

**Virtual**

# **PLACE**

Priorities for Local AIDS Control Efforts

## **Protocol for a Study of Social Media Sites**

September 2019







# Virtual

# PLACE

Priorities for Local AIDS Control Efforts

## Protocol for a Study of Social Media Sites

September 2019

This publication was produced with the support of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) under the terms of MEASURE Evaluation cooperative agreement AID-OAA-L-14-00004. MEASURE Evaluation is implemented by the Carolina Population Center, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill in partnership with ICF International; John Snow, Inc.; Management Sciences for Health; Palladium; and Tulane University. Views expressed are not necessarily those of USAID or the United States government. TL-19-56

ISBN: 978-1-64232-196-8





## FOREWORD

I thank the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and the United States President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) for their support of work on the Priorities for Local AIDS Control Efforts (PLACE) method and studies using it over many years.

I thank my collaborators at Enda Santé—particularly Daouda Diouf and Fatou Maria Drame. They led the translation of the venue-based PLACE protocol into an Internet-based survey as part of a PLACE study of men who have sex with men in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire (Linkages across the Continuum of HIV Services for Key Populations [LINKAGES] & Enda Santé, 2017). This virtual PLACE protocol reflects insights from the Abidjan study as well as insights from implementation of PLACE by the USAID- and PEPFAR-funded MEASURE Evaluation project in Malawi and Uganda. Use of the protocol in the future should lead to additional improvements.

Thanks to MEASURE Evaluation's knowledge management team for editorial, design, and production services.

Sharon S. Weir

Senior Technical Advisor for Key Populations

MEASURE Evaluation, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

### **Suggested citation for the tool kit as a whole:**

MEASURE Evaluation. (2019). Priorities for Local AIDS Control Efforts (PLACE) Tool Kit. Chapel Hill, NC, USA: MEASURE Evaluation, University of North Carolina.

### **Suggested citation for this document:**

MEASURE Evaluation. (2019). Virtual Priorities for Local AIDS Control Efforts (PLACE): Protocol for a Study of Social Media Sites. Chapel Hill, NC, USA: MEASURE Evaluation, University of North Carolina.

# CONTENTS

Figures.....	8
Tables .....	8
Abbreviations .....	9
The PLACE Tool Kit.....	10
How to Use This Manual .....	11
Overview.....	12
Background .....	12
Aim .....	12
Objectives .....	12
Implementation Options.....	13
Formative Work and Planning.....	13
Data Collection .....	13
Outputs and Data Use.....	14
Organizational Structure .....	15
The National Steering Committee.....	15
Implementation Team .....	15
PLACE Readiness Assessment.....	17
Populations of Interest.....	18
Review and Finalize Indicators for the Site Profile.....	20
Review and Finalize Indicators for the Behavioral Interviews.....	22
Sampling.....	24
Level 1. Community Informants: Quota Sampling.....	24
Level 2. Social Media Sites: Each Site Visited Once.....	24
Level 3. People Using Social Media Sites: Two Stage Sampling.....	24
Power Calculations and Sample Size.....	25
Ethical Review .....	27
Rationale for Ethical Review .....	27
Ethical Principles .....	27
Potential Risks and Measures to Mitigate Risks .....	27
Informed Consent.....	28
Request for a Waiver of Written Signed Informed Consent.....	29
Request for a Waiver of Parental Consent for People Ages 15–17 .....	29

Language .....	29
Ethics and Safety Training .....	29
Data Collection Methods .....	30
Phase I: Identification of Social Media Sites.....	30
Phase 2: Visits to Sites and Preparation of Site Profiles .....	32
Phase 3: Behavioral Survey .....	34
Analysis: Data Use Workshop .....	38
Overview and Rationale .....	38
Analyses Provided .....	38
Analysis Example: The Virtual PLACE Study of MSM Social Media Sites in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire .....	38
References.....	42
Appendix A. Virtual PLACE Forms A, B, and C Survey Questionnaires and Related Resources .....	43
Appendix B. Virtual PLACE Forms A and C Fact Sheets for Informed Consent .....	65
Appendix C. Worksheets.....	70
Worksheet 1. National Steering Committee and Stakeholder Engagement .....	71
Worksheet 2. Stakeholder Consultation Decisions .....	73

## FIGURES

Figure 1. PLACE tool kit.....	11
Figure 1. Options for implementing Virtual PLACE .....	13
Figure 2. Two-stage sampling process.....	25
Figure 3. Websites from which 260 MSM participants were recruited: Abidjan, Côte D'Ivoire Virtual PLACE study .....	26
Figure 4. Age distribution of MSM at physical venues versus virtual sites: Abidjan, Côte D'Ivoire Virtual PLACE study .....	39
Figure 5. Testing history: Internet versus physical venues, by testing status and percentage: Abidjan, Côte D'Ivoire Virtual PLACE study .....	39
Source: LINKAGES & Enda Santé, 2017.....	39
Figure 6. How many of the MSM you know go to physical venues at least once a week? Abidjan, Côte D'Ivoire Virtual PLACE study .....	40
Source: LINKAGES & Enda Santé, 2017.....	40
Figure 7. Where MSM met sex partners: Abidjan, Côte D'Ivoire Virtual PLACE study .....	41
Source: LINKAGES & Enda Santé, 2017.....	41

## TABLES

Table 1. Standard questions used to define key populations and priority populations .....	18
---	----



## ABBREVIATIONS

ART	antiretroviral therapy
LINKAGES	Linkages across the Continuum of HIV Services for Key Populations
MSM	men who have sex with men
PI	principal investigator
PLACE	Priorities for Local AIDS Control Efforts

## THE PLACE TOOL KIT

This guide is one part of a bigger package: the Priorities for Local AIDS Control Efforts (PLACE) Tool Kit. The tool kit is available on the website of MEASURE Evaluation, a project funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and the United States President’s Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR), here: <https://www.measureevaluation.org/resources/tools/hiv-aids/place>. Please see “Overview of the Tool Kit and the Method It Supports” for orientation to the tool kit as a whole (its history, purpose, and content) and how “Virtual PLACE: Protocol for a Study of Social Media Sites” fits into it.

## HOW TO USE THIS MANUAL

This manual describes how to use the Priorities for Local AIDS Control Efforts (PLACE) method for studies involving Internet sites, social media applications, and cellphones. It is designed to be used along with the standard PLACE protocol (a sample protocol is available in the PLACE tool kit, here: <https://www.measureevaluation.org/resources/tools/hiv-aids/place>).

The standard PLACE protocol described in Parts 1 and 2 of the tool kit identifies places where people meet new sexual partners or where people who inject drugs can be reached. Examples of the places that the standard protocol identifies are public physical locations such as bars, clubs, streets, and parks as well as events that occur in public locations such as concerts, sports events, and cultural ceremonies.

The virtual PLACE protocol is a companion protocol that is not required for implementation of PLACE, but is recommended where implementation of PLACE has identified many virtual venues such as Internet sites, social media applications, and cell phone numbers or where stakeholders report that there are many people who meet online who do not visit physical locations.

Although the virtual PLACE protocol is most informative when it is used with the full PLACE protocol, the virtual protocol can be implemented on its own.

**Figure 1. PLACE tool kit**

Part 1. Protocol Preparation	Part 2. Fieldwork Implementation	Part 3. Virtual PLACE Implementation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• PLACE Overview</li><li>• Sample PLACE Protocol</li><li>• Survey Questionnaires (Form A, Form B, Form C), Fact Sheets for Informed Consent, and Interviewer Confidentiality Pledge</li><li>• Protocol Decisions Manual (with tools and worksheets)</li><li>• District PLACE Report Template</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Fieldwork Implementation Guide (step-by-step instructions)</li><li>• Fieldwork Forms</li><li>• Fieldwork Tools</li><li>• Training Materials</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Adapted Questionnaires (Virtual Form A, Virtual Form B, Virtual Form C)</li><li>• Adapted Fact Sheets for Informed Consent and Interviewer Confidentiality Pledge</li><li>• Worksheets</li></ul>

# OVERVIEW

## Background

To be effective, the HIV response should be tailored to the local context and guided by empirical evidence and epidemiologic principles. Some national-level data are available to inform the HIV response; however, there is a lack of information about how social media sites on the Internet contribute to the epidemic, either by facilitating sexual partnerships or by providing an additional avenue for HIV prevention and treatment through education and support. Information about websites on which people meet new sexual partners is often not available. Information about who accesses these websites and how they facilitate sexual partnerships can provide additional insight on the HIV epidemic and can inspire new outreach strategies. This manual for the use of PLACE in virtual settings — Internet sites, social media applications, and cellphones—describes the population of people who visit these virtual settings. Henceforth we'll refer to the method as Virtual PLACE.

Some of the people who visit social networking sites are people who occupy central positions in HIV transmission networks, but who are not engaged with the healthcare system. The Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) has identified key populations who are at greater risk of acquiring and transmitting HIV but often lack access to services: men who have sex with men (MSM), sex workers, transgender people, people who inject drugs, and prisoners and other incarcerated people. (See <http://www.unaids.org/en/topic/key-populations>). The UNAIDS 2016–2021 Strategy calls for special efforts to focus on key populations (UNAIDS, n.d.). One strategy that should be explored to connect with people most likely to acquire and transmit HIV is to use Internet websites and social media applications. The Virtual PLACE protocol provides information to inform such outreach.

## Aim

The purpose of the PLACE method generally is to increase local capacity to understand the drivers of local HIV epidemics, identify gaps in services among those most likely to acquire and transmit HIV, and provide evidence to support tailored interventions to reduce HIV transmission. Virtual PLACE extends the reach of the standard PLACE protocol to virtual settings: Internet websites, social media applications, and cellphones.

## Objectives

The Virtual PLACE protocol has the following objectives:

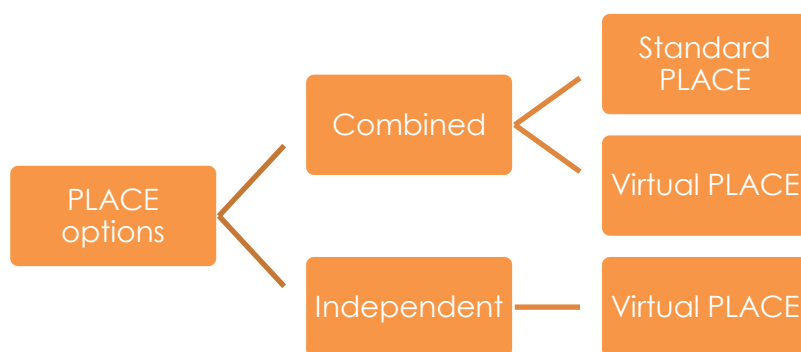
1. Describe Internet websites and social media applications that people use to meet new sexual partners.
2. Interview users of social media about their sexual behaviors, visits to public venues, HIV testing history, and access to and use of HIV prevention services.
3. Use the data to improve programs.

## Implementation Options

There are two options for implementing the Virtual PLACE protocol (Figure 2):

1. As part of the implementation of the standard PLACE protocol
2. As an independent study

**Figure 1. Options for implementing Virtual PLACE**



## Formative Work and Planning

The PLACE method requires formative work to finalize the protocol and to implement it. If the Virtual PLACE protocol is implemented along with the standard PLACE protocol, formative work for the Virtual PLACE protocol can be incorporated in the formative work required for the standard PLACE protocol. The formative work consists of the following:

1. Defining the organizational structure
2. PLACE Readiness Assessment and stakeholder engagement
3. Selection of populations on which to focus
4. Selection of indicators and finalization of questionnaires
5. Assessment of access to social media applications and Internet websites, and strategies for the recruitment of respondents from these sites
6. Sampling design
7. Ethical review
8. Adaptation and translation of data collection forms

## Data Collection

Following the formative work, including engagement with stakeholders, there are three phases of data collection:

1. Identify Internet websites and social media sites by stakeholders and through community informant interviews using Virtual PLACE Form A.
2. Visit social media sites and profile them using Virtual PLACE Form B.
3. Implement a behavioral survey using Virtual PLACE Form C.

## Outputs and Data Use

A stand-alone Virtual PLACE study provides these outputs:

- Stakeholder engagement
- Validated master list of social media sites on which people meet new sexual partners
- Profiles of social media sites
- Behavioral profile of key populations and priority populations, including:
  - Gap analysis for HIV prevention and treatment programming

When combined with a standard PLACE study focused on physical venues, additional analyses are possible such as comparison of the “virtual risk” population(s) with the venue-based population(s).

For example, in Abidjan, Côte D’Ivoire, the PLACE study of physical venues focused on men, with oversampling of MSM. The Virtual PLACE protocol that was implemented in Abidjan will be used as an example throughout this manual (LINKAGES & Enda Santé, 2017).

# ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

## The National Steering Committee

A National Steering Committee is responsible for the protocol and for ensuring stakeholder consultation. (See the PLACE Protocol Decisions Manual for guidance on forming a National Steering Committee.) Stakeholder consultation generally involves engaging with representatives from the following domains:

- The health sector, including the Ministry of Health and National AIDS Committees
- Key population organizations
- Health officials from subnational levels
- International donors contributing to HIV treatment and/or prevention
- Large employers and representatives from transportation sectors
- Employers relying on male migrant labor
- Departments of the government responsible for the census and geospatial data
- Other interested organizations

The National Steering Committee involves stakeholders in the development of the Virtual PLACE protocol, its implementation, and the use of its findings. In this way, the protocol is informed by the most knowledgeable people in the country and the results will be recognized and used. The National Steering Committee hosts a workshop during the preparation phase to provide an overview of the Virtual PLACE method and to solicit input on protocol decisions. A worksheet is provided in the Appendix C to document stakeholder engagement. At the end of the study, another meeting is convened to share results and solicit feedback.

Stakeholders should be consulted to adapt and finalize the protocol. Protocol decisions define the following:

1. Populations of interest
2. Typology of community informants
3. Typology of social media sites

## Implementation Team

The implementation team has the following members:

- Country principal investigator (PI)
- Financial manager
- Data management supervisor
- Study supervisor
- Six to eight social mobilizers/peer educators
- Six to eight interviewers who conduct interviews using Virtual PLACE Form C
- Liaison to the community of MSM
- Liaison to the community of female sex workers (FSWs)

Social mobilizers are members of the study populations who are registered on social media sites. They may also be working as peer educators with an outreach program. They obtain information about social media sites using Virtual PLACE Form B and they initiate contact with potential users of the sites.

In Abidjan, Côte D'Ivoire, the peer educators who conducted the Virtual PLACE study were chosen on the basis of their experience and their networks (LINKAGES & Enda Santé, 2017). They were trained to select respondents online through websites and Internet applications. They presented the Virtual PLACE study to MSM online. However, the social media site users who agreed to be interviewed were interviewed individually by telephone by trained interviewers, not by the social mobilizers.



## PLACE READINESS ASSESSMENT

A PLACE Readiness Assessment is a systematic consultation with stakeholders to determine whether any risk is posed to participants, service delivery providers, or to the study team by the implementation of the protocol.

The objectives of the Virtual PLACE Readiness Assessment are as follows:

1. Assess the readiness of key populations, stakeholders, and service delivery providers for the implementation of the Virtual PLACE protocol.
2. Assess the safety of contacting people online and to ensure that contacting people online for a survey is not against the rules or regulations of the websites.
3. Identify strategies to mitigate the risk or danger of implementation or, if no appropriate strategies can be identified, to determine that Virtual PLACE should not be implemented.
4. Systematically engage key populations in the design and implementation of the study.
5. Identify people who are willing to serve as social mobilizers.
6. Obtain feedback on the definitions of key populations, on the types of social media sites, and on subgroups of key populations and priority populations.
7. Incorporate the findings in the Virtual PLACE protocol before it is submitted for ethical review.

Ethical conduct and concern for the welfare of those involved in the study and those affected by its results are of utmost importance. The study should provide useful information while ensuring that data collection and data use do not result in arrests and prosecutions, harassment and violence, or worsen discrimination and stigma. Sex workers, MSM, and transgender people are already socially vulnerable and are often marginalized for their behaviors. Data collection efforts that bring attention to these populations may place them at additional risk. Consequently, there needs to be careful assessment before implementing the study with key populations to ensure that the benefits outweigh the risks.

There may be unique risks posed by online interviews. Consultation with key population groups during the preparation phase should reveal these risks and strategies to overcome them. The questions asked of stakeholders during the Readiness Assessment are as follows:

1. What risks if any are posed to people who are contacted online and who participate in a telephone survey?
2. What risks if any are posed to the interviewers?
3. What strategies can be employed to minimize these risks?
4. How do people identify themselves online and what is the risk of disclosing a personal identity?
5. What are the strategies to avoid these risks?
6. Are there any rules or regulations on a website or social media site that restrict its use for surveys?
7. Overall, can the risks be minimized to the extent required to implement the study safely and with the support of the most affected stakeholders and groups?

At the conclusion of these consultations, a brief “PLACE Readiness Report” is prepared listing the people attending the consultations, their affiliations, their connections to key populations and priority populations, the risks mentioned by participants, and a summary of the discussions on how to avoid the risks. The report should document the consensus reached about whether to proceed with the study.

## POPULATIONS OF INTEREST

The Virtual PLACE protocol can be tailored to provide findings for key populations or priority populations. The selection of the populations of interest is required to adapt the protocol.

The Virtual PLACE survey (Virtual PLACE Form C in Appendix A) has questions that determine whether each respondent is a member of one or more key population(s) or priority population(s). Results can be obtained for each population. Table 1 lists the standard questions used to define key populations and priority populations.

**Table 1. Standard questions used to define key populations and priority populations**

Key populations and priority populations	Questions	Response
Sex worker:	Have you had sex for money in the past three months?	Yes to one or both questions
	Some people see themselves as a sex worker? Do you see yourself as a sex worker?	Yes to one or both questions
MSM	What was your sex at birth?	Male
	Do you see yourself as a man or a woman?	Man
	Have you had anal sex with a man in the past 12 months?	Yes
Person who injects drugs	Have you injected a non-prescription drug in the past 12 months?	Must answer yes
Transgender person:	What was your sex at birth?	Male or female
	Do you see yourself as a man or as a woman?	Must answer woman if born a male. Must answer man if born a female.
	What was your sex at birth?	Female
Girls ages 15–19	What is your age?	Must be 15–19 years old
	What was your sex at birth?	Must answer female
Male clients of sex workers	What was your sex at birth?	Must answer male
	In the past three months, have you paid a woman to have sex with you?	Must answer yes
Bisexual man	Do you see yourself as a man or a woman	Must answer man
	In the past 12 months, approximately how many men have you had sex with?	Answer must be greater than zero

Key populations and priority populations	Questions	Response
	In total, how many women have you had sex with in the past 12 months (not including trans women)?	Answer must be greater than zero

The National Steering Committee should review the list of key populations and priority populations to determine the following:

- Which populations are most likely to meet new sex partners online?
- For each key population identified, the National Steering Committee should identify the organizations and stakeholders who should be consulted to ensure appropriate outreach to groups; special recruitment, if necessary; safety; and any other ethical issues.

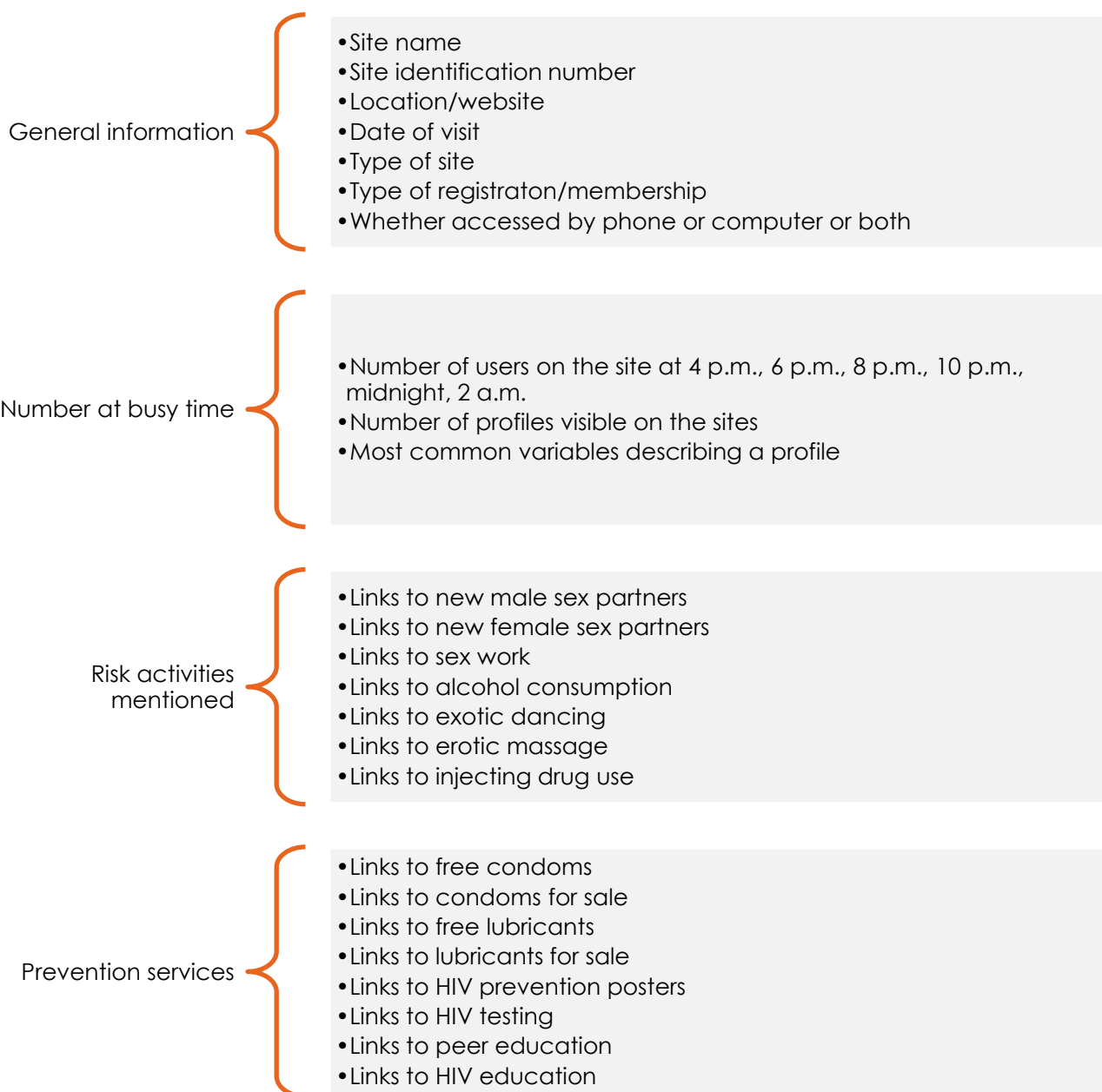
Operationalizing the definitions of the key populations should be made with the engagement of key populations, service delivery providers, and the program monitoring and evaluation team.

## REVIEW AND FINALIZE INDICATORS FOR THE SITE PROFILE

The Virtual PLACE social media site profile is similar to the standard PLACE venue profile in that the characteristics of the social media sites are identified and described. A list of variables used to describe a social media site or Internet website is provided in Box 1.

After the National Steering Committee finalizes the list of social media sites, a study team member—often one of the social mobilizers—visits the website and ensures that the desired information can be obtained. During this formative work stage, 10–20 sites should be visited to delete or augment the list of variables that are available to describe the websites. Internet sites are rapidly adapting to the needs of their users; therefore, it can be expected that the information available online may change over time.

### Box 1. Variables used to describe a social media site or Internet site



## **REVIEW AND FINALIZE INDICATORS FOR THE BEHAVIORAL INTERVIEWS**

Behavioral indicators are based on the proximate determinants framework (Boerma & Weir, 2005) and shown in Box 2. Unlike the standard PLACE method, the Virtual PLACE protocol does not include HIV testing. Respondents are instead asked about their HIV status and the date of their most recent HIV test.

**Box 2. Standard indicators for a Virtual PLACE behavioral survey**



# SAMPLING

## Level 1. Community Informants: Quota Sampling

Community informants are asked to identify Internet and social media sites. The stakeholders brainstorm the types of community informants most likely to know about social media sites (young MSM who identify as such, university students, sex workers at upscale hotels). Then quotas are set for each type of community informant. The community informants are interviewed until no new social media sites are identified, ensuring that the master list of sites is complete. Generally, at least 100 people should be interviewed from a variety of backgrounds to ensure that the list is complete. Virtual PLACE Form A is used to collect the information.

## Level 2. Social Media Sites: Each Site Visited Once

All reported social media sites named by the community informants who meet the inclusion criteria should be visited online.

- Inclusion criteria: Should be a public website, or a website that requires registration but is open to anyone to register, or a site with a limited enrollment but with access from a key population organization.
- Exclusion criteria: personal phone numbers and private individual websites.

Virtual PLACE Form B is used to collect the information.

