Call for Expression of Interest for Researchers and Consultants at Connected Development - Girls' Education Research Study

1) About Connected Development (CODE)

Founded in 2012, Connected Development [CODE] is a non-government organization [NGO] whose mission is to empower marginalized communities in Africa. We strengthen local communities by creating platforms for dialogue, enabling informed debate, and building capacities of citizens on how to hold their government accountable through Follow The Money.

CODE provides marginalized and vulnerable communities with resources to amplify their voices with independence and integrity while providing the communities with information that ushers social and economic progress. To enhance effective democratic governance and accountability, CODE creates platforms [mobile and web technologies] that close the feedback loop between citizens and the government. With global expertise and reach, we focus on community outreach; influencing policies, practices and reforms; challenging inequalities and gender barriers; and knowledge mobilization.

CODE's commitment to participatory capacity & community building, research, advocacy and campaigns, and monitoring and evaluation creates effective and sustainable programs even within the most challenging environments.

2) Research Study/Consultancy Background

2.1 General Overview:
The North-East (NE), Nigeria has remained one of the least developed regions in the country. As of 2019, according to the National Bureau of Statistics, the poverty rate in the region was above 71%, the highest in the country, while as of 2020, 60% of Nigeria's 13 million out of school children are in the region. The region also has the lowest literacy rate across the country at 34%. Girls are most affected in the region education-wise. Most of them are out of school and cannot complete primary and secondary education following so many factors including inherent traditional societal barriers, early marriage, continuous insurgency in the past decade, as well as issues of affordability, availability and accessibility to schools.

To address the barriers to girls' education in the region, CODE is currently implementing the project, "Increasing Girl-child Primary and Secondary Education Enrolment and Completion in Adamawa State," which is funded by The Malala Fund. The project aims at facilitating girl-child education enrolment, access and completion through activating accountability channels for gender-responsive service delivery in schools, addressing traditional/cultural barriers to girls' education and high-level governmental engagement on improving girls' education.

2.2 Research Study Overview:
As part of the project, CODE is conducting a research study on the impact of COVID-19 on girls' education in the region through a case study of Adamawa State. The advent of Covid-19 and global standard recommendations to

limit its spread has led to the closure of schools, with attendant effects on not just learning outcomes but most specifically retention of pupils/students especially the girl-child. There are concerns that the girl-child during this period might be married off during schools' closure or immediately after the relaxation of the lockdown and resumption of social and economic activities - a risk, more pronounced in the northern part of Nigeria. In addition is the fact that several months of education could be lost as a result of the pandemic situation, while there is also the risk that some teachers might leave the profession in a bid to find alternative means for economic sustenance.

2.3 Study Purpose:

The study would: 1) investigate how COVID-19 has affected girls' education in the region 2) Examine how social norms and perceptions have affected girls' education during the COVID-19 pandemic and 3). Assessing the effectiveness of the Federal Government's Learning at Home Programme (LHP) in relation to girls' education. Through its findings, the research hopes to influence policy making and donor efforts in the region through recommending measures to ensure continuous learning for girls' amidst school closures; ensure the LHP is effective and inclusive; boost recovery readiness of the government through instituting gender-responsive measures/standards in place for girls safe return to school when schools reopen; measures to ensure girls' return back to schools; and approaches that should be considered for effective digital learning for girls.

2.4 Consultant's Background and Responsibilities:

As such, CODE is seeking a qualified research consultant (**represented by an entity**), who has experience in conducting such studies. The consultant would work closely with the project's team and relevant structures of CODE.

The mixed-study research (final research study report) should be of 8,000 words max (exclusive of footnotes); figures and tables are calculated at 400 words; and the study should provide references in a standard and consistent style.

2.4.1 Duration:

This entire assignment is expected to last a total of 30 working days. The first draft study report should be submitted by 21 August 2020.

2.4.2 Fees and costs

Fees and costs will be discussed with the successful applicant putting into consideration: skills, methodology proposed and time to execute the assignment.

2.4.3 Qualifications

A PhD in the social sciences with a strong knowledge of conducting qualitative and quantitative research. The position is open to any qualified applicant.

2.4.4 Responsibilities:

- Develop a research study proposal and design (6 - 8 pages) featuring the relevant sections and a comprehensive methodology.
- Participate in relevant meetings with the chief executive, project team and field researchers for the study's coordination and administration.
- Design both qualitative and quantitative data collection instruments for the study, and revise as might be directed by the project team.
- Coordinate the data collection exercise through working closely with the project team and CODE Adamawa state chapter members and ensuring that the required quality control measures are in place.
- Analyse data and produce a draft research study report.

- Address necessary revisions that might be required on the draft study report and produce the final report.

3) Selection process

In the selection process, CODE shall ensure: Fairness, Non-discrimination, Confidentiality and Transparency

4) Method of Application

Interested applicants should send a draft **research study proposal** (including research questions, methodology, costed research plan); **Curriculum Vitae** with the names and contacts of 2 referees; and a **Cover Letter** to admin@connecteddevelopment.org. Kindly address application to: The Human Resource Department, CODE. Only shortlisted candidates will be contacted.

5) Deadline for Submission

COB, 15 July, 2020. *Only e-application(s) are welcomed.