

# **Guideline for the Community Monitoring Board Members**

---

**Integrated Behavioral and Biological Assessment  
(IBBA)  
Andhra Pradesh  
September 2005**

**National Institute of Nutrition  
ORG-CSR  
Family Health International  
Avahan, Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation (BMGF)**

## **I. INTRODUCTION**

### **A. Purpose of this manual**

This document is a detailed guideline for community liaison persons in the IBBA. It is a part of the Field Manual for the IBBA. It gives brief introduction to the IBBA and key facts that need to understand. It provides a profile of the community liaison person, their key roles and responsibilities of community liaison and provides a step by step guide of their activities at the survey site.

### **B. What is the Integrated Behavioral and Biological Assessment (IBBA)?**

The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation (BMGF) is implementing interventions among high risk groups in six states (Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Manipur and Nagaland) and national highways under the Avahan India AIDS Initiative (Avahan). The project will be implemented in close collaboration with National AIDS Control Organization (NACO) and State AIDS Control Societies (SACS) and will provide valuable information to feed back into and strengthen the National AIDS Control Program in India.

The IBBA has been developed to help Avahan assess the impact of the interventions in the state. One of the main objectives of Avahan is to enable the states to gain better understanding about the levels of HIV and STI and risk behaviors among intervention groups. Information collected through the IBBA would help them to strengthen their intervention programs in the states and also provide data to project trends for the future.

The IBBA will be conducted three times during the five-year project period of Avahan. The baseline assessment will be undertaken in 2005, mid-line in 2007 and end-line in 2009.

The IBBA will be implemented by the Indian Council for Medical Research and National AIDS Research Institute with technical support and assistance from Family Health International. Within the States, the IBBA will be implemented through corresponding ICMR institutes, National Institute of Nutrition in Andhra Pradesh. The IBBA will also be implemented in partnership with the Andhra Pradesh SACS and local Avahan partners and community members. Community level advisory and monitoring boards will be established to ensure that ethical standards are adhered to and that the concerns of the community participating in the survey are addressed.

In Andhra Pradesh, IBBA will be implemented in eight districts. The assessment will be first piloted in Karimnagar district. The assessment will be done about the following groups:

- Female Sex Workers
- Clients of Sex Workers
- Men who have sex with Men

In the first phase we will be talking to Female Sex Workers only.

The key stakeholders for implementing IBBA in Andhra Pradesh are:

- National Institute of Nutrition
- Research Agency – ORG
- Avahan partners and Community members in the district
- Family Health International

## **Some Key Facts About IBBA**

IBBA is an assessment of sexual behaviors and sexual infections including HIV infection

- Participation is entirely voluntary; informed consent will be taken from all respondents.
- No name will be collected to maintain anonymity
- There is no reason why one person was selected instead of others; Selection is entirely by chance.
- A person may decide not to take part or to leave the assessment at any time.
- Not taking part or deciding to leave will not affect the services you receive in this community.
- Behavioral or biological information collected will not be shared with any programme staff or other community members
- Staff who administer the survey will be trained to administer the survey in a respectful and ethical manner to prevent violation of respondents' rights.
- The participant can go to the clinic to receive their syphilis test results, for this they will be given the transport costs.
- Likewise if they go to the VCT center for HIV testing they will be given transport costs.

## **What are the Benefits of IBBA**

Those participating in IBBA will be helped by this assessment because

- During the interview, participants will be treated for existing sexual infections
- Participants will be able to get results of syphilis test.
- Participants will also learn about sexual infections including HIV, and ways to prevent these infections.
- The information learned from this assessment will help with the planning of special programs in India. This will help to slow the spread of sexual infections including HIV

## **Community Monitoring Board**

### **Overall function/ mission:**

- To help safeguard and address community interests and concerns prior to and during survey activities
- To ensure that the ethical and harm minimization guidelines are followed during the implementation of the survey.
- To ensure that the survey team is aware of major community concerns and adverse events and be able to respond in a timely manner

### **Composition:**

- The board will consist of key population members (i.e. sex workers) within the district;
- To have geographic representation and have 'local monitors' – two monitors will be selected for an area (comprising of a group of sites). Each monitor will have responsibility to feedback on his/ her geographic area and report back to the district boards.

### **Structure**

Each district will have a many CMBs – this will be dependent on the sampling frame and the geographic spread of the district / sites within the district.

A district may be divided into an appropriate number of regions (to be decided by the project/ survey staff, based on the sampling frame issues). For each region two to three members will be identified to be on the monitoring board.