## Level 3. People Using Social Media Sites: Two Stage Sampling

Sampling of people online is a two-stage sampling process (Figure 2). After each of the social media and Internet and telephone sites have been visited, a master list of sites is updated with new sites added and sites that are no longer operational deleted. Remaining in the sampling frame should be the operational sites that were visited. The sites should be stratified based on the population(s) of interest. For example, if the focus is on MSM sites, the list should be stratified into sites visited by men looking for male partners and all other sites. In this example, the two strata would be:

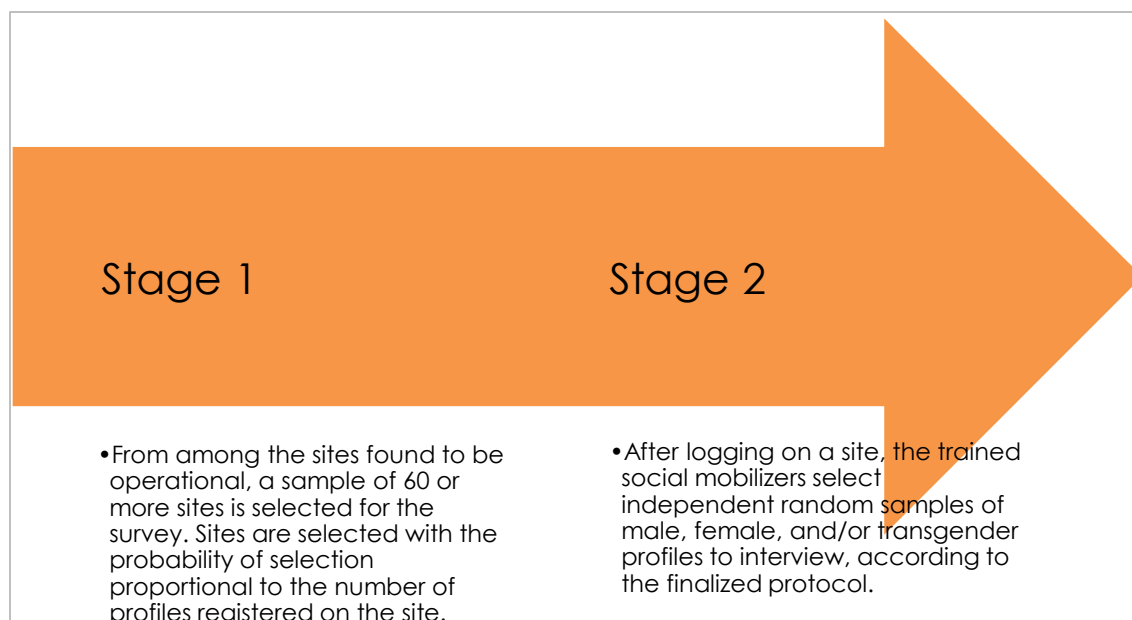
- MSM sites
- All other sites

After making these adjustments to the sampling frame, the recommended approach is to select a probability sample of 60 or more sites, with the probability of selection proportional to the number of registered profiles on the site (Stage 2). When there are two strata of sites, a stratified sample of 30 or more sites is selected in each stratum, with the probability of selection proportional to the number of profiles registered at the site.

Last, individual profiles from the selected sites are sampled.



**Figure 2. Two-stage sampling process**



If it is not feasible to identify the number of profiles on all or most of the sites, then the sites should be stratified into two or three large categories and a random sample of a specified percentage of venues should be selected in each stratum without regard to the number of profiles on the site. Refer to standard survey sampling texts such as Leslie Kish's book, *Survey Sampling* (Kish, 1965).

## Power Calculations and Sample Size

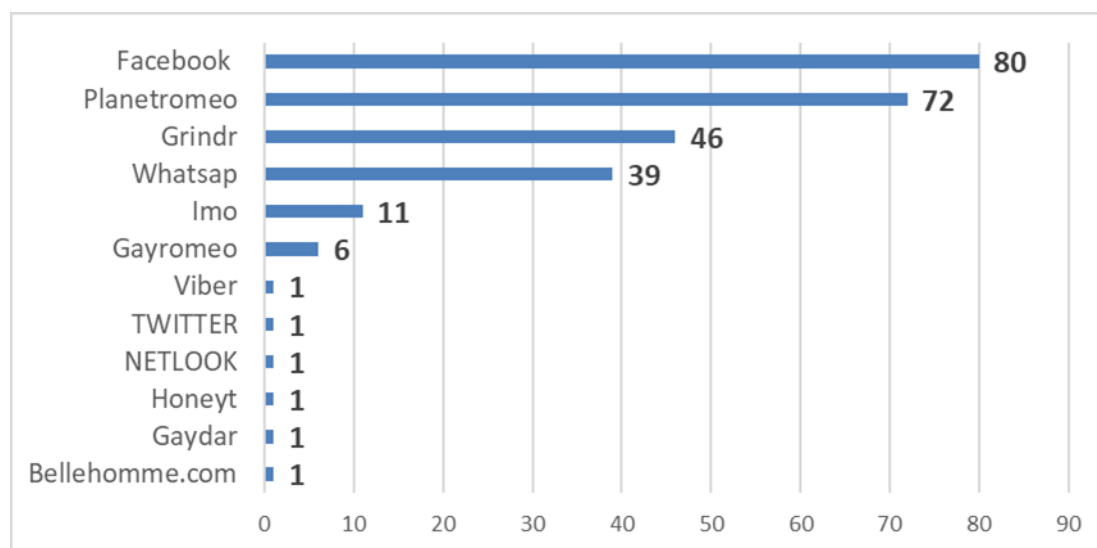
If sites were sampled with the probability of selection proportional to the number of profiles on the site (PPS) then the same number of interviews can be conducted at each site. The sample size should be at least 400 people. It will require reviewing the number and size of the sites to make a final determination of how many sites to visit and how many to interview per site. A typical application is to select 40 sites and interview 10 people per site.

If sites were randomly selected, then the number interviewed at each selected site should reflect the same percentage at each site: for example, 20 percent of all of the profiles. More interviews would be conducted at sites with many profiles and fewer at small sites.

Typical power calculations are not feasible, because one person may have more than one profile on a site and may register on more than one site. The selected sample should conservatively be considered a convenience sample.

Figure 3 shows the distribution of 260 participants in the Virtual PLACE study that focused on MSM in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire (LINKAGES & Enda Santé, 2017). Facebook sites are grouped together.

**Figure 3. Websites from which 260 MSM participants were recruited: Abidjan, Côte D'Ivoire  
Virtual PLACE study**



Source: LINKAGES & Enda Santé, 2017

# ETHICAL REVIEW

## Rationale for Ethical Review

The PI should submit the Virtual PLACE protocol to an appropriate ethical committee to determine whether the study should be considered human subjects research. The standard PLACE protocol is often not considered to be human subjects research, because the findings are used primarily to monitor and improve programs, rather than to provide generalizable research results. If the ethics committee determines that PLACE is not being implemented as research, a full review is not required. Regardless of whether a full ethical review is required, the study should be implemented with a high ethical standard. The protocol should reflect the findings of the Virtual PLACE readiness assessment.

## Ethical Principles

The Belmont Report (1979) established three principles to help researchers collect information from participants: respect for persons, beneficence, and justice.

1. Respect for persons means that people who participate do so voluntarily and with adequate information about the study. Therefore, potential respondents should be given information about the study so that they know what they are agreeing to participate in. Respect for persons also means that those who cannot make their own decisions, such as children, should have special protections.
2. Beneficence means that the study should offer benefits to society and not cause harm to respondents or society.
3. Justice means that all members of society should be able to benefit from and participate in the study. It also means that the study should not be done on a vulnerable population to benefit a more powerful population.

## Potential Risks and Measures to Mitigate Risks

The Virtual PLACE readiness assessment engages stakeholders and key population members to identify possible risks from participation in the study and strategies to eliminate those risks. Other features of the protocol are also designed to reduce the likelihood of causing harm. Participants are contacted only once. No identifying information is stored by the study team. The study team receives training on ethics and safety. Participants are not required to travel outside their normal routine. Strategies to reduce risk are described below.

### Embarrassment

Interviewers are trained to be sensitive when covering the questions about sex in Virtual PLACE Form C and to collect responses in a neutral manner. Participants are reminded during the interview process that they can refuse to respond to any question or end the interview at any time.

## Fear of a Breach of Confidentiality

The study team depends on a relationship of trust with participants. The cornerstone of developing trust is ensuring confidentiality.

Confidentiality means:

- Information the respondents provide will not be discussed with anyone other than the Study Supervisor (or other senior survey staff).
- Interviewers will not tell respondents what other respondents have said even if asked what other people think.
- Information about a respondent and/or her/his data will not be left in an unsecured place.

Interviewers should sign the Interviewer Confidentiality Pledge (see Appendix A) before speaking with respondents. Violation of the terms of the statement is grounds for immediate dismissal.

The data collected are password-protected and are accessed only by authorized members of the study team. All paper forms, computer tablets, logs of data activities, data printouts, etc., are kept in a locked and secure file cabinet. Tablets used for data collection will require passwords to access the data collection forms and upload data to secure servers.

## Informed Consent

Informed consent is the process of explaining to a potential participant what they will be asked to do and the possible risks and benefits of participation. Potential participants should be assured that their participation is voluntary, that they can stop the interview at any time, and that the information they provide is confidential. The protocol does not require the person to provide personal identifying information or a signature.

### Informed Consent for Community informants

Interviewers explain the purpose of the study, the types of questions asked, and that no identifying information is collected from the community informants.

- Anonymous verbal informed consent is requested.
- A fact sheet is provided (Appendix B).

### Informed Consent for People Recruited on a Social Media Site

A social mobilizer on the study team who is registered on the site makes initial contact with a potential respondent. For example, the social mobilizer may be a man who has sex with men who uses Gaydar. He will contact someone profiled on Gaydar as instructed by the Supervisor and ask him or her if he/she would be interested in an interview. The study team member provides a phone number for the person to call to talk with an interviewer or offers that the interviewer can call the person. If the person agrees, the interviewer makes contact with the person and conducts the informed consent process with the respondent before the interview begins. The interviewer explains the purpose of the study and the types of questions asked. The interviewer reviews an informed consent statement that describes the risks and benefits of participating in the interview.

- Anonymous verbal informed consent is requested.
- A fact sheet is read to respondents that summarizes the study, their role, and a point of contact if they have subsequent questions or concerns (Appendix B).

## **Request for a Waiver of Written Signed Informed Consent**

The PI requests from the ethical review committee a waiver from requiring participants to sign a consent form. Because the interview is not conducted face-to-face, a signature cannot be obtained. Moreover, a signature would disclose the identity of the subject to the interviewer and could pose a risk to participants if confidentiality were breached. There is no need for the study team to know the identity of participants. This approach diminishes the social, psychological, and economic risks to participants should a breach of confidentiality occur, and also allows the inclusion of a portion of the potential subject pool who have limited literacy and would not be able to sign their names.

## **Request for a Waiver of Parental Consent for People Ages 15–17**

The PI also requests a waiver of parental consent from the ethical review committee for people online who are ages 15–17 who wish to participate in the study. A waiver of parental consent, when assent is formally attained, will not adversely affect the rights or welfare of the participants.

The risk to privacy would be much greater for people ages 15–17 were parental consent to be required. Most national indicators of HIV and related behaviors include information on people ages 15 and older. Therefore, including subjects ages 15–17 increases comparability and ease of monitoring trends in HIV prevalence and related behaviors nationally.

## **Language**

Fact sheets and questionnaires should be translated into the common languages used by people on the selected sites. The interviewer team will include people who speak the languages spoken in the country.

## **Ethics and Safety Training**

Interviewers receive ethics and safety training before initiating any data collection activities and sign a commitment to confidentiality (Appendix A). The training covers:

- Ethical principles
- Informed consent
- Confidentiality

## DATA COLLECTION METHODS

After the formative work stage is completed, three phases of data collection are implemented:

1. Identification of Internet websites and social media sites by stakeholders and from community informant interviews using Virtual PLACE Form A (Appendix A)
2. Visits to social media sites and preparation of profiles using Virtual PLACE Form B (Appendix A)
3. Implementation of the biobehavioral survey using Virtual PLACE Form C (Appendix A)

### Phase I: Identification of Social Media Sites

#### Objectives

There are two objectives:

1. To identify all public social media sites in the country on which people meet new sexual partners
2. To obtain information about the name, location, and characteristics of each site identified and summarize it on a master list of sites

#### Rationale

The approach used to identify sites assumes that the community informants know where people meet new sexual partners online and that the community informants will provide this information if it is requested by a trained interviewer. The interviewer does not ask the community informant to disclose whether he or she has personally visited the site, or has had sex, or has injected drugs. Self-presentation bias is minimized by not asking where the informant meets new sexual partners and by not asking the informant's name or any other personal identification information.

