



## **Universal Access to Sexual and Reproductive Health Care and Family Planning Services by Women and People with Disabilities during the COVID-19 Pandemic - Radio Programme Outcome Report**

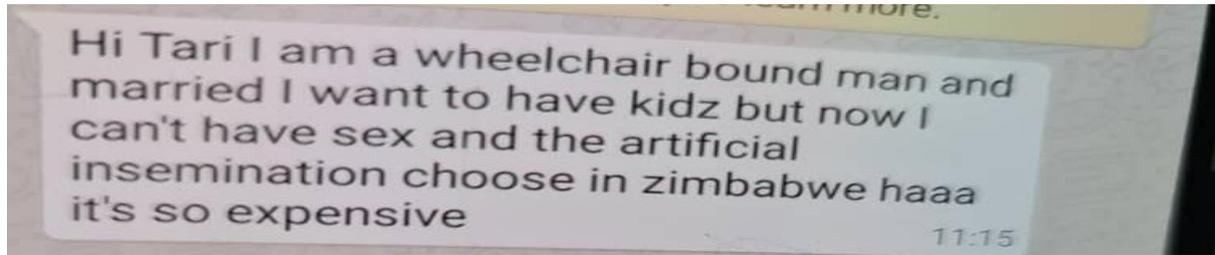
### **Introduction**

The Poverty Reduction Forum Trust conducted the second radio programme on Diamond FM and Star FM radio stations on Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> and Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> February 2021, respectively. The radio programme interrogated universal access to sexual and reproductive health care and family planning services by women and people with disabilities during the COVID-19 Pandemic. The panellists for the two programmes were Mr. Itai Rusike (Executive Director-Community Working Group on Health) and Ms Elisa Ravengai (National Coordinator – Federation of Disabled Persons of Zimbabwe).

### **Key Highlights**

- Health care services should be comprehensive, accessible, affordable, non-discriminatory and should be found in place for them to meet the needs of women and people with disabilities
- Maternal health user fees are a barrier to disabled women accessing maternal health services and they end up giving birth at home giving rise to complications which in some cases are resulting in loss of life
- The advent of COVID-19 & the hasty implementation of lockdowns disadvantaged people with disabilities & women who rely on vending & survive on hand to mouth basis. They are getting into lockdown without enough food and medical supplies
- Health care workers are not trained to handle and treat people with disabilities. Some health care workers have a negative attitude towards PwDs and think PwDs do not have sexual and reproductive rights because of their conditions
- The unavailability of potable water which has resulted in women spending more time in borehole queues whilst leaving girls with disabilities at home alone for long periods of time, exposing them to risk of being sexually abused
- COVID-19 has increased challenges for PwDs getting assistance from other people as before the pandemic. There is stress, anxiety and fear among PwDs not to get close to others in an effort to maintain COVID-19 protocols yet they need the physical assistance.

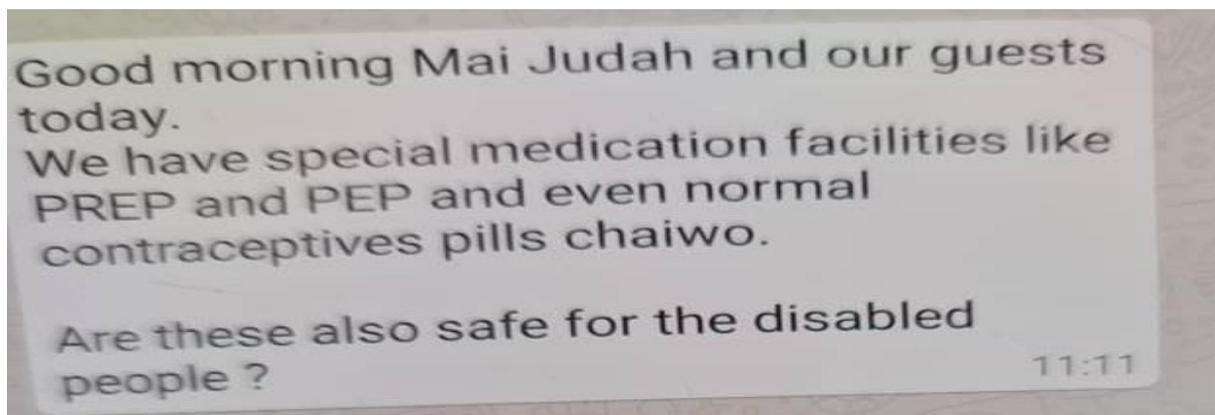
## Questions and Contributions from Listeners



Hi Tari I am a wheelchair bound man and married I want to have kidz but now I can't have sex and the artificial insemination choose in zimbabwe haaa it's so expensive

11:15

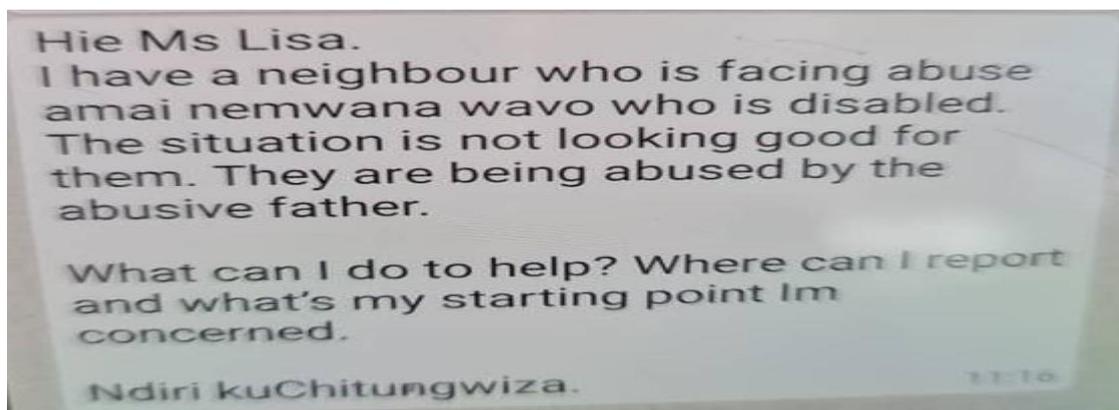
The listener was advised to seek advice from a medical doctor who is better positioned to give guided advice.



Good morning Mai Judah and our guests today.  
We have special medication facilities like PREP and PEP and even normal contraceptives pills chaiwo.  
Are these also safe for the disabled people ?

11:11

The listener was advised to consult their nearest health facility and discuss with health officers on best contraceptive method that can work for them as these differ from person to person.



Hie Ms Lisa.  
I have a neighbour who is facing abuse amai nemwana wavo who is disabled. The situation is not looking good for them. They are being abused by the abusive father.  
What can I do to help? Where can I report and what's my starting point Im concerned.  
Ndiri kuChitungwiza.

11:16

The listener was advised to visit a police station close to them and report the issue to the victim friendly unit which can look into the matter. The listener was further advised to report the matter to Msasa Project if it's a gender based violence type of abuse.

## **Key Recommendations**

1. Establishment of Community-based databases of PwDs which will assist village and community health workers to deliver medical supplies directly to PwDs at their homesteads
2. Doctors and Nurses' training curriculum should include courses that will enhance health care workers' skill in dealing and handling PwDs patience
3. Current lockdown roadblocks should have at least one officer with sign language skills to remove the communication barriers that PwDs are currently facing
4. Duty bearers should work in collaboration with CSOs that work with women and PwDs in order to address the issues facing women & PwDs
5. Local Authorities should ensure adequate provision of potable water to communities in order to minimize the risk of PwDs and women exposure to COVID19