

Understanding the factors affecting access and utilization of Sexual and Reproductive Health Services among Persons with Disability in Nepal.

Request for Proposals

Deadline for Submission of Proposal: *19 August 2020*

Estimated date for award of contract: *25 August 2020*

Research, Monitoring and Evaluation
Evidence to Action Department
Sunaulo Parivar Nepal
Implementing partner of Marie Stopes International

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1. Organizational overview

Marie Stopes International (MSI)

Marie Stopes International (MSI), a registered charity, is a global Sexual and Reproductive Health (SRH) service providing organization registered in 1973 in United Kingdom. It works in close partnership with local non-government organizations (NGOs) in different countries, providing technical and managerial support for increasing access and utilization of quality FP/SRH services with a mission of enabling people to have children by choice not chance. MSI is a not-for-profit SRH organization that uses modern business methods to achieve the social goal of preventing unintended pregnancies and unplanned births in 37 countries worldwide. MSI works in Nepal in partnership with Sunaulo Parivar Nepal (SPN), a local not-for-profit NGO, since 1994.

Sunaulo Parivar Nepal (SPN)

SPN, established in 1994, is a Nepali NGO, an implementing partner of MSI. SPN provides a wide range of services to meet the SRH needs of the men, women and young people of Nepal. We are increasing awareness and understanding of SRH with increasing access to affordable quality services to prevent unwanted births. SPN uses an advocacy-based approach to support people in exercising their fundamental SRH rights, particularly targeting underserved, marginalized and hard to reach populations.

The goal of SPN is to ensure every birth is wanted amongst all segments of the population including poor, marginalized and vulnerable communities. SPN has been managing static Marie Stopes centres to provide full range of SRH services, comprehensive mobile family planning (FP) camps, contraceptive commercial sales, a reproductive health training centre and a youth friendly service centre.

2. Study Rationale

While there is great commitment to reducing unmet need for FP and improving sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR), the 2016 Nepal Demographic Health Survey shows insufficient progress toward achieving Nepal's SDG and FP2020 commitments. Both the mCPR and the unmet need for family planning have stagnated over the last decade. In order to address this lack of reduction in unmet need, it is necessary to explore the marginalized and vulnerable groups that have consistently not been included in SRH and health programs and policies in general. Once such group that research has shown to struggle with access to family planning services are persons with disabilities. MSI has always been keen to design disability inclusive FP programs in alignment with the "leave no one behind" pillar of the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals. It has been noted that persons with disabilities are at a disadvantage regarding most indicators in the SDG. While the challenges faced by persons with disabilities is documented in the literature, this study aims to understand the crucial challenges faced in the two provinces where the program will be implemented and recommend practical solutions for defining and implementing disability inclusive SRH programming.

The World Health Organization (WHO) and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) estimates approximately 15% of the world's population live with a disability¹. The Nepal 2011 census, which is considered the most representative national data, reported that approximately 2%, of the Nepalese population have a disability, distributed almost equally among men & women. Of those disabled, more than one-third of the disabled populations have physical disability followed by almost one-fifth with blindness/low vision². A review by UNICEF of disability in Nepal in 2018 concludes that given the WHO estimate of global disability prevalence and the prevalence rates from district specific studies that ranged from 3 %to 13%, the disability prevalence in the census is an underestimation even though differences in methodology also contribute to the variance. The report further recommends that along with more accurate higher quality disability prevalence data smaller studies are equally necessary to identify specific challenges faced by persons with disability and develop suitable interventions³.

Person with disabilities are amongst the most marginalized and poorest groups and are often overlooked or neglected within society and by Government and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) in policy and program implementation despite having the same SRH education and service needs as those without disabilities if not greater due to their vulnerability to abuse¹. A 2015 study by CREHPA among female persons with disability showed that 21% had experienced some form of sexual violence⁴. persons with disability face many challenges to accessing SRH information and services including social and cultural assumptions regarding sexuality and sexual needs of persons with disability, discrimination, lack of accessible information and communication materials, service infrastructure and negative provider attitudes¹. Furthermore, persons with disability are at greater risk of being denied the right to make decisions for themselves including their reproductive rights.

