrap-around services referrals, peer outreach and navigation activities for improved linkages, retention and adherence to ART) to reach the 95:95:95 goals by 2030 among KP in the Kyrgyz Republic. EpiC is tasked to build the capacity of local community-based people living with HIV (PLHIV) and/or KP organizations to deliver HIV services tailored to the needs of PLHIV and KP. While significant progress has been made to date, USAID/Kyrgyz Republic and EpiC aims to support approaches that are systematic, coordinated, data-driven, and community-led that will significantly stem new infections, mitigate the impact of HIV, and address structural barriers, including stigma and discrimination.

The selected organization will undertake activities among PLHIV and the most at-risk KP to contribute to the program objectives and targets. Illustrative activities are listed in Table 1 by EpiC result area and to address the indicators listed. Interested organizations should identify the activities they will implement in order to successfully reach each of these result areas. During the EOI process, EpiC will help coordinate between Applicants to ensure that all the key activities are being addressed within the final selection of the organization. Interested organizations can think creatively about additional activities that use innovative strategies not mentioned in this EOI to address EpiC result areas and indicators.

Geographic Scope*:

- Bishkek City
- Chui Oblast: Alamedin district.

Table 1: Illustrative Key Activities for Key Populations

Result 1 – Increased availability of comprehensive prevention, care and treatment services, including reliable coverage across the continuum of care for key populations.

1. Provide PLHIV community-based case management for ART adherence support and treatment retention and support groups for PLHIV.
2. Scale up access to HIV self-testing for KPs and partners of PLHIV.
3. For those reported their results, ensure further support to HIV prevention and / or treatment services.

4. Support rollout of differentiated service delivery (DSD) models for distribution of HIV self-tests and ensure clients linkage to further services.
5. Support rollout of DSD models for pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) within the target KP community.

Result 2 – Demand for comprehensive prevention, care and treatment services among key populations enhanced and sustained.

1. Support development and implementation of innovative Strategic Behavior Change Communication and online strategies for increasing demand for HIV services among KP focusing on PrEP and HIVST.
2. Develop and implement effective peer outreach and navigation models.
3. Support activities on monitoring and improving KP and PLHIV clients' satisfaction by services at community-based organizations and health facilities.

Result 3 - Strengthened systems for planning, monitoring, evaluating and assuring the quality of programs for key populations

1. Monitor activities and use data for program improvement
2. Use an individual tracking system of client's outcomes across the HIV cascade.
3. Report on indicators based on PEPFAR and custom indicators and associated targets.

EpiC Kyrgyz Republic will contribute to the goals and objectives of the Kyrgyz Republic HIV program, guided by national guidelines and within the priorities of PEPFAR's regional operational plan for the Kyrgyz Republic. Organizations responding to the EOI should propose targets for the following indicators:

- HTS_TST_POS: Number of individuals who received positive HIV test.
- HTS_SELF: Number of individual HIV self-test kits distributed.
- PREP_NEW_VERIFY: Number of individuals who have been newly enrolled on oral antiretroviral pre-exposure prophylaxis to prevent HIV infection in the reporting period.
- PREP_CT_VERIFY: Number of individuals, inclusive of those newly enrolled, that received oral antiretroviral preexposure prophylaxis (PrEP) to prevent HIV during the reporting period.
- TX_NEW_VERIFY: Number of key populations newly enrolled on antiretroviral therapy (ART).
- TX_CURR_VERIFY: Number of key populations currently receiving antiretroviral therapy (ART).

III. Anticipated Period of Performance

April 1, 2024 to September 30, 2024 (6 months) with possibility of continued funding beyond this period depending on performance and availability of funds.

IV. Funding Availability

EpiC anticipates awarding one grant under this project. Applicants should budget based off from their historic operational costs, proposed geographic reach and targets in their applications. Applicants should understand that submitted budgets are illustrative and if awarded a grant, budgets will be revised based off identified final targets and geographic scope.

V. Eligibility Criteria and Selection

To respond to this EOI, an organization must meet **all** the following minimum eligibility criteria identified below:

- Must be duly registered in the Kyrgyz Republic.
- Must be able to submit a stamped support letter from the local AIDS Center in the geographic area where the organization operates.
- Must be able to comply with all USG regulations as per <https://www.usaid.gov/ads/policy/300/303mab>.
- Able to show evidence of current and past donor-funded HIV and AIDS projects with technical areas of focus (include information on target groups reached and numbers served). Please emphasize any work that you have done related to the most at-risk key populations; HIV/AIDS prevention, care, and treatment activities; human rights; stigma and discrimination; increasing health service access; and gender and gender-based violence.
- Must be forthcoming of any conflict of interest: the Applicant's relationships, associations, activities, and interests should not create a conflict of interest that could prevent full impartiality in implementation of the grant activities.
- Must have or be in the process of obtaining a UEI number (<https://sam.gov/content/home>).