### **Meetings**

CMB members for a region will be once a week or as frequently as required

CMB members within a district will meet once in two weeks to review and discuss IBBA issues that came up during their monitoring visits to sites.

District coordinator will be present at the district CMB meetings to collect their feedback on the survey activities.

CMB members may file report

### **Selection:**

- Board members will be selected by IBBA project staff in consultation with NGOs and other KP members.

### **Roles:**

The monitoring board will be responsible as 'eyes and ears' for keeping the Advisory Board and survey team/ district coordinator: a) apprised of adverse events and/ or community concerns, in order to respond to them in an appropriate and timely manner; b) to support the smooth, uninterrupted conduct of the field work.

The community monitoring board members have the following specific roles:

- Respond to community doubts and concerns about the survey by giving correct information on the IBBA, prior to start of survey as well as throughout the entire survey period
- Make random visits to survey sites within their respective areas to check on how the survey is being implemented and to ensure that the survey teams are following ethical/ harm minimization guidelines.
- Provide feedback on community response to survey activities to the CAB and District Coordinator during meetings, in order to anticipate and respond to issues of concern to the community.
- Provide feedback on unaddressed concerns of KPs and possible solutions for the same
- Report any grievances of KPs, cases of misconduct by survey team and harms to KPs (harassment by police/rowdies/general public/media; violence; police raids, etc.)
- Members may also assist any respondents who approach them with questions on or for help on issues such as VCT and Syphilis test results – by referring them to the appropriate NGO in the area, or the nearest VCTC center in the district.

Gathering of information on key community concerns will be done:

- Passively (i.e. observing or during other interaction with community members and networks to glean popular sentiments and information on adverse events) and;
- Reactively (i.e. community members should be able to use board members as channel to voice concerns to survey staff)

### **Process/ meetings**

The district monitoring board will be constituted approximately 2 weeks prior to the start of survey activities.

**An orientation** meeting of all the CMB members in the district will be held before the start of the survey.

- Members will be oriented to the IBBA, their roles and their method of work during the survey period.
- The workshop will cover ‘core messages to be shared with the community regarding IBBA’.
- CMB members will also be made aware of the harm minimization guidelines, so that they monitor that they are followed during the actual survey.

At the time of the orientation meeting, the CMB members will decide on:

- The dates of their meetings within their areas
- How they will conduct their meetings and method of work
- How they will make decisions within the group

The names and contact numbers and or / address of the members in each area will be given to the District Coordinators and to the CAB.

CMB members will be given dates of when the survey team will be doing field work in their region/ area. Specific information, on which sites are being sampled etc, will not be shared with the CMB members prior to the beginning of field work.

**After the beginning of the survey activities:**

Board members in their respective regions will make random field visits to sites in their area. At these times they may observe or enquire with the community members and about the conduct of the survey team on:

- Informed consent was taken from respondents
- Community concerns and doubts were addressed by community liaison officer
- VCT referrals were given to those who wanted them
- STI treatment was given
- Check that harm minimization guidelines are not being violated

The CMB members will meet once a week to discuss the following:

- The number of survey sites they visited that week
- Their observations and remarks on the conduct of the survey in that site, or discussions with any community members
- Report of community concerns or any adverse events
- Interactions with Survey team members/ supervisor or community liaison staff
- Other issues as they arise

CMB members will keep written records the above as well as of the dates of their visits to survey sites as well as any discussions with survey team/ or other community persons at the sites. These will be shared with the District coordinator, who in turn will share them at the District level CAB meetings.

All CMB members will meet once in two weeks to review and discuss the issues pertaining to the survey (as described above) in the respective areas within their district.

Any community concerns / problems with the conduct of the survey will be reported by the CMB member to the District coordinator immediately, for the relevant action to be taken. These will be shared / reviewed during the CMB and CAB meetings at the district level.

In addition to the above, the monitoring board in a region will convene as needed on an emergency basis whenever issues of serious concern arise.

Upon completion of the survey in their areas, the CMB members may continue to attend the district level bi-monthly meetings of the CMB.

**Remuneration:**

CMB members will be given reimbursed for their travel to the survey sites as CMB meetings during the field work period. They will also be giving an honorarium for their time as CMB member in the IBBA

**Information to be collected by the CMB**

- Dates of visits
- What were the reports about the survey team's work
- What were their observations
- Was there any problems or concerns reported? If yes what were they
- Was there any adverse events? If yes, what and how were they handled