Asking people to identify Internet sites on which others meet new sexual partners has been successful, even in countries where people are reluctant to talk about sex. Not every community informant will know an online site, but interviews with 100 community informants from diverse backgrounds and representing key populations and priority communities should provide a comprehensive list of sites in most countries.

A site is an Internet website or social media application where people go to meet new sexual partners. Private sites are excluded unless a member of the site is on the study team.

There are several important reasons for being systematic and thorough in identifying sites on which people meet new sexual partners:

1. Important transmission paths will be missed without a thorough and systematic assessment.
2. A thorough assessment provides data that can be readily used to track prevention program coverage online.
3. A full and complete list of sites is necessary to have confidence that the priority sites identified by the Virtual PLACE method are indeed the most important sites for prevention programs.
4. The extra time and effort required to be systematic and thorough are relatively little.

## Methods

During the National Steering Committee meeting, the committee approves the final typology of community informants. Community informants can be members of key population groups, university students, people at Internet cafes, and people at physical venues, such as bars and clubs.

Interviews can be conducted in geographic areas across the country to identify Internet sites used by people from one area of the country. Key population and priority population groups can be asked to identify people to serve as community informants. They can be interviewed in person or by telephone. After an interview is completed, the interviewer can ask about other people who may be interested in serving as a community informant.

After identifying a potential respondent, the interviewer introduces him/herself, explains the purpose of the study, requests verbal informed consent, reads or offers a fact sheet, and asks whether the community informant agrees to participate to identify specific public social media sites where he or she believes people meet new sexual partners.

Follow-up questions probe whether the community informant can name social media sites where each key population can be reached. Each informant is invited to name up to 10 sites. The informant is asked about each site that he or she names.

Information about each site is recorded on a separate Virtual PLACE Form A. The information includes:

- Interviewer ID
- Community informant sequential number
- Site ID (determined at the time of data entry)
- Date of interview
- Name of site
- Location/how to access the site
- Type of site (according to the site typology)
- Number of profiles online or members

An interviewer should be able to complete five to ten community informant interviews per day. Interviews are conducted until no new sites are named. It is important that the list of sites is comprehensive and that it is built systematically.

## Enter Data in a Master Site List

After the Virtual PLACE Form As are completed, they are collated so that there is a stack of Virtual PLACE Form As for each reported site. Under the guidance of the Study Supervisor, the interviewers organize each stack and put the one with the best information on top. This form is called the “Top Sheet.” Information summarized from all reports for a single site is entered on the Top Sheet, which has space for recording the information. Data from the Top Sheet for each sites is entered in Excel with one row per social media site named.

## Training of Interviewers for Community Informant Interviews

The training, using appropriate PowerPoint decks in the PLACE tool kit online, covers the following topics:

- Overview of the PLACE method
- Interviewing skills
- Having a nonjudgmental attitude
- Teamwork
- How to ensure data quality
- Recruitment of community informants
- Administration of informed consent
- Question-by-question review of Virtual PLACE Form A
- Data entry using the master list spreadsheet

## Output

By the end of Phase I, the master list of social media sites will be complete and interviewers will be trained to conduct the community informant interviews.

## Phase 2: Visits to Sites and Preparation of Site Profiles

### Specific Objectives:

There are three objectives:

1. To visit all social media sites (except telephone numbers) identified and confirm that they exist
2. To obtain information to create profiles of the sites
3. To obtain information about the number of people registered on the sites, or who frequent the sites, by type of population

### Rationale

The community informants have provided a list of sites, but it is not known which sites on the list actually exist and what their characteristics are. During site verification, interviewers attempt to locate each reported site, document its existence and location, and obtain information on the characteristics of the site, its patrons, and the availability of on-site HIV prevention information.

The approach assumes that:

- The Internet and social media sites are accessible either by the interviewers or in collaboration with members of key populations and priority populations who have access to the sites.
- On visiting the site online, searching it will provide information on the number of profiles on the site and other information.
- If a telephone number reaches a group of people, then Virtual PLACE Form B can be completed for the group. If the number is for an individual, a stratum of individuals should be constructed and a sample of individual selected for Virtual PLACE Form C interviews.



## Methods

All sites should be visited. The Virtual PLACE team should meet in a safe and secure location that has access to laptops or computers in sufficient number so that each interviewer and social mobilizer has access to a website.

Before visiting a site, preliminary information about the site obtained from Virtual PLACE Form A is recorded on Virtual PLACE Form B (Appendix A). Virtual PLACE Form A provides the interviewer with such information as the site's name, location, description, and type, so that the interviewer can find the site. If the site cannot be accessed publicly by a regular interviewer, a social mobilizer who has access to the site should facilitate access, if feasible and appropriate. Whoever accesses the site uses Virtual PLACE Form B to record information about the site. There is no interaction with anyone on the site, just observation of what is on the site.

## Data Entry

Data can be entered on paper versions of Virtual PLACE Form B or on tablets programmed for data entry. Both formats require pilot testing (a trial run of the protocol, forms, and instructions), high-quality translations, and efforts to ensure that any skip patterns are well designated.

## Training of Interviewers and Social Mobilizers

The Study Supervisor conducts the training. Training covers the following topics:

- Recording information from Virtual PLACE Form A about the site on Virtual PLACE Form B before visiting the site
- How to access a site
- How to determine if a site cannot be accessed for the study
- Recruitment of site informants
- Eligibility criteria
- Question-by-question review of Virtual PLACE Form B
- Information obtained by observation
- Ensuring data quality

## Outputs

By the end of Phase 2, interviewers and social mobilizers will be trained to use Virtual PLACE Form B and each active virtual site will be confirmed and salient information about it recorded on Virtual PLACE Form B.

## Phase 3: Behavioral Survey

### Specific Objectives

The objective is to describe key demographic and behavioral characteristics of people who visit online social meeting and sexual network sites.

The virtual PLACE method specifically estimates the following indicators:

- Demographic profile
- Transmission risk
- Vulnerability and adverse event profile
- Self-reported HIV prevention and treatment cascades
- Access to and use of HIV services
- HIV prevention cascade indicators
- The size of key populations visiting online sites
- The prevalence of HIV risk behaviors

Subgroup analyses provide indicators for key populations, under the assumption that a sufficient number are interviewed.

### Rationale

The behavioral survey provides information on self-reported HIV prevention and treatment cascades and describes the important proximate and underlying determinants of the HIV epidemic among people who access online social meeting and sexual networking sites. People who visit these sites—sites that were identified and confirmed as online places where people meet new sexual partners—are important to reach with prevention and treatment services. The Virtual PLACE survey confirms whether outreach to these sites will reach people with a high rate of new partner acquisition or who inject drugs and are thereby at risk of acquiring and transmitting HIV to others. This phase is the only one where self-reported behavioral information is gathered.

Key questions answered by the survey are as follows:

- What is the self-reported prevalence of HIV by age group and risk group?
- What are the rates of sexual and needle sharing partnerships?
- What is the rate of unprotected vaginal and anal sex?
- How accessible are condoms and lubricants?
- Are the sites reached by peer educators, condom suppliers, and outreach testing services?
- Do prevention cascades show gaps in prevention programming?
- What are the characteristics of people with HIV?
- What is the estimated size of key population groups, such as sex workers, MSM, transgender people, and people who inject drugs?
- What the underlying factors, such as poverty, homelessness, and incarceration history, are associated with risk of HIV transmission and acquisition?
- What is the reported experience with stigma and discrimination in healthcare settings?

- To what extent do people who visit online sites also visit physical venues?
- What are the characteristics of people who do not visit physical venues?

Virtual PLACE makes these assumptions:

- People socializing on social media sites are willing to report information to trained interviewers about their personal sexual and injection drug use behavior.
- Requesting verbal, anonymous informed consent, assuring confidentiality, and asking closed-ended questions minimizes self-presentation bias.

## Methods

The master list of sites is updated to ensure that only operational and validated sites are on the list. Using the probability proportional-to-size (PPS) approach described in the sampling section, 60 or more sites are sampled from the list of operational sites.

Sampling can be done after stratifying the sites into strata of interest (for example, MSM sites and all other sites). For each site, include an indication of the number of profiles on the site or members associated with the site. Select a probability proportional-to-size sample of 30 or more sites in each stratum, with the probability of selection proportional to the number of site profiles or members.

Social mobilizers select a random sample of profiles of people from each selected site. The social mobilizer initially contacts the selected profiles to start the recruitment process. The person is contacted and asked whether he or she would like to participate. Those who express interest are asked either to provide a phone number or are given a phone number to call to speak to an interviewer. The social mobilizer provides the interviewer with phone numbers provided by the participants. The interviewer conducts the informed consent process and the interviews with those who agree to participate.

Box 3 summarizes the steps undertaken during the Virtual PLACE survey.

### Box 3. Steps undertaken for the Virtual PLACE survey

#### Virtual PLACE survey: Step by step

##### Study Supervisor:

- Selects sites
- Sets targets for the number of interviews
- Trains interviewers
- Instructs social mobilizers on which profiles at the site to recruit

##### Social mobilizer:

- Makes initial contact with profile
- Documents refusals that occur before requesting informed consent
- Requests initial consent
- Obtains agreement on how to link respondent to interviewer (interviewer calls respondent or respondent calls interviewer)

##### Interviewer:

- Requests informed consent for the survey
- If the respondent refuses to participate, records the refusal and reasons for it
- Reads fact sheet
- Conducts interview with an eligible respondent who consents

##### After the interview:

- Interviewer tracks progress against targets
- Study Supervisors track progress for the entire site
- Study Supervisors review Virtual Form C data and provide feedback to the interviewers

### Training

Training covers the following topics:

- Selection of sites
- Documentation of refusals
- Teamwork
- Recruitment
- Eligibility criteria
- Informed consent
- Question-by-question review of Virtual PLACE Form C

- Definition of key populations
- Respect for participants
- Handling refusals and sensitive questions
- Common problems encountered and how to resolve them
- Ensuring data quality

## Outputs

- Data from interviews
- Information needed for subgroup analysis of key populations
- Information for the data use workshop

# ANALYSIS: DATA USE WORKSHOP

## Overview and Rationale

Workshop objectives are as follows:

- Describe the process and outcome of the study
- Identify gaps in services based on the findings
- Estimate HIV prevention and treatment cascades

## Analyses Provided

- Profiles of each site based on the information collected on Virtual PLACE Form B (see Box 4)
- The percentage of sites with links to each prevention service
- The percentage of sites with specific prevention or treatment messages
- Characteristics of site users
- Comparison of venue and Internet-based key populations

Based on the findings, a list of recommendations should be developed to address gaps found by the survey.

## Analysis Example: The Virtual PLACE Study of MSM Social Media Sites in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire

The virtual PLACE study conducted in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire was part of a standard PLACE study focused on MSM (LINKAGES & Enda Santé, 2017). The virtual study had these objectives:

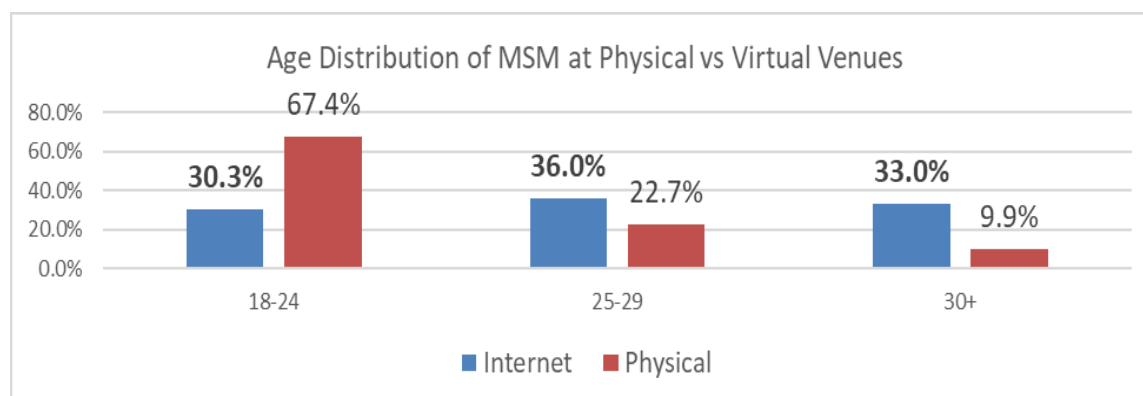
1. Extend the MSM PLACE study to Internet sites.
2. Estimate the extent to which the physical site data underestimated MSM size because it missed MSM who visit Internet sites only and do not visit physical venues.
3. Understand whether the Internet MSM population had a riskier behavioral profile compared with MSM at physical venues.
4. Gain insight on the MSM who do not visit physical venues or Internet venues.

This virtual PLACE study focused on MSM websites and social media sites. Illustrative analyses follow.

