**TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR**

**Capacity Needs Assessment for Young Women with Disabilities**

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## 1. BACKGROUND

In 2021, approximately 1.3 billion people globally or 16 per cent of the population have disability, according to the latest data on disability published by the World Health Organization (WHO), compared to 15 per cent a decade ago. The increase is said to be due to population increase and more people with non-communicable diseases living longer.[1] About 80 per cent of the global population of persons with disabilities live in developing countries. It is estimated that over 180 million persons with disabilities live in Africa and *vast majority face extreme levels of poverty, marginalization, and abuse*.[2] *A recent analysis of survey data by World Bank Group in 2021, from a sample of countries in Sub-Saharan Africa highlighted the following key messages emerging from the analysis of the data on disability:*

- The most prevalent disabilities are impairments to mobility, concentration, and vision. Visual impairments are the most commonly reported disability type
- The prevalence of disability is higher in rural areas than in urban areas
- Women experience higher rates of disability than men. This may be due to pre-existing lack of equal protections and rights for women, the risks associated with pregnancy and childbirth, and women's exposure to intimate partner violence.
- The likelihood that someone reports an impairment, generally increases as people age.
- Persons with disabilities have a lower level of educational attainment compared to their counterparts, as schools frequently lack resources and access to accommodate children with disabilities who then exit the formal education system.
- There are limited economic opportunities in the formal job market for persons with disabilities. Participation in the labour market is a major challenge for them. Primary

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[1] World Health Organization, 2022. Global report on health equity of persons with disabilities. https://www.who.int/teams/noncommunicable-diseases/sensory-functions-disability-and-rehabilitation/global-report-on-health-equity-for-persons-with-disabilities

[2] World Report on Disability http://www.who.int/disabilities/world_report/2011/report.pdf

barriers include discriminatory attitudes, absence of enabling policy ground and lack of accommodation on the part of employers.

There is growing recognition that women with disabilities experience "double discrimination" on the basis of both gender and disability. Most of the highlighted challenges are felt acutely by women and girls with disabilities as they face multiple and intersectional forms of discrimination on account of gender and disability.[3] Women experience higher rates of disability than men. This may be due to pre-existing lack of equal protections and rights for women, the risks associated with pregnancy and childbirth, and women's exposure to intimate partner violence as well as harmful traditional practices such as female genital mutilation.

Traditional and cultural beliefs depreciate the value of women and girls with disabilities in families and in society. They are often considered of little value, tend to suffer from neglect within their family and community, and are far more at risk of violence, abuse and exploitation. Indeed, women with disabilities are twice as likely, and girls with disabilities are up to four times more likely, to be affected by violence than their peers without disabilities.[4] Rights violations also include the right to family, education, employment, political participation, birth registration, social protection, health and access to justice.[5]

The African Disability Forum (ADF) is a continental membership organization of Organizations of Persons with Disabilities (OPDs) committed to amplify the voices and rights of persons with disabilities across Africa.
ADF implemented a project focusing on women with disabilities. The Young African Women with Disabilities Leadership Program is a regional, hybrid
capacity-building initiative to empower young African women with disabilities. The Program runed over eight months of contact and virtual spaces and includes women with all types of disabilities and intersecting identities, fostering self-confidence and Competence. The first cohort included 16 young women with disabilities from 16 African countries and ran from 2022 to 2023.
Cognizant of the work undertaken previously, the project supported by Disabled People of Denmark aims at strategically positioning of the gender interventions in the disability movement and in the development programs of Africa.  One of the activities incorporated in the project is to conduct an assessment on the capacity needs assessment of young women with disabilities.

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[3] USAID. 2016. 'Advancing Women and Girls with Disabilities'. https://www.usaid.gov/what-we-do/gender-equality-and-womens-empowerment/women-disabilities

[4] The Lancet (2012) 'Addressing Violence Against Women: A Call to Action' and UNICEF (2013), 'The State of the World's Children: Children with Disabilities'.

[5] IDA submission to the CEDAW Committee's General Discussion on Rural Women October 2013, 56th session

In line with this, ADF intends to undertake a capacity needs assessment in four selected African countries, one from each of its four sub-regional federations: Eastern Africa Federation of the Disabled (EAFOD), Central Africa Federation of Persons with Disabilities (CAFOD), West Africa Federation of Persons with Disabilities (WAFOD), and Southern Africa Federation of the Disabled (SAFOD).
The assessment will generate evidence to inform targeted and gender-responsive capacity development interventions that strengthen leadership and meaningful participation within OPDs and beyond. Findings will also support future ADFs' program planning and advocacy.

## 2. Objectives

The overall objective of the consultancy is to identify and analyze the capacity strengths, gaps, priorities and support needs of young women with disabilities in four selected African countries (Kenya, Botswana, Tchad and Niger) and develop evidence-based recommendations and a practical capacity development framework to strengthen their leadership, advocacy skills, economic empowerment and meaningful participation in OPDs and decision-making processes.

