



## **Terms of Reference: Consultancy to develop a simplified guide for Mama Siri continuous learning**

### **Introduction**

This Ability Trust is a women-led nonprofit organization whose mission is to advance the sexual reproductive health and rights of women and girls with disabilities in Kenya and across the region. We envision a society in which women and girls with disabilities have access to quality dignified healthcare with their rights respected and upheld. Our model focuses on leveraging various forms of technology to increase access to sexual reproductive healthcare services and information, build the capacities of healthcare providers on disability rights and inclusive healthcare and collect disaggregated data to inform and strengthen collective multi stakeholder advocacy on sexual reproductive health for women and girls with disabilities in Kenya.

### **Background**

Globally, women and girls with disabilities face a multitude of challenges in accessing information and services related to Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) and experiencing Gender-Based Violence (GBV). Women and girls with disabilities experience a dual impact of discrimination due to their gender and disability status. This intersectionality places them in a particularly vulnerable position within society. They may be seen as dependent, incapable, or a burden, which can exacerbate their risk of violence. The physical and social barriers faced by women and girls with disabilities, such as inaccessible environments and limited mobility, often lead to social isolation. This isolation may make them more dependent on caregivers, potentially increasing their vulnerability to abuse. In addition, some women and girls with disabilities may face challenges in communication, making it difficult for them to report or seek help when they experience violence. This can be especially true for those with intellectual or communication disabilities.

The UN Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (the mechanism that supervises the implementation of the CRPD) has pointed out that the main reasons for concern are violence, health and sexual/reproductive rights, and discrimination. It has also shown strong concern about the effects of multiple discrimination and other matters linked directly to violence, including the right to life, sexual violence, forced sterilization, female genital mutilation, sexual and economic exploitation, and forced institutionalization.<sup>1</sup>

### **Problem Statement**

Women with disabilities in Kenya face challenges when trying to access Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) services. Many health facilities lack features that make them accessible, such as ramps, elevators, and accessible bathrooms. This can make it difficult or impossible for women with mobility impairments to even enter the building. Healthcare workers often have limited knowledge and understanding of the specific needs of women with disabilities. This leads to insensitive communication, a lack of awareness of different disabilities, and difficulty providing appropriate care. Information on

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.ohchr.org/en/treaty-bodies/crpd>



SRHR is often not available in formats that are accessible to women with disabilities, such as Braille, sign language, or audio recordings. Women with disabilities also experience stigma and discrimination from both healthcare providers and the community which in turn makes them feel uncomfortable or ashamed to seek out SRHR services. SRHR services, like contraception or prenatal care, can be expensive. This can be a particular burden for women with disabilities who already have limited income or employment opportunities.

These barriers can have a serious impact on the health and well-being of women with disabilities. They may lead to unwanted pregnancies, unsafe abortions, sexually transmitted infections, and a lack of knowledge about their bodies and sexuality.<sup>2</sup>

Gender-Based Violence (GBV) is a pervasive and deeply rooted issue that affects individuals' worldwide, transcending cultural, economic, social and geographic boundaries. Many gaps and challenges exist that negatively affect the capacity and ability to access justice for the violations experienced by the women and girls with disabilities. These gaps and challenges exist at the family, community and institutional levels.

Women with disabilities encounter barriers in seeking information and support related to their sexual and reproductive health. This includes challenges in accessing family planning resources, comprehensive<sup>3</sup> sexuality education, safe pregnancy and childbirth services, and assistance for issues such as sexually transmitted infections (STIs) and gender-based violence. The lack of a centralized, confidential, and user-friendly platform exacerbates these challenges, resulting in gaps in knowledge and care.

### **Justification**

Due to stigma and other societal norms, women and girls with disabilities are often viewed as asexual. As a result, women and girls with disabilities are commonly left out of sexual and reproductive health rights policy and programming. To address this critical gap, This Ability Trust established Mama Siri. This dedicated helpline aims to serve as a confidential, easily accessible, and survivor-centered resource for reporting incidents of GBV, providing SRHR referrals and support, connecting survivors to comprehensive services such as counseling, medical assistance, legal aid, and safe shelter.

