

The National Academies of **SCIENCES • ENGINEERING • MEDICINE**

Committee on the Evaluation of Strengthening Human Resources for Health Capacity in the Republic of Rwanda Under the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR)

The National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine (the National Academies) has been tasked by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to evaluate and document PEPFAR's investments in human resources for health (HRH) in Rwanda. The task of the evaluation is to understand how the CDC PEPFAR funded Ministry of Health (MOH) HRH Program (funded 2012 – 2017) affected morbidity and mortality outcomes for people living with HIV (PLHIV).

To achieve this aim, using a participatory approach which seeks the views and assessments of relevant stakeholders, the evaluation will, to the extent feasible, specifically address the following:

1. Describe PEPFAR investments in HRH in Rwanda over time, including its support for MOH's efforts to address HRH needs as well as the broader context in which these investments were made.
2. Describe PEPFAR supported HRH activities in Rwanda in relation to programmatic priorities, outputs and outcomes.
3. Examine the impact of PEPFAR funding for the HRH Program on HRH outcomes and on patient or population level HIV-related outcomes. This will include comparing national and subnational HIV incidence and prevalence and HIV related morbidity and mortality before PEPFAR-HRH Program implementation to during and after PEPFAR-HRH Program implementation, using data from baseline and repeat HIV surveys as well as other available data sources.
4. Provide recommendations to inform future HRH investments that support PLHIV and advance PEPFAR's mission.

A study committee composed of 14 volunteer members appointed by the National Academies, together with study staff and evaluation consultants, have developed an evaluation plan to achieve the aims described above. The resulting evaluation protocol has been approved by the Rwanda National Ethics Committee, the National Academies' Committee to Review Studies on Human Subjects, and the CDC Associate Director for Science.

The study team will gather evidence from publicly available sources, including two public events in Rwanda in December 2018 and May 2019. In addition, the National Academies has contracted with EnCompass LLC, a non-profit specializing in mixed-methods evaluations, to collect and analyze primary qualitative and secondary quantitative data beginning in May 2019. The committee will review and interpret the information gathered and author a report of findings, conclusions, and recommendations that is expected to be released publicly in May 2020.

The study committee is chaired by Dr. Ann Kurth, Dean and the Linda Koch Lorimer Professor of Nursing at Yale Nursing School. Members have expertise in health workforce evaluation; mixed methods research; HIV/AIDS and tuberculosis clinical care and service delivery; health care quality; epidemiology; biostatistics; health economics; health services research; and gender and children's issues.

More information about the study, study committee, and study staff and consultants can be viewed on the project website: <http://www.nationalacademies.org/hrhrwanda>. For questions about the study, please email study staff at rwandahrhstudy@nas.edu.

About the United States National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine

For more than 150 years, the U.S. [National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine](#) (The National Academies) have provided independent, objective analysis and advice to solve complex problems and inform public policy decisions. Originally formed by an 1863 congressional charter under President Lincoln, the National Academies now comprise the National Academy of Sciences, the National Academy of Engineering, and the National Academy of Medicine (formerly called the Institute of Medicine).

The National Academies carry out consensus studies and other convening activities through program units. This study is being conducted by the Health and Medicine Division (HMD). Many of the studies that HMD undertakes are requested by U.S. federal agencies or independent organizations; others begin as specific mandates from the U.S. Congress. In addition to consensus committees, HMD also convenes forums, roundtables, standing committees, and other activities to facilitate discussion, discovery, and critical, cross-disciplinary thinking. Each year, more than 3,000 individuals volunteer their time, knowledge, and expertise to advance health through the work of HMD.

The National Academies' Consensus Study Process

The National Academies perform a unique public service by bringing together leading U.S. and international experts from across disciplines to review evidence with fresh eyes and with an openness to insights from other fields. Consensus studies are conducted by a committee selected and appointed based on their knowledge and experience. These experts serve without compensation as volunteers and are asked to set aside preconceptions and rely on evidence to provide unbiased advice to address critical issues. Committee members are vetted for possible or perceived conflicts of interest and they serve as individuals, not as representatives of organizations or interest groups.

Each committee gathers information from a range of sources to investigate the many facets of the question specifically described in its task and deliberates to reach a shared understanding of what the evidence reveals and the best path forward. The committee develops a consensus report of its findings, conclusions, and recommendations.

The National Academies study process is designed to protect the integrity and independence of the committee's work and to shield committee deliberations from influence by sponsors and special interests, who also do not review the committee's report prior to its public release as a final document. Each report undergoes rigorous peer review to ensure that its advice is grounded in the best available evidence and in objective analysis and interpretation of that evidence. This provides policy makers and other audiences assurance that the report's findings, conclusions, and recommendations reflect the evidence and the combined expertise of the science, engineering, and medical communities.