Programs aiming to improve SRH access among persons with disability need to develop targeted interventions to address their specific needs and facilitate access to information and services. The challenges faced also differ by the type of disability and needs to be considered. To develop targeted interventions, a better understanding of the specific domains of challenges faced by persons with disability in accessing SRH services is required. With a programmatic focus on province 2 and 3, this study aims to explore the knowledge, attitudes and practices (KAP) regarding SRH among persons with disability and provide a deeper assessment of their needs and barriers in accessing SRH services.

Given the unprecedented circumstances brought about by the COVID 19 pandemic and the consequent lockdown which has affected access to all health services including SRH. The literature shows that marginalized population such as persons with disability are disproportionately affected in terms of access to services. This study will also explore the effects of the pandemic and lockdown on access to SRH services in the study provinces.

With the above aim, MSI/SPN is looking for reputable Research Firm (RF) with familiarity and experience in conducting research on SRH and disability to conduct the study on our behalf.

General Objective:

To explore the barriers and facilitators to access to SRH information and services among persons with disability in Province 2 and 3, Nepal, and generate practical recommendations for inclusive SRH programming.

Specific Objectives:

1. To assess knowledge of SRH and access to information.
2. To assess the attitudes toward family planning among persons with disability and their experiences with SRH related stigma and discrimination.
3. To identify access to and utilization of SRH services among persons with disability
4. To assess decision making power and influences among persons with disability in their health care seeking choices
5. To generate practical recommendations for defining and implementing inclusive SRH programming.

3. Study Details**I. Study design:**

The interested firm is expected to propose a study design based on the objectives defined above to collect primary data using quantitative and qualitative approaches as appropriate. The firm is expected to propose relevant tools for measuring disability and SRH related indicators with rationale for selection.

In addition, the firm should propose sampling techniques/procedure and calculate sample size powered to measure the main outcomes with reasonable margin of error, taking into account the study population, sampling frame, and any other relevant considerations. The study is designed to get information from persons with disabilities in 2 provinces and not intended to be a nationally representative sample. Firms are requested to propose their sampling strategy in detail including a justification of why their methodology is best suited for the objectives of the study. Firms are urged to consider a stratified sampling approach to ensure a good distribution of respondents based on relevant characteristics.

II. Study area:

The study is focussed on gathering information from persons with disability in Province 2 and Bagmati Province with a view that the findings will assist with designing MSI's interventions in those districts to improve FP access and utilization among persons with disability. The RF is expected to propose study sites and clusters within the study area and the rationale and procedure used for selection.

4. Scope of Work (SoW)

The RF will be responsible to carry out the study on behalf of the Evidence to Action (E2A) Department with the work to be completed by 31st October 2020. The main responsibilities of the RF will include:

- I. **Conduct Literature review:** The RF will conduct a review of the body of evidence regarding Family Planning needs and knowledge, attitudes and practices relating to SRH in persons with disability

using available literature (including manuscripts, program reports and project documents) and secondary data (DHS and HMIS data).

- II. **Develop proposal for study and obtain ethical approval from Nepal Health Research Council:** The RF will be responsible for putting together a proposal for the study with oversight from the E2A dept at SPN. The proposal should include all the information required to obtain ethical approval from the NHRC including detailed plan regarding the sampling strategy, complete study tools and other ethical requirements. The RF is responsible for presenting the proposal to NHRC and responding to reviewer comments with input and approval from MSI/SPN.
- III. **Lead the development of study tools:** The RF will lead the development of data collection tools including any quantitative structured questionnaire and IDI or FGD guides as appropriate. They will also develop monitoring tools and mechanisms for checking and maintaining data quality.
- IV. **Data collection:** The RF is responsible for hiring, training, mobilization and management of data collectors. They are also required to develop field monitoring and supervision plans for the data collectors, mechanisms for data quality checks and provide reports based on monitoring visits to MSI/SPN on an agreed upon frequency.
- V. **Data Analysis and development of recommendations - presentation of preliminary report and submission of final report:** The RF must undertake data analysis including data cleaning, transcription and translation, data analysis and present key findings and practical recommendations to the team before preparing a comprehensive report in consultation with the E2A department and submitting it by the end of the study duration.
- VI. **Dissemination:** The RF is also responsible for leading the dissemination program at federal and provincial level and provide a plan and budget for it accordingly in the proposal.