Any organization that does not meet these minimum eligibility criteria will not be considered.

Applications will undergo a preliminary review for completeness and responsiveness. Incomplete applications, applications judged to be unresponsive to the EOI, and applications submitted after the due date and time will be considered ineligible and will NOT be considered for an award.

VI. Application Instructions

Applications should be no longer than five pages, excluding the budget and annexes, and include the following information.

A. Organizational Background (1.5 pages maximum)

Applicants should briefly detail the following information in the organizational background section. This information can be presented in a table format if needed.

1. Name of the organization.
2. Contact person and full address (physical, postal, telephone and email).
3. Type of organization (NGO, CSO, CBO, LLC) and registration status. Indicate if it is a membership organization.
4. Current geographical coverage (communities, hot spots, health centers). Please note any current or past presence in the targeted regions.
5. Organizational vision, mission, goal, and objectives.
6. A list of current and recently-completed HIV projects within the last five years. Please include for each project the technical and geographic areas of focus, the groups served, and numbers reached. Please emphasize any work that you have done related to the most at-risk KP groups and identify the specific KP groups; HIV prevention, care, and treatment activities; human rights; stigma and discrimination; increasing access to health services; gender; and gender-based violence.
7. Sources and funding levels for the past three years. Indicate if the sources are private/foundation or government (United States, Kyrgyz Republic, other).
8. Key findings from annual financial audit reports conducted within the past three years, if available (copies of the audited financial reports should be included in the annex).
9. Organizational structure and staffing/membership level.
10. Active UEI code or proof of steps being taken to obtain one via proof of successful submission.

B. Technical Application (3.5 pages maximum)

Applicants should detail the following in the technical application:

B.1 Technical Approach and Key Activities (approximately 1.5 pages)

In this section, Applicants should describe in more detail the specific activities that they will conduct and the proposed approaches to ensure their success.

Applicants should organize this section as follows:

1. The overall technical approach should clearly explain what the Applicant's proposed project will do, which activities will be implemented, including how and by whom. The activities identified should be organized based on the three result areas provided in Table 1.
2. The geographical area of focus to be targeted should be described, including an explanation as to why the Applicant will target this area.
3. How KP will be reached and provided prevention and health services including HIV screening/testing through community-based approaches, how HIV+ KP individuals will be linked to care, initiated on treatment, retained in care, and verify and support viral load suppression. Refer to Figure 1.
4. A clear timeline of when activities will be implemented over the 6 months.

Applicants are free to present the information above in narrative or table format.

B.2 Management Approach and Institutional Capabilities (approximately 1 page maximum)

Applicants should explain the following information in this section:

1. How the management structure will ensure the successful implementation of the project
2. How the organization can ensure rapid project startup and achieve the project's objectives
3. Key personnel positions and who will fill these positions listing their areas of expertise

B.3 Monitoring and Evaluation Plan (approximately 1 page)

Applicants should include the following in this section:

1. A description of how the Applicant's monitoring and evaluation (M&E) system will support the implementation of the project.
2. How the project will use the M&E data for continual project improvement.
3. The organization's current capacity to collect and analyze data, monitor, and, evaluate project performance
4. Description of any tools the organization currently uses for M&E.

C. Illustrative Budget (no page limit)

Applicants should prepare and submit a proposed budget in accordance with their proposed interventions for the 6-month period of performance (April 1, 2024 to September 30, 2024). Applicants must submit the budget in Excel format using the template provided.

D. Annexes (no page limit)

In the annex, Applicants should submit Copies of Certificate of Registration or Incorporation Papers, a letter of support from the local AIDS Center, and annual audited financial statements for the past three years (if available).

VII. Application Submission Process and Timeline

Questions on this call for EOIs may be submitted to procurement.EpiC.kg@fhi360.org. Questions must be received by **6:00pm Kyrgyzstan Time (KGT) on February 23, 2024**.

FHI 360 will hold a bidder's conference via Zoom from **3:00pm – 4:30pm KGT on February 27, 2024**. The bidder's conference will be held by webinar, and during this time FHI 360 will respond to questions on the call for EOI, including those submitted to the above email address (please identify in your submission if you want your question(s) to be anonymous). Information for joining the webinar by phone is provided below. Responses to questions will also be shared immediately following the bidder's conference.

Zoom conference link: <https://zoom.us/j/98616805841>

Zoom conference code: 986 1680 5841

Completed EOIs are due to FHI 360 by **6:00pm KGT on February 29, 2024**. Applications must be submitted by email to procurement_EpiC.kg@fhi360.org to be considered. Applications should be submitted in Microsoft Word and Excel (for the budget) and in English or Russian; applications in other languages will not be accepted. Please do not include attachments over 15 MB.

