

**Field  
implementation**

**Unique object and  
unique event multipliers  
operations manual**



**UCSF**



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Improving health and reducing inequities worldwide



## Unique object and unique event multipliers

# Unique object and unique event multipliers operations manual

A common objective of IBBS is to estimate the size of the key population where the survey is carried out. One approach to size estimation is the integration of multiplier methods with the activities of IBBS. In particular, the unique object and unique event multipliers entail contact with the key population.

This unique object and unique event multipliers operations manual is designed to guide project staff during the implementation of these population size estimation activities.

Using standard operating procedures will help ensure project staff understand their roles and responsibilities of the unique object distribution and unique event conduct. The manual also helps provide consistency across the cities where IBBS is being conducted.

We have used FSW as the example population for this manual, but it can be adapted for use with other key populations.

This manual provides

- Unique object procedures
- Unique event procedures
- Unique object and event forms

## How to use the manual

Review the manual during staff training to ensure understanding of roles and responsibilities. In addition, it is helpful for each staff member to carry a copy of the standard operating procedures with them while in the field.

- Any procedural changes should be documented in writing and attached to the standard operating procedures.
- Regular practice sessions and refresher courses help maintain quality of work.
- The field staff should be regularly given the opportunity to request clarifications about the implementation of the standard operating procedures.

GSI provides technical assistance (TA) in implementing IBBS. Please [visit our website and contact us](#) for trainings and TA.



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# Unique object and unique event multipliers

## Background

The purpose of the IBBS is to gather in-depth data that can be used to better understand characteristics and behaviors of FSW. The IBBS will provide important information on prevalence of HIV and risk behaviors in this population that will ultimately be used to develop appropriate prevention interventions. Specific objectives include

1. To estimate the prevalence of HIV and associated risk behaviors
2. To estimate the population size
3. To assess the use of and access to health and social welfare programs
4. Enhance the national capacity to conduct IBBS for key populations as a key component of a strengthened second generation national HIV surveillance system

The second objective above is to estimate the size of the key population. In the absence of a gold standard, such estimates are imprecise and prone to potential biases. The use of multiple methods strengthens confidence in estimates, provides upper and lower plausibility bounds, and reduces the likelihood that biases of any single method will substantially alter results. The present survey proposes a combination of approaches to produce multiple estimates of the key population sizes embedded within the proposed survey. The following size estimation methods may be used during the IBBS to estimate the size of the key population in the city where the survey is conducted: literature review, unique object multiplier, unique event multiplier, service multiplier, the wisdom of crowds, and census and enumeration. Many of the size estimations have been used elsewhere and are available in published literature.

This chapter describes operating procedures for unique object and unique event multiplier methods.

### Unique object multiplier

Procedures for unique object multipliers entail two basic steps

1. Distribution of a fixed number of memorable, unique objects (e.g., a bracelet) to members of the key population in the geographic areas

of the survey shortly (1-2 weeks) prior to the survey launch

2. Adding questions to the survey instrument asking about whether survey participants received the unique object. These questions are as follows
  - Over the past six months, did you receive an object similar to this I'm showing you?
  - Can you show me?
  - From whom did you receive this object?
  - Can you tell me how you received this object?
  - Can you tell me the place and city where you received it?

Using these two data sources, the multiplier method provides a population size estimate with the formula:  $N = n / p$

Where N is the estimated key population size, n is the total number of unique objects distributed in the survey location, and p is the proportion of the key population reporting in the survey questionnaire that they received the unique object.<sup>1</sup>

To strengthen accuracy and recall, the distribution will be done shortly before the launch of the survey and about 500 objects per survey location will be distributed by outreach workers who know how to find the key population. Outreach workers will wear distinctive clothing (e.g., t-shirts, red hat). Outreach workers will instruct the key population not to give the object to anyone else and they will keep a tally of how many objects they distributed each day.

### Unique event multiplier

Procedures for a unique event entail hosting a memorable event (e.g., a mobilization fair or a launching party for the IBBS) that records the number of unique key population individuals in attendance. Then, during the survey, all respondents are asked whether they attended the event. The number of the key population counted attending the event and the proportion reporting to have attended the event in the survey

<sup>1</sup> Please see *Field implementation, Population estimate worksheets in this Toolbox for a sample size calculation spreadsheet*



questionnaire provide the parameters for the same formula as the unique object multiplier above.

To strengthen accuracy and recall, the unique event will be conducted shortly before the launch of IBBS.

## Unique object

The unique object method involves the distribution of an object that is different, interesting and easy to remember and that the person may want to have and carry with her. Next, in the survey questionnaire, we ask the participant if s/he has received that object and if s/he can show it at the moment of the interview. Based on these answers, we use the above mathematical formula to calculate how many of the key population exist in each city.<sup>1</sup>

## Best practices

- Give the object only to those who meet eligibility criteria. If in doubt, do not give the object to the person
- Give only one object per person
- Make sure the person has not received the object before
- Tell the person to keep the object with them for 3 months
- Remind the person not to lose it or pass it onto someone else
- Tell the person who receives the object to remember later, during the survey, who she received the object from

## Distribution procedures

- The survey team develops a list of places and times the key population can be found (e.g.- bars, hotels, streets, stalls, etc.) and develop a distribution calendar (*Appendix A*)
- Community outreach workers (COWs) conduct the unique object distribution at selected places.
- Materials required
  - Backpack or purse with ~50 objects
  - Unique object distribution registration book