5. Timeline

The RF is expected to submit a timeline for the activities proposed in the course of conducting this study, adhering to the total duration provided for completion of the study. Please note that the time for NHRC approval should also be factored into your timeline.

6. Deliverables

Deliverable 1

- Final research protocol with all the required tools approved by MSI/SPN
- Final research protocol submitted to the NHRC

Deliverable 2

- Ethical approval obtained from the NHRC
- Training, data collection and field mobilization plan submitted to MSI/SPN

- Completion of data collection submitted to MSI/SPN
- Monitoring and Supervision plan submitted to MSI/SPN
- Data analysis framework submitted to MSI/SPN
- Key findings from the preliminary analysis submitted to MSI/SPN

Deliverable 3

- Submission of dataset, analysis syntax and data tables
- Final study report (both electronic and a hard copy) after incorporating the comments and suggestion from MSI/SPN
- Power Point presentation containing findings and recommendations presented to MSI/SPN
- 2-page brief
- Result dissemination event conducted at both central and provincial level.

7. Payment Terms

Bidders are invited to note that, if awarded the contract, payment terms will be subjected to negotiation. MSI/SPN Nepal's standard terms of payment will be done upon completion of each delivery in the following way.

- I. 30% upon completion of 1st deliverable
- II. 70% upon completion of 3rd deliverable

8. Requirements for Applicants

The selected RF should have at least three years' experience in conducting household and community-based surveys. This includes the preparation of study protocol, development of study tools, and ensuring confidentiality of records as well as conducting data analysis and preparing reports as per international standards. The firm will have demonstrated experience and capacity to manage logistics, including equipment, materials, and personnel. The firm will preferably have experience in handling sensitive material and information, and in conducting interviews concerning potentially sensitive issues.

The firm must have expertise in public health, sexual and reproductive health, biostatistics and disability related research. They must have a proven track record of undertaking research in Nepal or other neighbouring countries and publication of manuscripts in relevant disciplines.

A Team Leader with master's degree (PhD preferred) in Public Health, Demography or in a relevant field with hands-on experience in leading complex qualitative and quantitative research in the field of sexual and reproductive health is a must. The team must also have familiarity in working among persons with disability and conducting assessments in these communities. The team must include a statistician well versed in sampling marginalised populations and data analysis preferably with experience in working on SRH and disability related indicators.

Field supervisors should have experience in data collection and monitoring of data quality preferably in SRH and persons with disability related studies and should have a degree in public health/nursing or health/social sciences. Enumerators should be experienced in collecting data as per the proposed methodology in studies related to SRH and persons with disability and must have at least a high school degree (Bachelor's degree preferred).

Both national and international research agencies, research or consulting institutions and academic groups registered in Nepal or at least have a registered local partner in Nepal are equally encouraged to apply if they meet the minimum requirements.

9. Submission of Proposal

I. Documents required

Interested and qualified RFs are expected to submit an expression of interest with the following components:

1. **Cover Letter:** Please attach a cover letter stating your interest for this study and submit a list of the requested documents plus any additional supporting documents.

2. **Technical Proposal**

Please provide a technical proposal according to the format provided below:

| Organization Information | |
|--------------------------|----------|
| Name of Organization | |
| Contact Person | |
| Contact Details | Address: |
| | Email: |
| | Phone: |

- i. **Introduction to the Organization and Experience in Conducting Research**

[Please provide a brief 1-2-page introduction about the organization and highlight the organization's experience in working on research studies that are similar to the current study.]