## Comparison of Demographic Characteristics

The Virtual PLACE data were compared with data from MSM interviewed at PLACE physical venues. The comparison of sociodemographic characteristics showed that MSM on Internet sites were older than MSM at physical venues (Figure 4).

**Figure 4. Age distribution of MSM at physical venues versus virtual sites: Abidjan, Côte D'Ivoire Virtual PLACE study**

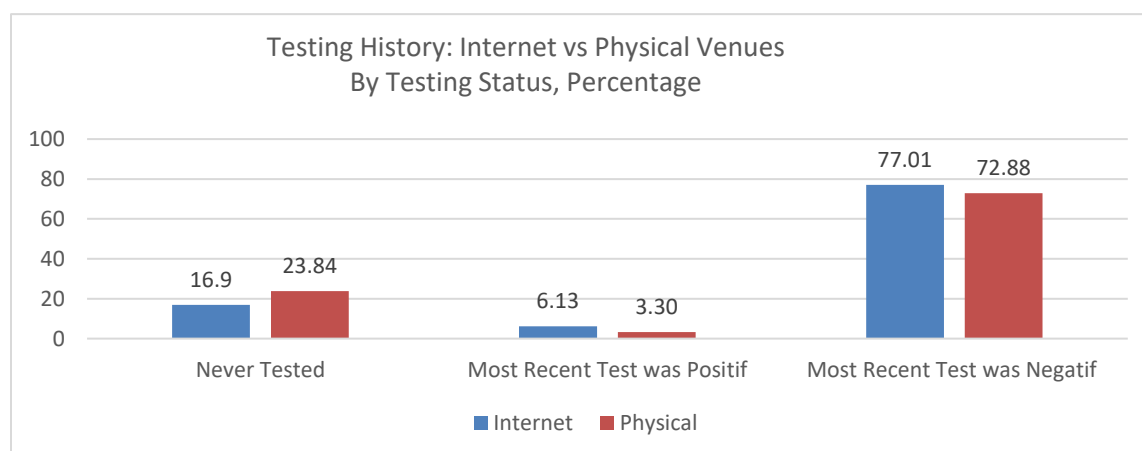


Source: LINKAGES & Enda Santé, 2017

### Comparison of Self-Reported HIV Status

MSM participating in the PLACE study at physical venues in Abidjan were tested. The HIV prevalence rate among the MSM at physical sites was 12.3 percent. This included 33 MSM who did not know that they were HIV-positive of the 45 MSM who tested positive. Only 27 percent of the MSM at venues who were HIV positive knew their status. Figure 5 shows that MSM at physical venues were more likely never to have been tested (24% versus 17%).

**Figure 5. Testing history: Internet versus physical venues, by testing status and percentage: Abidjan, Côte D'Ivoire Virtual PLACE study**

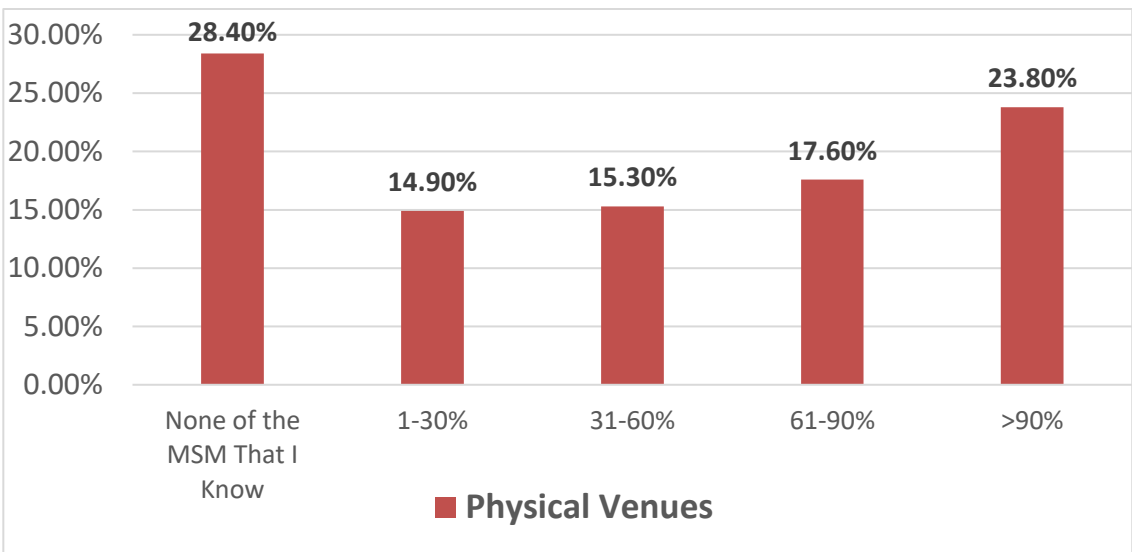


Source: LINKAGES & Enda Santé, 2017

### Assessment of Whether MSM Who Are Online Can Be Reached at Physical Venues

One of the most important insights obtained from Virtual PLACE data is the assessment of the proportion of MSM who are online who can be reached at physical venues. In Abidjan, MSM reached online were asked how many of the MSM they know go to physical venues to socialize at least once a week. About one-fourth of the MSM (23.8%) reported that 90 percent or more of the MSM they know go to physical venues at least once a week. About the same proportion (28.4%) said that none of the MSM they know go to physical venues at least once a week (Figure 6).

**Figure 6. How many of the MSM you know go to physical venues at least once a week?**  
**Abidjan, Côte D'Ivoire Virtual PLACE study**



Source: LINKAGES & Enda Santé, 2017



## Assessment of Whether MSM Who Are Online Meet Partners Online or at Physical Venues

In this Virtual PLACE study, 196 MSM online reported a total of 644 partners in the past four weeks. Of these, 558 were new partners. Of the new partners, 70.6 percent were met at physical venues and 29.4 percent were met online (Figure 7). This information is helpful for planning outreach prevention at physical venues.

**Figure 7. Where MSM met sex partners: Abidjan, Côte D'Ivoire Virtual PLACE study**



Source: LINKAGES & Enda Santé, 2017

## REFERENCES

- Boerma, J. T., & Weir, S. S. (2005). Integrating demographic and epidemiological approaches to research on HIV/AIDS: The proximate determinants framework. *Journal of Infectious Diseases*, 191 (Suppl. 1): S61–S67. Retrieved from <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/15627232>.
- Elibezova, E., Tate, J. E., Bassett-Hileman, S., & Weir, S.S. (2004). *Report of PLACE assessments in Osh, Kyrgyzstan, Central Asia 2002 and 2003*. Chapel Hill, NC, USA: MEASURE Evaluation, University of North Carolina. Retrieved from <https://www.measureevaluation.org/resources/publications/wp-04-81>.
- Figueroa, J. P., Byfield, L., Hall, A., Cummings, S. M., & Suchindran, C. M. (2010). The challenge of promoting safe sex at sites where persons meet new sex partners in Jamaica: Results of the Kingston PLACE randomized controlled trial. *Tropical Medicine & International Health*, 15(8), 945–954. Retrieved from <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/20545916>.
- Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS). (n.d.). UNAIDS 2016–2021 strategy: On the Fast-Track to end AIDS. Geneva, Switzerland: UNAIDS. Retrieved from [https://www.unaids.org/en/resources/documents/2015/UNAIDS\\_PCB37\\_15-18](https://www.unaids.org/en/resources/documents/2015/UNAIDS_PCB37_15-18).
- Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS). (2019). Key populations. [Website]. Retrieved from <http://www.unaids.org/en/topic/key-populations>.
- Khan, M. R., Behrend, L., Adimora, A. A., Weir, S. S., White, B. L., & Wohl, D. A. (2011). Dissolution of primary intimate relationships during incarceration and implications for post-release HIV transmission. *Journal of Urban Health*, 88(2), 365–375. Retrieved from <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/21286825>.
- Kish, L. (1965). *Survey sampling*. New York, NY, USA: John Wiley and Sons, Inc.
- Linkages across the Continuum of HIV Services for Key Populations (LINKAGES) & Enda Santé. (2017). Cartographie Programmatique et Estimation de la Taille des HSH à Abidjan utilisant la méthode PLACE avancée. Durham, NC, USA: LINKAGES. Retrieved from <https://www.fhi360.org/sites/default/files/media/documents/resource-linkages-cote-abidjan-french-place-april%202017.pdf>.
- National Commission for the Protection of Human Subjects of Biomedical and Behavioral Research. (1979). The Belmont report: Ethical principles and guidelines for the protection of human subjects of research. Retrieved from <https://www.hhs.gov/ohrp/regulations-and-policy/belmont-report/read-the-belmont-report/index.html>.
- Negróni-Belén, M., Vargas-Gadara, G., Rueda-Neria, C. M., Bassett-Hileman, S., Weir, S., & Bronfman, M. (2003). [Identification of meeting places of sexual partners in 2 cities of the Southern Mexican borders, using the PLACE method]. *Salud pública de México*, 45(Supp5), S647. Retrieved from <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/14974276>.
- Zhussupov, B., Alimbekova, G., Tate, J. E., Bassett-Hileman, S., & Weir, S. S. (2004). *Report of PLACE assessments in Karaganda, Kazakhstan, Central Asia 2002 and 2003*. Chapel Hill, NC, USA: MEASURE Evaluation, University of North Carolina. Retrieved from <https://www.measureevaluation.org/resources/publications/wp-04-80>.

## **APPENDIX A. VIRTUAL PLACE FORMS A, B, AND C SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRES AND RELATED RESOURCES**

### **Questionnaires**

- Virtual PLACE Form A
- Virtual PLACE Form B
- Virtual PLACE Form C

### **Interviewer Confidentiality Pledge**

### **Virtual PLACE Form 1-1: PLACE Interviewer Target and Tally Sheet**

## Virtual PLACE Form A. Interview with Community Informants

### Virtual PLACE Form A. Interview with Community Informants

*Interviewers refer to these instructions at all times.*

*Record responses on Virtual PLACE Form A: Community Informant Response Sheet*

#### **FILL IN PRELIMINARY INFORMATION BEFORE RECRUITING AN INFORMANT:**

- Interviewer number to identify who conducts the interview
- Community informant number (*for example, for the second informant this interviewer recruits that day, write 2*)
- Date

#### **INTRODUCTION TEXT:**

*Hello. My name is \_\_\_\_\_ and I am working with <Implementing Organization> on a study that will improve HIV prevention and treatment programs. I would like to ask you some questions about where people go to meet new sexual partners online. This interview should take about 10 minutes. I will not ask for your name or any personal questions about you. I only want to ask about your knowledge about social media sites. If you agree to participate, I will give you a telephone number you can call if you have any questions later.*

#### **CONFIRM ELIGIBILITY AND CONSENT**

ASK:

1. *Are you willing to answer a few questions?*
2. *Are you at least 18 years of age?*

If the person is not willing or younger than 18, stop the interview.

If the person is willing and 18 or older: Mark the tally sheet [provided at the end of Appendix A] to indicate the type of informant you are interviewing and continue.