- 2 pens
- Survey t-shirt
- Money for transportation
- Cell phone with emergency contact numbers
- Personal ID
- A copy of the survey's credentials
- A copy of the narrative explaining the purpose of the survey and the object distribution.
- COWs go to the survey site and check that it is safe. If necessary, they should get permission from local authority or venue manager. They can do this by providing a copy of the narrative explaining the purpose of the survey and the object distribution.
- After the place has been deemed safe and permission has been obtained, COWs can begin to distribute objects
- Before approaching participants, COW fills in the first 4 columns of the unique object distribution registration book (*Appendix B*)
- Each COW approaches the nearest person who meets eligibility criteria show her the unique object and explain purpose.
  - If there is doubt about the person's eligibility, the COW should ask. **Do not give the object to just anyone!** Theoretically, it is more important that the person receiving the object truly be a member of the key population, than the total number of objects is given out.
- If the person meets the eligibility criteria mark the first column on the unique object distribution registration book
- COW asks if the person has ever received the object from someone wearing a project shirt
  - If the participant has ever received such object, make a mark on the 6th column on the book.
  - If not, offer her the object
    - If she accepts, mark the 7th column on the book
    - If she doesn't accept, mark the 8<sup>th</sup> column on the book



## Unique object and unique event multipliers

- After contacting all the members of the key population who fit the eligibility criteria in that location, write down the time that you finished the distribution in the 9<sup>th</sup> column

### Unique object distribution registration book

Each COW will have their own unique object distribution registration book. The registration book is used to calculate the quantity of objects distributed by each COW each day.

#### How to fill in the columns in the book

1. **Date:** Indicate the date of the distribution.
2. **Time distribution began:** Write down the time you are starting distribution in this location.
3. **Name of location:** Write down the name of the location where you are doing the distribution.
4. **Type of location:** Be as specific as possible about the location of distribution. ex: street corner, bar, party, hotel, pension, etc.
5. **# of FSW contacted who are eligible:** Place a tally mark for each woman who you contacted that is eligible. At the end of the day, add up all the tally marks and write the total number in the corresponding box.
6. **# of FSW who had previously received the object:** Place a tally mark for every woman contacted who said she had received the object before. At the end of the day, count the tally marks and write the total number in the corresponding box.
7. **# of FSW who accepted the object:** Place a mark for every woman contacted who accepted the object. At the end of the day, count the tally marks and write the total number in the corresponding box.
8. **# of FSW who refused the object:** Place a mark for every woman contacted who refused the object. At the end of the day, count the tally marks and write the total number in the corresponding box.
9. **End of distribution time:** Write down the time you finished distribution in that location.



## Unique event

The unique event method involves organizing a party, a fair or a show to record the number of the key population who participate in the event. Next, in the survey questionnaire, we ask participants if they attended the unique event. Based on those responses, we use the above mathematical formula to estimate how many of the key population exist in each city.<sup>1</sup> For this survey, we will hold a party for FSW where there will be a raffle and food and drinks.

## Unique event procedures

At the entrance to the event, one person stamps the hand of each person who enters. Two COWs count and record all people stamped at the entrance. (*Appendix C*) If a person enters who was already stamped, she will not be counted again.

Two other COWs ask questions and hand out tickets to the people who arrive at the event. All people who attend the event will be asked three questions in order to participate in the raffle and get a free sandwich and drink. There will be a total of 300 tickets and only the first 300 people who reply to the questions will receive tickets.

- COW stamps the hand, counts and records each person who enters the door
- Next, the person enters the area where COW conducts the short questionnaire and distributes tickets
- In this area, the COW greets the person and explains that she will receive a ticket, drink and sandwich and a chance to participate in the raffle for a gift if she answers 3 simple questions
  - If the person does NOT accept to answer the questions, she may enter the event, but is not given the tickets
  - If the person accepts, the COW will ask the following questions
    - How old are you?
    - Have you had sex in the last 6 months?
    - If yes, have you received money for sex in the last 6 months?
- For each person who answers the questions, regardless of the answers, the COW gives her

2 tickets and places the 3rd ticket in the raffle box

- The COW writes down the person's answers and coupon number in the unique event registration book (*Appendix D*)
- The COW explains that she can use one ticket to get a sandwich and a drink, and keep the other ticket for the raffle. COW emphasizes that she must pay attention at the time of the raffle, because if her number is called, she will win a prize and will have to hand over the ticket to collect it.

People who refuse to answer questions may participate in the event. They will not receive tickets, but if they want they can buy food and drink that is available for sale at the location of the event.



## Unique object and unique event multipliers

### Appendix A: Unique object distribution list

No.	Name of location	Type of location	Hours frequented by the key population
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			
6			





## Unique object and unique event multipliers

### Appendix C: Unique event counter

	COW 1	COW 2	Supervisor signature
<b>Name</b>			
<b>Date</b>			
<b>21:00 - 22:00</b>			
<b>22:00 - 23:00</b>			
<b>23:00 - 24:00</b>			
<b>24:00 - 1:00</b>			
<b>1:00 - 2:00</b>			
<b>2:00 - 3:00</b>			
<b>TOTAL</b>			



## Appendix D: Unique event registration book

No.	Age	Have you had sex from March to August this year?	Have you ever had sex for money from March to August this year?	No. of the ticket
1		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> No answer	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> No answer	
2		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> No answer	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> No answer	
3		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> No answer	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> No answer	
4		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> No answer	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> No answer	
5		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> No answer	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> No answer	
6		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> No answer	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> No answer	
7		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> No answer	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> No answer	
8		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> No answer	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> No answer	
9		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> No answer	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> No answer	
10		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> No answer	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> No answer	
11		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> No answer	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> No answer	
12		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> No answer	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> No answer	
13		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> No answer	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> No answer	
14		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> No answer	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> No answer	
15		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> No answer	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> No answer	