- ii. **Technical Brief**

- a. *Understanding of SOW and Methodology*

- i. *Conceptual framework*

- ii. *Study Design*

- iii. *Study sites*

- iv. *Sampling strategy and site selection with rationale and supporting literature*

- v. *Details on Data collection tools, testing and validation*

- vi. *Ethical considerations*

- b. *Workplan with timeline*

- c. *Data management, analysis and quality assurance plan*

- d. *Personnel and qualifications*
- e. *Supplier's questionnaire (see section 15)*

- a. **Understanding of SOW and Methodology:** In this section please explain your understanding of the objectives of the proposed study, the technical approach to the conduct of the study (including study methodology, sampling strategy, training and data collection methods, development of survey tools and measures and field mobilization plan).
- b. **Workplan and Timeline:** The workplan should detail all the activities, duration for each and dates of completion for all deliverables mentioned above in section E. The proposed workplan should be consistent with the SOW, methodology and data management plan.
- c. **Data management, analysis and quality assurance plan:** In this section please detail the measures you will have in place to ensure data quality. This includes field supervision and monitoring plans, protocol for questionnaire checking during data collection and data entry and cleaning. Please mention the protocols that will be adopted to maintain data confidentiality throughout the study.
- d. **Personnel and qualifications:** Please detail the team composition and attach the CVs of the key personnel for the study mentioning designation and tasks assigned in the study.
- e. **Suppliers questionnaire:** The bidder is required to fill and submit the questionnaire either for entities or individuals. The questionnaire can be found in Annex I.

3. Financial Proposal

Please provide a comprehensive budget including all costs and consultancy fee in Nepali Rupees (NRS) and equivalent in US dollars (\$) that is in harmony with the proposed methodology and work plan.

| Budget Template | | | | | | | |
|------------------------|-------------|------|------------|------------------|---------------------|---------------|-------------------|
| | | | | | | | 1 USD = NRs _____ |
| No | Description | Unit | No of unit | Unit cost in NRS | Total amount in NRS | Amount in USD | Remarks |
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II. Sealing and marking of proposal

The Bidder shall seal the proposal in one outer and two inner envelopes, as detailed below.

(a) The outer envelope shall be addressed to –

Procurement Officer, Sunaulo Parivar Nepal, Baluwatar (opposite to the Chinese Embassy) Nepal and marked with – ToR: FP and disability study

(b) The 2 inner envelopes shall indicate the name and address of the Bidder and should be clearly marked with “Technical Proposal” and “Financial Proposal”. In summary, there will be one separate sealed envelope for the Technical Proposal and one separate sealed envelope for the Financial Proposal.

Bidders are also required to submit an electronic copy of the technical proposal as a word document or a pdf file either enclosed along with the sealed technical proposal (in a CD or a USB drive) or provide a secure download link to an electronic copy of the technical proposal.

III. Deadline for submission of proposals

Proposals must be received by SPN at the address specified no later than 17:00 hours (local time), *[insert date]*

SPN may, at its own discretion extend this deadline for the submission of proposals by amending the solicitation documents in accordance with clause Amendments of Solicitation Documents, in which case all rights and obligations of SPN and Bidders previously subject to the deadline will thereafter be subject to the deadline as extended.

I. Late proposals

Any proposal received by MSI/SPN after the deadline for submission of proposals will be rejected.

II. Modification and withdrawal of proposals

The Bidder may modify or withdraw its proposal after the proposal’s submission, provided that written notice of the modification or withdrawal is received by MSI/SPN prior to the deadline prescribed for submission of proposals. The Bidder’s withdrawal or modification notice shall be prepared, sealed, marked and dispatched in accordance with the provisions of MSI/SPN. The modification document must be signed and sealed by the same person/authority who submitted original proposal.

No proposal shall be modified subsequent to the deadline for submission of proposals. No proposal may

be withdrawn in the interval between the deadline for submission of proposals and the expiration of the period of proposal validity specified by the Bidder on the Proposal Submission Form.

10. Opening and evaluation of proposals

SPN will open the proposals in the presence of the Procurement Committee. To assist in the examination, evaluation and comparison of proposals, SPN may at its discretion, ask the Bidder for clarification of its proposal including breakdowns of unit cost. The request for clarification and the response shall be in writing and no change in price or substance of the proposal shall be sought, offered or permitted, except as required to confirm the correction of arithmetic errors discovered by the MSI/SPN in the evaluation of the proposal.

III. Preliminary examination of proposals

SPN shall examine the proposals to determine whether they are complete, whether any computational errors have been made, whether the documents have been properly signed, and whether the proposals are generally in order.