#### **ASK THE COMMUNITY INFORMANT TO NAME UP TO 10 SOCIAL MEDIA SITES. ASK ALL THE QUESTIONS BELOW AND PROBE FOR ADDITIONAL SITES:**

- *Could you tell me where people go online to meet new sex partners? We are interested in online sites and sites that operate by telephone.*
- *What are the names of these sites? How do I find them?*
- *Which websites, social media apps, or phone numbers do people use to meet new sex partner?*

Virtual PLACE Form A: Community Informant Response Sheet				
Interviewers leave gray boxes blank.				
A. Name of interviewer	A.			
B. Interviewer ID	B.			
C. Date (DD/MM/YY) :        /        /	C.			
D. Site name:	D.			
E. Website address	E.			
F. Type of site	Internet site 1 Social media app 2 Telephone number 3			
G. Public or invited only	Public 1 By invitation only 2			
H. Busy days: Circle up to three days.	Sunday 1 Monday 2 Tuesday 3 Wednesday 4 Thursday 5	Friday 6 Saturday 7 Month end 8 Every day 9		
I. Busiest times	11 a.m. to 2 p.m. 1 2 p.m. to 5 p.m. 2 5 p.m. to 8 p.m. 3 8 p.m. to 11 p.m. 4 11 p.m. to 2 a.m. 5			
J. Number online at busy times CIRCLE ONE:	< 30 1 30–100 2 101–200 3 > 200 people 4 Does not know 5			
K. Number of community informants who named this site	O.			
Do the following people come to this site?				
L. Women who have sex for money?	YES	NO	DK	L. Number yes:
M. People who inject drugs?	YES	NO	DK	M. Number yes:
N. Men who have sex with men?	YES	NO	DK	N. Number yes:

O. Is the site more for finding a sex partner or dating			SEX	DATING	DK	O. Number "sex":
<b>P. Site accessibility</b>	Site accessible 1	Site not accessible 2	Don't know 3			

## Virtual PLACE Form B: Visit to a Virtual Site or Phone Number

Virtual PLACE Form B: VISIT TO A VIRTUAL SITE OR PHONE NUMBER		RESPONSE OPTIONS	DIRECTIONS												
MODULE 1: INFORMATION FROM MASTER LIST			COMPLETE BASED ON MASTER LIST												
B1	Site identification number from master list:	NUMBER:													
B2	Site name:	TEXT:													
B3	Type of virtual site	Website 1 Social media application 2 Telephone number 3													
B4	Website address if applicable														
B5A B5B B5C B5D B5E B5F	IF WEBSITE OR SOCIAL MEDIA: Site priority indicators based on master list	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>Women who have sex for money visit</td> <td>1</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Men who have sex with men visit</td> <td>1</td> </tr> <tr> <td>People who inject drugs visit</td> <td>1</td> </tr> <tr> <td>More for sex than dating</td> <td>1</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Reported by 10+ community informants</td> <td>1</td> </tr> </table>	Women who have sex for money visit	1	Men who have sex with men visit	1	People who inject drugs visit	1	More for sex than dating	1	Reported by 10+ community informants	1	CIRCLE 1 IF TRUE BASED ON COMMUNITY INFORMANTS' REPORTS. OTHERWISE LEAVE BLANK.		
Women who have sex for money visit	1														
Men who have sex with men visit	1														
People who inject drugs visit	1														
More for sex than dating	1														
Reported by 10+ community informants	1														
B6	Public or invitation-only site	PUBLIC 1 INVITATION-ONLY 2													
MODULE 2: OUTCOME OF SITE VISIT															
B7	Was the site or telephone number found and operational?	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>Site not found</td> <td>0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Site found &amp; operational</td> <td>1</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Site visit not attempted</td> <td>2</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Phone call: Nobody answered</td> <td>3</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Phone call: Someone answered</td> <td>4</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Other</td> <td>3</td> </tr> </table>	Site not found	0	Site found & operational	1	Site visit not attempted	2	Phone call: Nobody answered	3	Phone call: Someone answered	4	Other	3	IF SITE NOT FOUND, STOP. TELL SUPERVISOR.
Site not found	0														
Site found & operational	1														
Site visit not attempted	2														
Phone call: Nobody answered	3														
Phone call: Someone answered	4														
Other	3														

Virtual PLACE Form B: VISIT TO A VIRTUAL SITE OR PHONE NUMBER		RESPONSE OPTIONS			DIRECTIONS
B8	Describe site in four to six words:				
<b>MODULE 3: NUMBER OF USERS AND TYPE OF PROFILES (WEBSITE AND SOCIAL MEDIA ONLY)</b>					
B9A- B9D	Visit the site at different times during the day and night. Record the number of users at each time that the site is visited.	Date:	Time:	NUMBER:	
		Date:	Time:	NUMBER:	
		Date:	Time:	NUMBER:	
		Date:	Time:	NUMBER:	
B10A B10B	Are there profiles for male-for-female sex partners? IF YES: How many profiles for male-for-female sex partners are available?	YES 1 NO 2 IF YES: NUMBER: _____			
B11A B11B	Are there profiles for female-for-male sex partners? IF YES: How many profiles for female-for-male sex partners are available?	YES 1 NO 2 IF YES: NUMBER: _____			
B12A B12B	Are there profiles for male-with-male sex partners? IF YES: How many profiles for male-with-male sex partners are available?	YES 1 NO 2 IF YES: NUMBER: _____			
B13A B13B	Are there profiles for male sex workers? IF YES: How many profiles for male sex workers?	YES 1 NO 2 IF YES: NUMBER: _____			
B14A B14B	Are there profiles for female sex workers? IF YES: How many profiles for female sex workers?	YES 1 NO 2 IF YES: NUMBER: _____			
B15A B15B	Are there profiles for transgender sex partners? IF YES: How many profiles for transgender sex partners are available?	YES 1 NO 2 IF YES: NUMBER: _____			
<b>MODULE 4: RISK ACTIVITIES MENTIONED</b>					



Virtual PLACE Form B: VISIT TO A VIRTUAL SITE OR PHONE NUMBER		RESPONSE OPTIONS		DIRECTIONS
B16	Are any of the following mentioned on the site?	Erotic dancing	YES 1 NO 2	
		Sex work	YES 1 NO 2	
		Alcohol	YES 1 NO 2	
		Massage	YES 1 NO 2	
		Injecting drugs	YES 1 NO 2	
B17	Are any of these health or prevention services mentioned on the site?	Free condoms	YES 1 NO 2	
		Condoms for sale	YES 1 NO 2	
		Free lubricant	YES 1 NO 2	
		HIV prevention	YES 1 NO 2	
		HIV testing	YES 1 NO 2	
		Peer education	YES 1 NO 2	
		HIV treatment	YES 1 NO 2	
B18	Are any of these health or prevention services linked to the site?	HIV testing	YES 1 NO 2	
		HIV treatment	YES 1 NO 2	
		HIV education	YES 1 NO 2	
B19	What type of advertising is on the site?	Alcohol	YES 1 NO 2	

Virtual PLACE Form B: VISIT TO A VIRTUAL SITE OR PHONE NUMBER		RESPONSE OPTIONS		DIRECTIONS
		Sex toys, aids	YES 1 NO 2	
		Condoms	YES 1 NO 2	
		Clothing	YES 1 NO 2	
		Casino/gambling	YES 1 NO 2	
B20	Other messages on the site (specify)			
B21	Provide three to five screen shots showing the site.			
<b>MODULE 5: WRAP-UP INFORMATION</b>				
B22	Interviewer ID			
B23	Tablet ID Number			
B24	Date of survey	Day:	Month:	Year:
B25	Additional Comments			
B26	Supervisor Name:			
<b>END OF SURVEY</b>				

## Virtual PLACE Form C: Interview with a User of the Internet, Social Media, and Telephone to Meet Sexual Partners

1. VIRTUAL PLACE FORM C: VIRTUAL PLACE SURVEY		RESPONSE OPTIONS	DIRECTIONS
2. 3. MODULE A: SITE INFORMATION			COMPLETE ONE MODULE A PER INTERNET SITE
4. A1	5. DATE OF RECRUITMENT	A. DAY:	THIS SECTION RECORDS INFORMATION ABOUT THE SITE. IT SHOULD BE FILLED IN AT THE TIME OF RECRUITMENT BY THE RECRUITER.
		B. MONTH:	
		C. YEAR:	
6. A2	7. NAME OF RECRUITER	NAME:	TEXT
8. A3	9. ROLE OF RECRUITER	MSM SOCIAL MOBILIZER 1 FSW SOCIAL MOBILIZER 2 OTHER 3	NUMBER
10. A4	11. ID NUMBER OF THE RECRUITER		NUMBER
12. A5	13. SITE IDENTIFICATION NUMBER	NUMBER:	FROM MASTER LIST
14. A6	15. NAME OF SITE	NAME:	TEXT
16. A7	17. WEBSITE ADDRESS/URL		TEXT
18. A8	19. START TIME	HOUR: _____ MINUTE: _____	
20. A9	21. HOW MANY PROFILES/USERS ARE REGISTERED ON THE SITE BASED ON THE SITE VISIT?	NUMBER:	OBTAIN FROM SITE VISIT (FORM B)
22. A10	23. HOW MANY PROFILES/USERS ARE ONLINE NOW AT THE TIME OF RECRUITMENT?	NUMBER:	
24. A11	25. WHAT SAMPLING METHOD IS BEING USED TO SAMPLE POTENTIAL RESPONDENTS AT THIS SITE?	INTERVAL SKIP 1 TAKE ALL SAMPLE 2 OTHER 3 IF OTHER, SPECIFY: _____	USE METHOD AS INSTRUCTED DURING TRAINING

VIRTUAL PLACE FORM C: VIRTUAL PLACE SURVEY		RESPONSE OPTIONS		DIRECTIONS
<b>MODULE B: RECRUITMENT OF SOCIAL MEDIA PROFILE SUBJECT BY SOCIAL MOBILIZER</b>				COMPLETE ONE MODULE B PER RECRUITMENT ATTEMPT
B1	SITE IDENTIFICATION NUMBER (SAME AS A5)	NUMBER:		NUMBER
B2	ID NUMBER OF THE RECRUITER (SAME AS A4)	NUMBER:		NUMBER
B3	RESPONDENT PROFILE ID NUMBER	Number:		CONSECUTIVE NUMBER BEGINNING AT 1 FOR EACH SITE
B4	SCREENSHOT TAKEN OF THE SITE WITH THE PROFILE?	YES 1 NO 2		
B5	FILE NAME OF SCREENSHOT	FILE NAME:		DATE + RECRUITER ID + SITE ID + PROFILE ID
B6	WHAT IS THE SEX OF THE PROFILE?	MAN 1 WOMAN 2 TRANS FEMALE 3 NOT PROVIDED 4		NUMBER
B7	DOES THE WEBSITE INDICATE THAT THE PROFILE IS LOOKING FOR A MALE PARTNER? A FEMALE PARTNER? A TRANSGENDER PARTNER?	MAN	YES 1 NO 2	NUMBER
		WOMAN	YES 1 NO 2	
		TRANS FEMALE	YES 1 NO 2	
B8	DID YOU INITIATE CONTACT WITH THE PROFILE?	YES 1 NO 2		IF NO, SELECT NEXT PROFILE TO RECRUIT ON THE SITE & BEGIN A NEW MODULE B
B9	Hello. My name is < ..... > and I am working on a study that will improve HIV prevention programs. I would like to recruit you to the study. I will give you some information about the study and if you want to participate, then I will ask you for your phone number so that an interviewer can call you, or I will give you a phone number you can call. We will not ask your name or any identifying information. Would you like to hear about the survey?	YES 1 NO 2		READ WHEN CONTACT IS MADE. IF NO, END RECRUITMENT & GO TO NEXT POTENTIAL RESPONDENT FROM THIS SITE USING A NEW MODULE B
B10	An interviewer from our study team can call you (unless you prefer to call the interviewer). What number should the interviewer call?	PARTICIPANT'S PHONE NUMBER: <b>[OR]</b> <input type="checkbox"/> MARK HERE IF PARTICIPANT PREFERS TO CALL INTERVIEWER.		READ
B11	What name should the interviewer ask for?	NAME:		

VIRTUAL PLACE FORM C: VIRTUAL PLACE SURVEY		RESPONSE OPTIONS	DIRECTIONS
B12	Is now a convenient time to call?	YES 1 NO 2	IF YES, PROVIDE NAME AND NUMBER TO INTERVIEWER NOW
B13	NOTES FROM RECRUITER ABOUT WHEN THE RESPONDENT SHOULD BE CALLED.		TEXT

VIRTUAL PLACE FORM C: VIRTUAL PLACE SURVEY		RESPONSE OPTIONS	DIRECTIONS
MODULE C: BEHAVIORAL SURVEY OF RECRUITED PROFILES BY INTERVIEWER			COMPLETE ONE MODULE C PER RESPONDENT CONTACTED BY THE INTERVIEWER
C1	DATE OF SURVEY	A. DAY: B. MONTH: C. YEAR:	READ
C2	INTERVIEWER IDENTIFICATION NUMBER	NUMBER:	
C3	DISTRICT WHERE SURVEY CONDUCTED	NAME:	TEXT
C4	DISTRICT NUMBER	NUMBER:	
C5	START TIME	HOUR: _____ MINUTE: _____	
C6	DID YOU CALL THE RESPONDENT OR DID THE RESPONDENT CALL YOU?	RESPONDENT CALLED ME 1 I CALLED RESPONDENT 2	
C7	RESPONDENT PROFILE ID FROM MODULE B	NUMBER:	FROM B3
C8	TYPE OF RESPONDENT	MSM 1 FEMALE SEX WORKER 2 NO SPECIFIC TYPE OF PERSON 3	DO NOT ASK. INTERVIEWER INDICATES THE TYPE OF RESPONDENT TARGETED FOR THE SURVEY.