In the subject line of the email, please indicate “EpiC/Kyrgyz Republic EOI – [name of your organization]”. Only one application may be submitted per organization.

After the EOI review process, FHI 360 may contact Applicants with questions to clarify aspects of their EOIs.

Table 2 provides a summary of key dates in this process.

Table 2. Key dates for EOI process

Milestone	Dates
EOI issue date	February 19, 2024
Questions on EOI due to procurement_EpiC.kg@fhi360.org	February 23, 2024
Bidder’s conference and responses to questions	February 27, 2024
EOIs due to procurement_EpiC.kg@fhi360.org	February 29, 2024
EOI review and post-submission clarifications	February 29, 2024 – March 4, 2024
Notification of decisions to Applicants	March 6, 2024
Pre-award assessments and subaward development with selected Applicants to complete subaward documentation	March, 2024
Expected award of funds to selected and successfully processed sub-awards	April, 2024

VIII. Evaluation Criteria

All applications will be objectively reviewed and scored against the criteria provided in Table 3.

Table 3. Evaluation criteria for applications

Criteria	Points
ORGANIZATIONAL BACKGROUND: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The application includes all components detailed above• The Applicant meets minimum eligibility criteria• The Applicant’s organizational vision, mission, goals, and objectives are in line with the EpiC Kyrgyz Republic project• The Applicant is duly registered in the Kyrgyz Republic	35

Criteria	Points
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Applicant has implemented similar donor-funded HIV projects for PLHIV and KPs in the past in the geographical areas indicated and has included clear examples. The Applicant should be able to submit past performance references from current/previous donors in the past three years, if requested. The Applicant is KP-led and demonstrates the ability to reach KP communities and social networks in the selected regions 	
TECHNICAL APPLICATION	
TECHNICAL APPROACH: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The technical approach is clear, complete, and responsive to the EpiC Kyrgyz Republic objectives and the requirements of this EOI The technical approach is innovative, based on best practices, and is likely to achieve the project's objectives The Applicant demonstrates an understanding of the context and expertise on the subject matter described in this EOI The technical approach clearly articulates what activities will be conducted, how, where, and by whom and with a clear timeline 	30
MANAGEMENT APPROACH: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The application sets forth a management structure and team that are capable of rapid project startup and achievement of the grant project's objectives 	20
MONITORING AND EVALUATION PLAN: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The M&E approach responds to the technical strategy The Applicant proposes effective and high-quality methods for monitoring activities, measuring results and using M&E data to improve performance The Applicant demonstrates current capacity to collect and analyze data and monitor and evaluate project performance 	15
TOTAL	100

IX. Additional Information and Disclaimers

This information is provided to aid Applicants in the preparation of their applications.

CONTRACT MECHANISM

FHI 360 anticipates awarding one grant. The grantee will be selected based on best value according to the criteria above.

DISCLAIMERS

- Applicants will not be reimbursed for the cost incurred in preparation and submission of an application. All preparation and submission costs are at the Applicant's expense.
- FHI 360 may cancel this EOI and not award;
- FHI 360 may reject any or all responses received;
- Issuance of this EOI does not constitute award commitment by FHI 360;
- FHI 360 reserves the right to disqualify any offer based on Applicant's failure to follow EOI instructions;
- FHI 360 will not reimburse Applicants for costs incurred in preparation and submission of an application;

- FHI 360 reserves the right to independently negotiate with any Applicant, or to issue award based on initial evaluation of offers without further discussion;
- FHI 360 may choose to award only part of the activities in the EOI, or issue multiple awards based on the solicitation activities;
- FHI 360 reserves the right to check an Applicant's donor references; and
- FHI 360 reserves the right to waive minor application deficiencies that can be corrected prior to award determination to promote competition.

CALL FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST NOT AN OFFER

This call for EOI represents only a definition of requirements. It is merely an invitation for submission of applications and does not legally obligate FHI 360 to accept any of the submitted applications in whole or in part, nor is FHI 360 obligated to select the lowest priced application. FHI 360 has no contractual obligations with any Applicants based upon issuance of this call for EOI. It is not an offer to contract. Only the execution of a written award shall obligate FHI 360, in accordance with the terms and conditions contained in such award.

DISCUSSIONS AND AWARD

FHI 360 reserves the right to seek clarifications, enter into discussions or negotiations, or to make award on initial submissions without discussions or negotiations of any kind. FHI 360 reserves the right to exclude from further consideration any applications at any time, including after discussions or negotiations have been entered into.