Mama Siri offers women a confidential and immediate channel to seek support, guidance, and information regarding Sexual and Reproductive Health (SRH) and Gender-Based Violence (GBV). The anonymity provided by toll-free hotlines encourages women and girls with disabilities to reach out for help without fear of judgment. It serves as a reliable source of information on SRH and GBV issues, providing women with disabilities with accurate and up-to-date information about reproductive health, family planning, and ways to prevent and address gender-based violence. In addition, women with disabilities experiencing crises related to SRH or GBV can access timely intervention through the toll-free number and immediate assistance, referrals to support services, and crisis management strategies.

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<sup>2</sup> <https://nation.africa/kenya/health/healthcare-barriers-that-women-with-disabilities-face-4328962>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.this-ability.org/mama-siri/>



Mama Siri also plays a crucial role in educating women about their sexual and reproductive health rights, as well as providing awareness campaigns to prevent GBV. This contributes to empowering women and girls with disabilities with knowledge and promoting healthier communities. Mama Siri serves to ensure accessibility, especially for women in remote or rural areas where access to SRH and GBV support services may be limited. It bridges the gap by offering assistance to those who might otherwise face geographical barriers. By providing information and resources, Mama Siri contributes to the prevention of SRH issues and GBV.

The Mama Siri toll-free SRHR and GBV helpline for women and girls with disabilities is a vital resource in promoting health, safety, and rights. By providing accessible, confidential, and supportive services, the service aims to empower women and girls with disabilities to take control of their health and well-being, and to seek help when needed. The Mama Siri guide shall serve as a comprehensive resource to ensure the effective implementation and operation of this essential service.

By understanding the diverse needs women and girls with disabilities have, related to communication, comprehension, or processing information, a simplified guide ensures clear and concise instructions, presented in an accessible format (easy-to-read font, use of symbols or pictograms) to effectively reach all Mama Siri. The guide shall be adaptable for Mama Siri to cater to diverse disabilities.

#### **Overall Objective:**

- To create a simplified guide that shall strengthen the knowledge and capacities of Mama Siri to undertake her daily tasks effectively.

#### **Deliverables.**

- Review the existing content then prepare the Facilitators Guide content from the existing curriculum and session plans.
- Develop a detailed outline for the Facilitators guide.
- Regular consultations with Mama Siri
- Have periodical meetings with This Ability team to provide feedback and progress reports
- Submit and present the final version of the comprehensive simplified guide in word format and powerpoint presentation summary.
- Training of Mama Siri upon completion

#### **Requirements:**

- An Advanced degree in Social sciences, Education, Development studies, Disability studies, Public health or related field.



- At least ten years of proven experience in the development of user-friendly educational and training materials
- Knowledge of the local Kenyan social context including the cultural and socio-economic factors affecting women and girls with disabilities.
- Experience in gender and disability, working with women with disabilities is an advantage.
- Demonstrated experience in developing resources, particularly engaging and effective educational guides tailored to persons with disabilities.
- Strong analytical and research skills for reviewing and synthesizing existing curriculum content.
- Strong project management skills, including the ability to meet deadlines, manage iterative feedback processes, and deliver high-quality, polished products.
- Should have strong empathy and ability to communicate in Swahili to be able to efficiently interact and consult with Mama Siri during the weekly update meetings.

### **How to apply:**

Please send your expression of interest to [consultant@this-ability.org](mailto:consultant@this-ability.org) on or before 15th September 2024. Late applications will not be accepted.

N.B. Qualified women with disabilities are encouraged to apply.

### **Exclusion clauses**

1. *This Ability Trust has zero tolerance for corruption and fraud. You are required to go through the anti-bribery policy to get a better understanding of this and the other policies that the Trust's operations focus on.*
2. *This Ability Trust has a zero-tolerance policy against sexual harassment. The Trust makes available annual sexual harassment prevention and response training for all supervisors, managers, and Contractors. You are required to go through the Safeguarding policy*
3. *The Trust affirms its established policy of non-discrimination in employment and its commitment to affirmative action in being an equal opportunity employer, particularly in the employment of women with disabilities.*
4. *This Ability Trust reserves the right to offer comparable assignments to those qualified candidates that may not have been selected for this consultancy assignment which they applied for. These offers will be based on the needs of the organization, appropriateness and relevance to the candidate's educational backgrounds and work experience. Only those candidates in whose qualifications and experience the Trust has further interest will be contacted for subsequent interviews.*