Specifically:

- Assess knowledge, skills, experiences and competencies in leadership, advocacy, disability rights and organizational participation.
- Identify the root causes of individual, organizational, institutional and systemic barriers to meaningful participation and leadership.
- Examine access and barriers to capacity development, mentoring, professional networks, information and resources.
- Identify priority needs in leadership, advocacy, communication, economic empowerment, digital literacy, project management and resource mobilization.
- Assess opportunities to participate in decision-making structures of national and sub-regional OPD federations.
- Document good practices, resources and initiatives for adaptation across the four sub-regions.
- Develop practical recommendations and a prioritized capacity development action plan.

# 3. Scope of Work

## 3.1 Geographical Scope

The assessment will be conducted in four countries, with one country selected from each of the following sub-regions:

| Sub-region | Federation | Country |
|---|---|---|
| Eastern Africa | EAFOD | Kenya |
| Central Africa | CAFOD | Tchad |
| Western Africa | WAFOD | Niger |
| Southern Africa | SAFOD | Botswana |

## 3.2 Target Groups

The primary target group will be young women with disabilities aged 18–35 years, including young women with different types of disabilities, backgrounds and experiences.

The assessment should ensure representation of:

- Young women with physical, sensory, intellectual and psychosocial disabilities.
- Young women with multiple disabilities, including deafblindness.
- Young women with disabilities from rural and urban communities.
- Young women with disabilities involved in OPDs, as well as those not currently participating in disability organizations.
- Young women with disabilities with different educational, employment and socioeconomic backgrounds.

Secondary respondents may include representatives of national umbrella federations or their members and sub-regional OPDs, women-led disability organizations, youth networks, relevant government institutions, development partners and capacity development providers.

## 3.3 Thematic Areas

The assessment should examine the following interconnected areas:

**A. Leadership and meaningful participation**

- Leadership competencies, confidence and decision-making skills.
- Representation in OPD governance and management structures.
- Opportunities to influence organizational priorities.
- Mentorship and networking.

**B. Human rights knowledge and advocacy**

- Understanding of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), the African Disability Protocol and other relevant frameworks.
- Advocacy, policy analysis and engagement with human rights mechanisms.
- Public speaking, negotiation, communication and coalition-building.

**C. Organizational and professional capacities**

- Project development, planning and management.
- Resource mobilization and proposal writing.
- Financial literacy and basic budgeting.
- CRPD Inclusive budget analysis.
- Monitoring, evaluation, accountability and learning.
- Digital literacy and effective use of accessible technologies.

**D. Economic empowerment and livelihoods**

- Access to education, vocational training and employment.
- Entrepreneurship and business development skills.
- Access to financial services and economic opportunities.
- Barriers to dignified work and economic independence.

**E. Gender equality, inclusion and protection**

- Gender and disability-related discrimination.
- Awareness of sexual and reproductive health and rights.
- Safeguarding, protection from violence and access to support services.
- Reasonable accommodation, accessibility and other support requirements.

**F. Access to capacity development opportunities**

- Availability and accessibility of existing training programs.
- Preferred training formats, languages and communication methods.
- Availability of mentoring, peer learning and professional networks.
- Individual and institutional support required for sustained participation.

# 4. Methodology

The consultant will adopt a participatory, gender-responsive, disability-inclusive and rights-based approach, combining desk review, questionnaires and key informant interviews to undertake the work effectively.

## 4.1 Desk Review

The consultant will review relevant ADF program documents, national disability policies and other available literature to identify existing capacities, gaps and opportunities for young women with disabilities.

## 4.2 Questionnaires

Structured questionnaires will be administered to approximately 25 young women with disabilities in each of the four selected countries. The questionnaires will assess existing knowledge and skills, leadership experiences, barriers to participation, training needs and preferred capacity development approaches.

The questionnaires will be made available in accessible formats and appropriate languages.

## 4.3 Key Informant Interviews

The consultant will conduct approximately 5 key informant interviews per country with selected young women with disabilities, representatives of OPDs, women's disability networks and other relevant stakeholders.

## 4.4 Data Analysis and Validation

The consultant will analyze the quantitative and qualitative information collected, identifying capacity gaps, country-specific priorities, existing strengths and opportunities for capacity development.

Preliminary findings will be shared with ADF and Sub region members for review and validation, including opportunities for young women with disabilities to provide direct feedback.

# 5. Deliverables

The consultant will be responsible for producing the following deliverables:

- ***Inception report*** – Detailed methodology, sampling approach, assessment framework, data collection tools and work plan.
- ***Data collection tools*** - Accessible questionnaires, interview guides and consent forms.