FALSE STATEMENTS IN OFFER

Applicants must provide full, accurate and complete information as required by this call for EOI and its attachments. At any time that FHI 360 determines that an Applicant has provided false statements in the EOI, FHI 360 may reject the EOI without further consideration. This call for EOI and any resulting award shall be interpreted in accordance with the laws of the U.S. Government except in cases where they contradict local law. The English language version of this call for EOI and any resulting award shall govern. Notices and responses pursuant to the provisions of this call for EOI may be in English or Russian. Should notices and/or responses be in Russian an English translation obtained by FHI 360, including an English analysis of the intent, shall govern.

OFFER VERIFICATION

FHI 360 may contact Applicants to confirm contact person, address, application amount and to confirm that the application was submitted for this call for EOI.

RESERVED RIGHTS

- All call for EOI responses become the property of FHI 360 and FHI 360 reserves the right in its sole discretion to disqualify any offer based on Applicant failure to follow solicitation instructions;
- FHI 360 reserves the right to waive any deviations by Applicants from the requirements of this call for EOI that in FHI 360's opinion are considered not to be material defects requiring rejection or disqualification; or where such a waiver will promote increased competition;

- Extend the time for submission of all call for EOI responses after notification to all Applicants;
- Terminate or modify the call for EOI process at any time and re-issue the call for EOI to whomever FHI 360 deems appropriate;
- FHI 360 reserves the right to issue an award based on the initial evaluation of offers without discussion;
- Award only part of the activities in the call for EOI or issue multiple awards based on call for EOI activities.
- The awardee must have or be in the process of obtaining a DUNS number. Additional assistance will be provided, as needed, during negotiations with prospective awardees.
- FHI 360 reserves the right to request audited financial statements from the selected Applicant(s).
- At the conclusion of the evaluation process, any selected firm will be required to complete a Financial Pre-Award Assessment in order for FHI 360 to ascertain that the organization has the capacity to perform successfully under the terms and conditions of the proposed subaward. As part of the Pre-Award Assessment process the firm will also be requested to submit their incorporated papers, certificate of registration and/or Tax ID number (TIN), audit reports and/or financial statements. Applicants may be asked to submit additional documentation to illustrate that the organization has the financial capacity to implement the subaward. Site visits may be conducted by FHI 360 staff to evaluate the organization in these areas.

CERTIFICATION OF INDEPENDENT PRICE DETERMINATION

(a) The Applicant certifies that--

- 1) The prices in this EOI have been arrived at independently, without, for the purpose of restricting competition, any consultation, communication, or agreement with any other Applicant, including but not limited to subsidiaries or other entities in which Applicant has any ownership or other interests, or any competitor relating to (i) those prices, (ii) the intention to submit an offer, or (iii) the methods or factors used to calculate the prices offered;
- 2) The prices in this application have not been and will not be knowingly disclosed by the Applicant, directly or indirectly, to any other Applicant, including but not limited to subsidiaries or other entities in which Applicant has any ownership or other interests, or any competitor before bid opening (in the case of a sealed bid solicitation) or award (in the case of a negotiated or competitive call for EOI) unless otherwise required by law; and
- 3) No attempt has been made or will be made by the Applicant to induce any other concern or individual to submit or not to submit an application for the purpose of restricting competition or influencing the competitive environment.

(b) Each signature on the application (if any) is considered to be a certification by the signatory that the signatory--

- 1) Is the person in the Applicant's organization responsible for determining the prices being offered in this application, and that the signatory has not participated and will not participate in any action contrary to subparagraphs (a)(1) through (a)(3) above; or
- 2) Has been authorized, in writing, to act as agent for the principals of the Applicant in certifying that those principals have not participated, and will not participate in any action contrary to subparagraphs (a)(1) through (a)(3) above;

- 3) As an authorized agent, does certify that the principals of the Applicant have not participated, and will not participate, in any action contrary to subparagraphs (a)(1) through (a)(3) above;
- 4) As an agent, has not personally participated, and will not participate, in any action contrary to subparagraphs (a)(1) through (a)(3) above.

(c) Applicant understands and agrees that --

- 1) violation of this certification will result in immediate disqualification from this call for EOI without recourse and may result in disqualification from future solicitations; and
- 2) discovery of any violation after award to the Applicant will result in the termination of the award for default.

CALL FOR EXPRESSION OF INTEREST FIRM GUARANTEE

All information submitted in connection with this call for EOI will be valid for six (6) months from the call for EOI due date. This includes, but is not limited to, cost, pricing, terms and conditions, service levels, and all other information. If your organization is awarded a subaward, all information in the call for EOI and negotiation process is contractually binding.

WITHDRAWALS OF EXPRESSIONS OF INTERESTS

Applicants may withdraw EOIs by written notice via email received at any time before award. EOIs may be withdrawn in person by an Applicant or his/her authorized representative, if the representative's identity is made known and the representative signs a receipt for the application before award.