Terms of reference for freelance consultants

CBM is looking for a freelance consultant to review and update CBM's existing Built Environment Accessibility Guidelines.

1. Background and rationale

CBM is an international development and humanitarian organisation dedicated to improving the quality of life of persons with disabilities in the world's poorest countries. CBM's primary objective is to break the cycle of poverty and disability and to improve the quality of life of persons with disabilities in the poorest countries of the world.

The current Built Environment Accessibility Guidelines to be reviewed were first developed in 2008 and have been used by CBM staff and partners including organisations of persons with disabilities and other external stakeholders. There are new developments, resources and standards which are not fully covered in the current guidelines and other sections need to be updated based on the evolving trends around built accessibility standards and the use of innovative technologies to promote accessibility.

Since the CBM guidelines were produced, accessibility needs and standards have advanced while new global frameworks have been developed including the UNCRPD, ISO 21542, and Universal Design Principles updates. Reviewing CBM's current Built Environment Accessibility Guidelines will ensure they remain consistent with the global norms and the best practices when it comes to building accessibility in the work that CBM and its partners do.

2. Objective

The overall objective of this assignment is to review and update CBM's existing Built Environment Accessibility Guidelines to ensure they are comprehensive and inclusive, aligned with the international and national priorities on accessibility.

3. Expected results

I. Review phase (Gap Analysis Report):

a) **Identify gaps and strengths of the Built Environment Accessibility Guidelines**,

- considering experiences and lessons learned from lived experiences, key stakeholders including CBM and its partners (feedback has been collected by the Global Accessibility Advisor)
- in line with the Universal Design Principles and international standards such as the UNCRPD, ISO 21542 and the SDGs, All Under One Roof among others.

b) Review and revise **language to align with a human rights-based approach** to disability, recommending appropriate changes in terminology where appropriate to promote dignity, respect and inclusion.
c) Propose a **work plan** including timelines, expected scope on how to update the document and budget.

II. Document update draft:
Produce a draft of the **revised guidelines**:

a) **Update outdated information** where necessary
b) **Adjust language** in line with point b) above.
c) Incorporate **emerging accessibility technologies and design innovations** related to the built environment into the guidelines (including actionable recommendations)
d) Add **new sections** on:
- **technical solutions to plan and assess accessibility** of built environments (for example AI solutions, digital tools etc)
- **localization and accessibility in different** cultural, socio-economic, climatic and legal **contexts** (including potential clashes between different norms and the need to find solutions)
e) **Conceptualize a short "easy to use" field version.**

III. Document update final:
f) Incorporate **feedback and adjustments from the CBM technical team** led by the Global Accessibility Advisor
g) Produce the short field version as proposed under point e)

4. Deliverables, methodology, timeframe and duration

- Present a Gap Analysis Report
- Updated Built Environment Accessibility Guidelines
- Final Built Environment Accessibility Guidelines including an easy-to-use field version

Timeframe and duration

This assignment will take a period of 30 working days spread over a two-month period.

Sno	Activity	Duration
1.	Inception and desk review	4 working days
2.	Drafting and validation	6 working days
3.	Finalization, submission and approval	4 working days

5. Required expert profile

We encourage applications from mixed teams of consultants involving technical experts and users with lived experience of disability.

Expected qualifications of the consultant or within the team of consultants:

- Advanced degree in Built Environment, Disability Inclusive Design with focus on Accessibility, Advanced degree with a specialization in Universal or Accessible Design
- Professional certifications such as the Accessibility Professionals Association Certification for Built Environment (APAC-BE), Certified Access Specialist (CASp), or Certified Environmental Access Consultant (CEAC) enhance qualifications and credibility.
- Minimum of 10 years' experience in accessibility, universal design and inclusive infrastructure including the current ISO standards and global trends related to accessibility and the use of AI agents.
- A strong understanding of disability rights and inclusion of persons with disabilities.
- References from previous clients in developing and designing built accessibility guidelines for different sectors.
- Experience working with persons with disabilities, especially from a user perspective.
- Knowledge and experience of using research/survey concepts, approaches, tools, techniques, methodologies, sampling, etc.
- A demonstrated high level of professionalism and the ability to work independently.
- Demonstrated experience and expertise in designing and managing review or evaluation studies for similar projects and in delivering agreed outputs on time and within budget.
- Excellent communication in English, writing, editing, attention to detail, presentation and organizational skills.
- Ability to communicate complex data in simple, clear ways.
- Persons with lived experience of disability are encouraged to apply.

The freelance consultant adheres to CBM's values and commits to CBM's Child Safeguarding Policy.

6. Application

Applicants should submit an offer including CV and expected fee (in EUR) as well and a timeline for the consultancy.

The application should be sent by **30th November 2025** to Justine Yikiru, justine.yikiru@cbm.org.