- ***Four country assessment briefs*** – Country-specific findings, strengths, capacity gaps, barriers and priority recommendations both in English and French.
- ***Consolidated assessment reports*** - Comparative analysis of findings from the four countries, including emerging trends and good practices both in English and French.
- ***Final assessment report including capacity development action plan with indicative financial resources in both languages.***

## 6. Duration

The assignment is expected to be completed within **six weeks** from the date of contract signature.

## 7. Roles and Responsibilities

### 7.1 African Disability Forum

ADF will:

- Provide overall coordination and technical oversight.
- Facilitate engagement with the four sub-regional federations.
- Provide relevant institutional documents and background information.
- Review and approve the inception report, methodology and final deliverables.
- Facilitate validation of the findings.

### 7.2 Sub-regional Federations and National Umbrella Federations OPDs

Participating federations and OPDs will:

- Facilitate identification of eligible participants.
- Support contextual adaptation of the assessment tools.
- Assist with accessible and inclusive data collection arrangements.
- Participate in validation of findings.

### 7.3 Consultant / Consulting Team

The consultant will:

- Engage French speaking team members to undertake the work.

- Develop and implement the assessment methodology.
- Ensure inclusive and ethical data collection.
- Coordinate with ADF and participating partners.
- Analyze findings and identify actionable capacity priorities.
- Prepare and submit all agreed deliverables.

## 8. Qualifications

The assignment may be undertaken by an individual consultant or a consulting team with demonstrated expertise in disability inclusion, gender equality, youth empowerment and organizational capacity development.

The consultant or lead consultant should possess:

- An advanced university degree/Masters in social sciences, development studies, gender studies, human rights or a related field.
- At least five years of relevant professional experience conducting capacity assessments, participatory research or program evaluations.
- Demonstrated experience working with women and young persons with disabilities.
- Strong understanding of the CRPD, the African Disability Protocol, the Maputo Protocol and relevant African human rights mechanisms.
- Experience developing capacity development frameworks and action plans.
- Proven skills in mixed-methods research, stakeholder consultation and report writing.
- Familiarity with the African disability movement and OPD structures.
- Strong English communication and report-writing skills. French proficiency or access to qualified French-speaking team members is mandatory.

**Consultants with disabilities, particularly women with disabilities, are strongly encouraged to apply.**

## 9. Safeguarding, Ethics and Accessibility

The assessment must adhere to the principles of dignity, autonomy, non-discrimination, accessibility, confidentiality and meaningful participation.

The consultant will be required to:

- Provide safe space, obtain informed and voluntary consent from all participants.
- Provide information in accessible formats and appropriate languages.
- Avoid collecting unnecessary sensitive personal information.
- Ensure secure storage, restricted access and appropriate disposal of personal data.

- Report findings in anonymized form and avoid identifying individuals without explicit consent.
- Ensure that young women with disabilities participate in the interpretation and validation of findings.

Where sensitive protection concerns arise, the consultant should immediately contact ADF's safeguarding focal point.

## 10. Mode of Payment

The contract payment shall be as indicated below:

a) 10 percent of the agreed amount upon signing of the contract agreement

b) 90 percent after completing all the tasks and Approved by ADF

## 11. Expression of Interest and Submission of Proposals

Interested consultants or consulting teams should submit proposals in TWO (2) separate documents/attachments:

- **Technical Proposal, including**: (i) a written expression of interest responding to this ToR, with the proposed assessment approach and methodology and disability-inclusive data collection approach; (ii) a detailed work plan and timeframe; (iii) the CV(s) of the Lead Consultant and any proposed team members, highlighting relevant experience in disability and/or gender assessment; (iv) at least three contactable references for similar assignments; (v) a sample of previous, comparable assessment work; and (vi) a disclosure of any actual or potential conflict of interest.
- **Financial Proposal**, presenting a detailed and comprehensive budget inclusive of all fees, costs and applicable taxes.

Proposals should be submitted electronically to the ADF HR (jobs@adf-secretariat.org) quoting the subject line " *Capacity Needs Assessment for Young Women with Disabilities* ", by **17h00 (EAT) on 3rd December 2026.**

## 13. Evaluation of Proposals

Proposals will be evaluated:

***Technical Evaluation***

The technical proposal will be scored out of 70 points.

| Criteria | Points allocated |
|---|---|
| Quality of proposal, and appropriateness of the proposed capacity needs assessment approach, methodology responding to the ToR (including work plan and timeframe). | 20 |
| Consultant(s) experience in conducting capacity needs assessments for disability, gender or rights-based advocacy programmes as well as developing capacity development frameworks and action plans. | 20 |
| Qualifications of the Consultant(s), including demonstrated expertise in disability inclusion, gender equality, youth empowerment and organizational capacity development. | 25 |
| Sample/evidence of previous similar consultancy work. | 5 |

***Financial Evaluation***

Financial proposals of suppliers will be scored out of 30 points.