Arithmetical errors will be rectified on the following basis: If there is a discrepancy between the unit price and the total price that is obtained by multiplying the unit price and quantity, the unit price shall prevail, and the total price shall be corrected. If the Bidder does not accept the correction of errors, its proposal will be rejected. If there is a discrepancy between words and figures, the amount in words will prevail. Prior to the detailed evaluation, SPN will determine the substantial responsiveness of each proposal to the ToR. For purposes of these clauses, a substantially responsive proposal is one which conforms to all the terms and conditions of the ToR.

A proposal, which does not meet the requirements outlined above, shall be rejected by MSI/SPN.

IV. Evaluation and comparison of proposals

The Procurement Committee will evaluate and compare the proposals which have been determined to be substantially responsive in accordance.

A two-stage procedure is utilized in evaluating the proposals, with evaluation of the technical proposal being completed prior to any price proposal being opened and compared. The technical proposal is evaluated on the basis of its responsiveness to the Terms of Reference (TOR).

The financial proposal will be opened only if they meet the following condition:

The bidder's proposal passed the minimum technical score of 70% of the obtainable score of 100 points in the evaluation of the technical proposals. In the second stage, the financial proposal of all Bidders, who have attained minimum 70% score in the technical evaluation, will be evaluated.

80% weightage will be given to the technical proposal (which pass the minimum technical score of 70%) and 20% weightage will be given to the financial proposal. The contract will be awarded to the Bidder scoring the highest combined scores.

The technical and financial proposals will be evaluated based on the matrix below.

EVALUATION MATRIX

| # | Item | Marks |
|--------------|---|------------|
| 1. | Understanding of SOW and Methodology | 25 |
| 2. | Workplan and timeline | 15 |
| 3. | Data Management, Analysis and Quality Assurance | 20 |
| 4. | Relevant experience of the firm | 10 |
| 5. | Team Composition | 10 |
| 6. | Budget | 20 |
| TOTAL | | 100 |

11. Intellectual Property Right (IPR)

The Intellectual property rights for all tools, data and reports emerging from this study is reserved with MSI/SPN. The RF may neither disclose, share nor publish in part or full anything related to the study without prior written permission.

12. Contacting SPN

Clarification on ToR can be sought up to December 24, 2019 through email correspondence to the provided email address using the subject line **“ToR: FP and disability study”**.

recruitment@mariestopes.org.np

No Bidder shall contact MSI/SPN on any matter related to this proposal, thereafter. Any effort by a Bidder to influence proposal evaluation, comparison or contract award decisions may result in the rejection of the Bidder’s proposal.

13. Award criteria and award of contract

SPN reserves the right to accept or reject any proposal, and to annul the solicitation process and reject all proposals at any time prior to award of contract, without incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or any obligation to inform the affected Bidder.

14. Signing of the contract

The successful Bidder will reply within the time specified otherwise it will be considered as non-interested. In such a case the next Bidder in the list will get the offer letter. Within **7 days** of receipt of the contract the successful Bidder shall sign and date the contract and return it to MSI/SPN.

15. Suppliers Questionnaire, Bidder Form and Code of Conduct

The bidder is required to fill and submit the supplier's questionnaire either for entities or individuals, as appropriate along with the technical proposal and the bidder form.

All parties entering into an agreement for goods or services with the organization are required to abide by the code of conduct of the organization.

Both the supplier's questionnaire, bidders form and the code of conduct can be found at the link for the RFP on the organization website.

16. References

1. World Health Organization (WHO) Department of Reproductive Health and Research and United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA). Promoting sexual and reproductive health for persons with disabilities: WHO/UNFPA guidance note. Geneva: World Health Organization; 2009.
2. Central Bureau of Statistics. National Population and Housing Census 2011, Volume 02, 2011. Kathmandu, Nepal: National Planning Commission Secretariat, Government of Nepal; 2012.
3. United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and Disability Research Centre, Kathmandu University. Disability in Nepal. Taking stock and forging a way forward. UNICEF; 2018.
4. Puri M, Misra G, Hawkes S. Hidden voices: Prevalence and risk factors for violence against women with disabilities in Nepal. BMC Public Health. 2015;15:261.