VIRTUAL PLACE FORM C: VIRTUAL PLACE SURVEY		RESPONSE OPTIONS	DIRECTIONS
	Hello. My name is < ..... > and I am working on a study that will improve HIV prevention programs. I would like to ask you some questions about this site and some questions to assess your need for and access to services. I will not ask your name or any identifying information about you. You can refuse to answer any question or stop the interview at any time. Some of the questions are sensitive and some people may be embarrassed to answer the questions. There are no other risks to participating. I can give you some health information at the end of the survey about where to get health services if you would like. This interview should take about 30 minutes.		READ
C9	INTERVIEWER: DID YOU READ THE FACT SHEET TO THE RESPONDENT AND ANSWER ANY QUESTIONS?	YES 1 NO 2	
C10	First, tell me whether you are a man or a woman or a transgender person?	MAN 1 WOMAN 2 TRANS FEMALE 3	
C11	What is your age?	AGE:	IF < 15, STOP INTERVIEW. GO TO C93
C12	Are you willing to be interviewed?	YES 1 NO 2	IF NO, GO TO C93
C13	INTERVIEWER: IS RESPONDENT CAPABLE OF ANSWERING THE QUESTIONS?	YES 1 NO 2	IF NO, GO TO C93
C14	LANGUAGE OF INTERVIEW	LANGUAGE OF INTERVIEW:	TEXT
<b>DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS</b>			
	Thank you for agreeing to participate. First, I am going to ask you a few general questions.		READ
C15	In what district do you live?	DISTRICT CODE:	NUMBER
C16	How many years have you lived there?	NUMBER OF YEARS: _____ ALL MY LIFE 66 DON'T KNOW 77 REFUSED 88	

VIRTUAL PLACE FORM C: VIRTUAL PLACE SURVEY		RESPONSE OPTIONS	DIRECTIONS
C17	What is your main occupation when you are working?	FISHING 1 FARMING 2 POLICE/MILITARY 3 GOVERNMENT WORK 4 TRANSPORTATION 5 BUSINESS/TRADING 6 PHYSICAL LABOR 7 STUDENT/EDUCATION 8 DOMESTIC WORK 9 SEX WORK 10 DISABLED/CANNOT WORK 11 OTHER 96 REFUSED 98 NO SPECIFIC OCCUPATION 99	READ
C18	Are you currently employed?	YES 1 NO 2 REFUSED 8	
C19	Are you currently in school or taking classes?	YES 1 NO 2 REFUSED 8	
C20	What is the highest level of education you completed?	NONE 1 PRIMARY SCHOOL 2 SECONDARY SCHOOL 3 POST SECONDARY 4 REFUSED 88	
C21	What type of phone do you use, if any?	NO PHONE AT ALL 1 BASIC PHONE (NOT SMART) 2 SMART PHONE 3	READ OPTIONS
C22	How often do you use social media, such as WhatsApp or Facebook?	NEVER 1 LESS THAN ONCE A WEEK 2 WEEKLY 3 DAILY 4	
C23	Now think about the place where you slept last night. Did you sleep at....	A BAR OR CLUB 1 ANOTHER SOCIAL VENUE 2 FAMILY RESIDENCE 3 FRIEND'S RESIDENCE 4 DORMITORY 5 HOTEL/COMMERCIAL LODGING 6 STREET/OUTSIDE 7 SOMEWHERE ELSE 8	READ OPTIONS
C24	Have you traveled outside this district in the past four weeks?	YES 1 NO 2 REFUSED 8	IF NO OR REFUSED, GO TO C26

VIRTUAL PLACE FORM C: VIRTUAL PLACE SURVEY		RESPONSE OPTIONS		DIRECTIONS
C25	Which districts outside this district have you traveled to most often in the past four weeks?	DISTRICT A: DISTRICT B: DISTRICT C:		NAME UP TO THREE DISTRICTS
SITE ATTENDANCE				
C26	Next I am going to ask you about how often you come here to the Internet or social media site on which you were contacted by the study recruiter. This information will help us estimate how many people could be reached if we placed some health messages on the site. How often do you visit the site? READ OPTIONS.	DAILY 1 4–6 TIMES PER WEEK 2 2–3 TIMES PER WEEK 3 WEEKLY 4 2–3 TIMES PER MONTH 5 MONTHLY 6 LESS THAN ONCE A MONTH 7 ONLY VISITED ONE TIME 8 DO NOT KNOW 77 REFUSE 88		READ OPTIONS
C27	Why do you come to the site?	A. Socialize? 1 B. Look for a sexual partner? 1 C. Entertainment? 1		CIRCLE 1 IF YES
C28	In total, how many Internet sites or social media sites have you visited this week to look for a person with whom to have sex?	NUMBER:		
C29	Which sites did you visit?			LIST WEBSITE ADDRESSES
C30	In total, how many physical venues, such as bars and clubs, have you been to this week to look for a sexual partner?	NUMBER:		
C31	Some men have sex with men. Approximately how many men do you know who have sex with men? You know them and they know you and you have talked in the past four weeks.	NUMBER:		IF ZERO, SKIP TO 33
C32	Some men meet men online, some men meet men at public venues, and some men meet men at both types of locations. Of the <u>men</u> you know who have sex with men, are any looking for male sex partners online? Are any looking in physical venues? Are any looking in both physical venues and on Internet sites? Are some not looking at all?	Looking online 1 Looking in physical venues 1 Looking both online & physical venues 1 Not looking 1		NUMBER:
C33	Of the <u>men</u> you know who have sex with women, are any looking for female partners online? Are any looking in physical venues? Are any looking in both physical venues and on Internet sites? Are some not looking at all?	Looking online 1 Looking in physical venues 1 Looking both online & physical venues 1 Not looking 1		NUMBER:



VIRTUAL PLACE FORM C: VIRTUAL PLACE SURVEY		RESPONSE OPTIONS	DIRECTIONS
<b>DRUG USE</b>			
	Now I have a few questions about smoking, drinking alcohol, and using drugs.		READ OPTIONS
C34	How often do you smoke cigarettes?	DAILY 1 LESS THAN DAILY 2 NEVER 3 REFUSED 8	READ OPTIONS
C35	How often do you drink alcohol?	DAILY 1 LESS THAN DAILY 2 NEVER 3 REFUSED 8	
C36	Do you feel you should cut down on your drinking?	YES 1 NO 2 REFUSED 8 NOT APPLICABLE, NEVER DRINKS 9	
C37	Have you ever injected nonprescription drugs?	YES 1 NO 2 REFUSED 8	IF NO, SKIP TO C42
C38	Some people take medicine to help keep them from injecting drugs. Are you receiving opioid substitution therapy or taking a medicine to treat an addiction to opioids, such as heroin?	YES 1 NO 2 REFUSED 8	IF NO, GO TO C40
C39	Have you been taking the medicine for six months or more?	YES 1 NO 2 REFUSED 8	
C40	Have you injected nonprescription drugs at any time in the past year?	YES 1 NO 2 REFUSED 8	
C41	The last time you injected drugs, did you use a sterile needle and syringe?	YES 1 NO 2 REFUSED 8	
<b>SEXUAL BEHAVIOR</b>			
	The next few questions are about sexual behavior.		READ
C42	At what age did you first have sex? By sex I mean penile-vaginal sex between a man and a woman.	AGE: _____ DOES NOT KNOW 97 REFUSED 98 NEVER HAD VAGINAL SEX 99	IF NEVER HAD VAGINAL SEX, SKIP TO C45
C43	The last time you had penile-vaginal sex, did you use a condom?	YES 1 NO 2 DOES NOT KNOW 7 REFUSED 8	

VIRTUAL PLACE FORM C: VIRTUAL PLACE SURVEY		RESPONSE OPTIONS	DIRECTIONS
C44	Which best describes your condom use during penile-vaginal sex (man with woman) in the past six months?	I DID NOT USE CONDOMS AT ALL 1 I OCCASIONALLY USED THEM 2 I USED CONDOMS EVERY TIME 3 I DID NOT HAVE VAGINAL SEX IN THE PAST SIX MONTHS 4	READ ALL
C45	Have you ever had anal sex with a man?	YES 1 NO 2 REFUSED 8	IF NO, SKIP TO C49
C46	At what age did you first have anal sex with a man?	AGE: _____	
C47	The last time you had anal sex with a man, did you use a condom?	YES 1 NO 2 REFUSED 8	
C48	Which best describes your condom use during anal sex with a man in the past six months?	I DID NOT USE CONDOMS AT ALL 1 I OCCASIONALLY USED THEM 2 I USED CONDOMS EVERY TIME 3 I DID NOT HAVE ANAL SEX IN THE PAST SIX MONTHS 4	READ ALL
C49	In the past 12 months, have you had sex with men only, women only, both men and women, or have you not had sex with anyone?	MEN ONLY 1 WOMEN ONLY 2 BOTH MEN AND WOMEN 3 NO SEX AT ALL IN THE PAST 12 MONTHS 4	IF NO SEX AT ALL, SKIP TO "SYMPTOMS AND USE OF SERVICES"
C50	In the past 12 months, have you had sex with a person who you never had sex with before?	YES 1 NO 2 REFUSED 8	
C51	In the past 12 months, have you paid a woman to have sex with you?	YES 1 NO 2 REFUSED 8	
C52	In the past 12 months, has someone paid you money for sex?	YES 1 NO 2 REFUSED 8	
C53	In the past 12 months, how many men did you have sex with?	NONE 0 ONE 1 TWO 2 THREE 3 FOUR 4 FIVE 5 SIX TO NINE 6 TEN TO TWENTY 7 TWENTY TO THIRTY 8 31–100 9 MORE THAN 100 10 REFUSED 88	READ OPTIONS

VIRTUAL PLACE FORM C: VIRTUAL PLACE SURVEY		RESPONSE OPTIONS	DIRECTIONS
C54	In the past 12 months, approximately how many women have you had sex with?	NONE 0 ONE 1 TWO 2 THREE 3 FOUR 4 FIVE 5 SIX TO NINE 6 TEN TO TWENTY 7 TWENTY TO THIRTY 8 31–100 9 MORE THAN 100 10 REFUSED 88	READ OPTIONS
	Now I am going to ask you about how many people you had sex with in the past four weeks.		READ
C55	First, I would like to know how many men you had sex with in the past four weeks, including men you had sex with once and men you had sex with more often. In total, how many men did you have sex with in the past four weeks?	NUMBER:	IF ZERO, SKIP TO C57
C56	Of these, how many were new male partners—that is, the first time you had sex with the person was in the past four weeks?	NUMBER:	
C57	In total, how many women did you have sex with in the past four weeks?	NUMBER:	IF ZERO, SKIP TO C59
C58	Of these, how many were new female partners—that is, the first time you had sex with the person was in the past four weeks?	NUMBER:	
C59	Do you have a main sexual partner now? A main partner could be a spouse, someone you live with, or someone else.	YES 1 NO 2 REFUSED 8	IF NO, SKIP TO C62
C60	Are the main partner(s) male, female, or do you have both a main female and a main male partner?	MALE 1 FEMALE 2 BOTH 3 REFUSED 8	
C61	Do you think that your main partner(s) (any of your main partners) has had sex with another person in the past 12 months? PROBE FOR BEST GUESS.	YES 1 NO 2 REFUSED 8	
C62	We've talked a bit about male condoms, but I want to make sure I know whether you have ever used a male condom. Have you ever used a male condom?	YES 1 NO 2 REFUSED 8	
SYMPTOMS AND USE OF SERVICES			
	READ: Next I would like to ask whether you have physical symptoms of an infection and whether you are getting health services.		READ

VIRTUAL PLACE FORM C: VIRTUAL PLACE SURVEY		RESPONSE OPTIONS	DIRECTIONS
C63	In the past four weeks, have you had an unusual discharge from your penis or vagina?	YES 1 NO 2 DON'T KNOW 7 REFUSED 8	
C64	In the past four weeks, have you had sores on or around your penis or vagina?	YES 1 NO 2 DON'T KNOW 7 REFUSED 8	
C65	Are you a circumcised man?	YES 1 NO 2 REFUSE 8 NOT APPLICABLE: FEMALE 9	
	In the past 12 months, have you received information about HIV or AIDS from...		READ
C66	A healthcare provider or peer educator at....	A. THIS SITE? YES 1	ASK ABOUT EACH TYPE OF LOCATION. ENTER 1 FOR A YES RESPONSE
		B. A DROP-IN CENTER? YES 1	
		C. A PUBLIC HEALTH CLINIC? YES 1	
C67	If you wanted a condom, would it be easy or difficult for you to get one quickly?	EASY 1 DIFFICULT 2 REFUSED 8	
C68	If you wanted personal lubricant, would it be easy or difficult for you to get some quickly?	EASY 1 DIFFICULT 2 REFUSED 8	
C69	Do you have a condom with you now?	YES 1 NO 2 REFUSED 8	
C70	Do you know where to go to get tested for HIV in the area in which you live?	YES 1 NO 2 REFUSED 8	
C71	Have you ever had a positive HIV test indicating that you have HIV?	YES 1 NO 2 REFUSED 8	IF NO, SKIP TO C73
C72	How long ago did you have your first positive HIV test?	LESS THAN SIX MONTHS AGO 1 SIX MONTHS TO FIVE YEARS AGO 2 OVER FIVE YEARS AGO 3	READ OPTIONS
C73	Have you ever been tested for HIV?	YES 1 NO 2 REFUSED 8	
C74	Have you ever taken medicine to treat HIV or prevent an infection?	YES 1 NO 2 REFUSED 8	IF NO, SKIP TO C79

VIRTUAL PLACE FORM C: VIRTUAL PLACE SURVEY		RESPONSE OPTIONS	DIRECTIONS
C75	Are you currently taking antiretroviral therapy (ART) drugs?	YES 1 NO 2 REFUSED 8	
C76	Have you been taking your ART drugs for less than 12 months?	YES 1 NO 2 REFUSED 8	
C77	In the past seven days, did you miss taking your ART drugs for three days or more?	YES 1 NO 2 REFUSED 8	
	Where did you most recently obtain your ART drugs?		
C78	A. Name:		WRITE THE NAME OF THE FACILITY
	B. Facility type:		
	C. District:		
<b>900 INTERVIEW MODULE: VULNERABILITIES</b>			
	READ: There are just a few more questions about problems people face in their lives.		READ
C79	In the past four weeks, did you go to sleep hungry at night because there was not enough food?	YES 1 NO 2 REFUSED 8	
C80	In the past 12 months, has a family member or sexual partner hurt you physically?	YES 1 NO 2 REFUSED 8	
C81	In the past 12 months, have you been forced to have sex against your will?	YES 1 NO 2 REFUSED 8	
C82	Some people get paid money for sex and see themselves as sex workers. Do you get money for sex and do you see yourself as a sex worker?	YES 1 NO 2 REFUSED 8	
C83	In your opinion, how many of the women on this Internet site right now are looking for men to pay them money for sex?	NUMBER:	
C84	Some people see themselves as gay or lesbian. Do you see yourself as gay or lesbian?	YES 1 NO 2 REFUSED 8	
C85	In the past 12 months, have you spent a night in jail or prison?	YES 1 NO 2 REFUSED 8	
C86	In the past 12 months, have you been hurt physically by the police?	YES 1 NO 2 REFUSED 8	

VIRTUAL PLACE FORM C: VIRTUAL PLACE SURVEY		RESPONSE OPTIONS	DIRECTIONS
C87	In the past 12 months, have you experienced stigma from a healthcare worker?	YES 1 NO 2 REFUSED 8	
C88	Have you been homeless anytime in the past 12 months (e.g., living on the street)?	YES 1 NO 2 REFUSED 8	
C89	Do you see yourself as a man or a woman?	MAN 1 WOMAN 2	
C90	Do you see yourself as transgender?	YES 1 NO 2 REFUSED 8	
C91	Were you born male or female?	MALE 1 FEMALE 2	
C92	What is your current marital status?	Married/living with partner 1 Separated 2 Divorced 3 Never married 4	

	INTERVIEWER FINAL SECTION		
	INTERVIEWER: YOU MUST COMPLETE THIS SECTION FOR EVERY VIRTUAL SITE OR PHONE NUMBER THAT IS VISITED EVEN IF THERE ARE NO RESPONDENTS. YOU MUST COMPLETE THIS MODULE FOR EACH POTENTIAL RESPONDENT EVEN IF THE PERSON WAS NOT ELIGIBLE OR REFUSED AT THE BEGINNING OR PARTWAY THROUGH. YOU MUST COMPLETE THIS SECTION FOR EACH RESPONDENT WHO WAS INTERVIEWED.		
C93	Outcome of interview	INTERVIEW COMPLETED 1 NEVER CONTACTED RESPONDENT 2 RESPONDENT NOT ELIGIBLE 3 RESPONDENT REFUSED, SO WAS NOT INTERVIEWED 4 INCOMPLETE INTERVIEW 5 OTHER 6	
C94	IF OTHER, EXPLAIN		TEXT
C95	CONSECUTIVE NUMBER OF INTERVIEWS COMPLETED TODAY BY THIS INTERVIEWER:		
C96	TABLET ID NUMBER		
C97	NAME OF YOUR SUPERVISOR:		

## Virtual PLACE (Priorities for Local AIDS Control Efforts)

# Interviewer Confidentiality Pledge

The information you will be collecting using Virtual PLACE Form A, Virtual PLACE Form B, and Virtual PLACE Form C is sensitive and may cause harm to the participants in this study if it is shared with anyone outside this study. To protect people participating in the study, we require you to sign a confidentiality pledge.

Virtual PLACE Form A is the Interview with Community Informants.

Virtual PLACE Form B is the Site Visit to a Virtual Spot.

Virtual PLACE Form C is the Virtual PLACE Survey.

This pledge indicates that any information you may learn from community informants, people knowledgeable about specific people and online places in this study, including key population members or people socializing at the sites, will not be repeated or released to any sources outside the personnel directly involved in this study. If you agree to this pledge, please sign below.

---

Signature

---

Date

---

Name (Please Print)

Thank you for your cooperation.

## Virtual PLACE Form 1-1: Interviewer Target and Tally Sheet for Community Informant Interviews

<b>VIRTUAL PLACE FORM 1-1. INTERVIEWER TARGET AND TALLY SHEET FOR COMMUNITY INFORMANT INTERVIEWS</b> ONE SHEET PER INTERVIEWER							
T1. Interviewer Name:				T2. Interviewer Number:			
T3. Date: DD/MM/YY <div style="text-align: center; margin-top: 10px;">                         /       /                     </div>							
EACH TALLY MARK BELOW INDICATES THAT INFORMED CONSENT WAS CARRIED OUT.							
Community Informant Types	TARGET	REACHED			TARGET	REACHED	
		Tally	Total			Tally	Total
1 Taxi driver				12 Youth in school			
2 Truck driver				13 Youth out of school			
3 Bar owner or worker				14 Military / Police			
4 Individual socializing at spot				15 CBO / NGO staff			
5 Security guard / Car guard				16 Peer educator			
6 Transgender person				17 Community health worker			
7 Person who injects drugs				18 Trader / Business person			
8 Man who has sex with men				19 Hawker / Street vendor			
9 Woman who has sex for money				20 Unemployed / Individual Loitering			
10 Hairdresser				21 Other	X		
11 Community leader				Unassigned		X	X
TOTAL NUMBER COMMUNITY INFORMANTS				TARGET: _____ REACHED: _____			



## **APPENDIX B. VIRTUAL PLACE FORMS A AND C FACT SHEETS FOR INFORMED CONSENT**

Completing Virtual PLACE Form B does not involve an interview, so informed consent is moot.

**<IMPLEMENTING AGENCY LETTERHEAD>**

**<Project Director Name, Address, and Telephone Number>**

## **Virtual PLACE Form A Fact Sheet for Informed Consent by a Community Informant**

### **Who is conducting this study?**

<Name of implementing agency> in to improve health programs in this area with funding from <name of funding collaboration with <collaborating organizations> is conducting a survey of people ages 18 and older sources>.

### **What is this study about?**

The study is part of an outreach program to populations at risk of health problems, such as infectious diseases—especially HIV. This survey has been approved by <organizations providing ethical review>. We will ask you a few questions to get some information to develop and monitor HIV and AIDS programs. The knowledge obtained from the study will help identify where better programs are needed in this area.

### **Why is this study important?**

The results will be used to strengthen HIV programs and to improve people's access to services.

### **What will the survey cover?**

If you participate in this study, we will ask you questions about where people meet new sexual partners. This will include asking you about Internet sites, social media applications, and telephone numbers that people use to meet new sexual partners. None of the questions will be about your behavior specifically. The interview will last 10 to 20 minutes.

### **Can I refuse?**

Participation is voluntary. You have the right to refuse to participate, or you can refuse to answer any question in the survey. If you change your mind about participating during the interview, you have the right to withdraw and end your participation at any time.

## **Who will have access to my survey answers?**

Answers from your survey will not be shared outside the team working on this study. We will not ask or record your name or other information about your identity, so your responses will remain anonymous. The questionnaires will be kept in a locked cabinet. When describing the findings from the survey, we will use only summary information and never any information about you specifically.

## **What if I have questions?**

The study is being conducted by <agency> in collaboration with <groups, including official groups>. If you have any questions you can contact <project director or principal investigator name and telephone number>. This study has been approved by <name of institutional review board>, which can be reached at <telephone number>.

**<IMPLEMENTING AGENCY LETTERHEAD>**

**<Project Director Name, Address, and Telephone Number>**

## **Virtual PLACE Form C Fact Sheet for Informed Consent to Participate in an Interview about Internet, Social Media, and Telephone Use**

**IRB Study #**

**Title of Study:** Priorities for Local AIDS Control Efforts (PLACE)

**Principal Investigators:**

- **<Name>**
- **<Phone Number>**

**Sponsor:**

**Introduction:**

This study has been approved by < > and the < > .

Your participation in this study is voluntary, and you may end your participation in the study at any time. Refusal to participate will involve no penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled, and you may discontinue participation at any time without penalty or loss of benefits.

This study involves research. The purpose of the research is to identify ways to improve HIV prevention and treatment programs to prevent more people from acquiring HIV. I would like to ask you a few questions to get some information necessary to develop and monitor the programs. I would like to ask you some questions about your behavior, including your sexual behavior. The interview should take 30 minutes of your time. Your name will not appear anywhere on the survey and I will not ask your name.

Some people feel anxious or embarrassed when asked questions about their behavior. Your participation is completely voluntary and you may decline to answer any specific question or completely refuse to participate. We would greatly appreciate your help in responding to these questions, even though we are not able to pay you anything.

**Confidentiality:**

All data obtained through the interview will be stored in a manner such that the information about individual respondents is kept strictly confidential.

Any information that links you to a specific site or that could be used to ascertain your identity will be kept strictly confidential by the study team.

If you have any questions about this research study, you can contact <name> at <telephone number>.

---

## CONSENT

By allowing the interviewer to mark an X in this box on my behalf, I certify that the nature and purpose, the potential benefits, and possible risks associated with participating in this survey have been explained to me.

**Put X in box:**

☐

**Signature of Interviewer:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

## APPENDIX C. WORKSHEETS

Worksheets are provided to document protocol decisions and to describe the rationale for the decisions. The cost of implementation is not treated as a critical factor in selecting where to implement Virtual PLACE and at what scale. We suggest developing the protocol that best aligns with country strategic information needs and local demand for the data. If funding is not available, the study can be scaled back or implemented in waves.

## Worksheet 1. National Steering Committee and Stakeholder Engagement

Name of organization	Individual representative name	Telephone number,,if interested in collaboration	National/ specific districts
<b>National Steering Committee chair</b>			
<b>National Steering Committee members</b>			
<b>Stakeholders: Government health/census/statistics sector</b>			
<b>Stakeholders: Other government/political sector</b>			
<b>Stakeholders: Commercial sector</b>			

Name of organization	Individual representative name	Telephone number,,if interested in collaboration	National/ specific districts
Stakeholders: Nongovernmental sector			
Stakeholders: Civil society advocacy			
Stakeholders: Donors			
Stakeholders: Political/religious groups			



## Worksheet 2. Stakeholder Consultation Decisions

	Options	Decision
<b>Populations of interest</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. MSM</li> <li>2. Female sex workers</li> <li>3. Transgender persons</li> <li>4. People who inject drugs</li> <li>5. Youth</li> <li>6. Other</li> </ol>	
<b>Typology of informants especially suited to social media</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. MSM social media users</li> <li>2. Female sex worker social media users</li> <li>3. Transgender persons social media users</li> <li>4. University/college students</li> <li>5. Other</li> </ol>	
<b>Social media sites typology</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. MSM websites</li> <li>2. WhatsApp</li> <li>3. Specific Facebook pages</li> <li>4. Sex worker websites</li> <li>5. Dating websites</li> <li>6. HIV treatment support sites</li> <li>7. Other</li> </ol>	



<https://www.measureevaluation.org/place>

**MEASURE** Evaluation

University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill  
123 West Franklin Street, Suite 330  
Chapel Hill, NC 27516 USA  
Phone: +1 919-445-9350

[measure@unc.edu](mailto:measure@unc.edu)

[www.measureevaluation.org](http://www.measureevaluation.org)

This publication was produced with the support of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) under the terms of MEASURE Evaluation cooperative agreement AID-OAA-L-14-00004. MEASURE Evaluation is implemented by the Carolina Population Center, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill in partnership with ICF International; John Snow, Inc.; Management Sciences for Health; Palladium; and Tulane University. Views expressed are not necessarily those of USAID or the United States government. TL-19-56  
ISBN: 978-1-64232-196-8

