
Context Matters

— RESEARCH GRANTS —

October 2020

CALL FOR MENTORS

CODE's Context Matters Research Grants program is designed to support African researchers as they take the lead in evidence-based research in the field of education and literacy. Our intent is to stimulate conversation, develop a research agenda, support research that is clearly situated in local contexts and recognizes the complex relationships between the local and global in education. Each year, up to five research grants of CAN \$10,000 are awarded to increase the effectiveness, efficiency and salience of K-12 education programming, including pre-service teacher education, in Africa.

Currently, there are six research projects underway (2019-2021 cohort) and we are in the process of awarding five new grants in 2020 (2020-2022 cohort).

CODE is seeking academics with experience in the field of education, literacy, research and supervision / mentorship to provide guidance to the current and upcoming African researchers. We think of these mentors as 'critical friends' who will provide feedback, suggestions, recommendations and editorial guidance to the researchers. CODE believes this extra level of support will help ensure the results of the research can be shared in a range of formats including local, regional and international websites, journals, conferences, discussion forums and policy briefs.

We envision this support to include input into new proposals, recommendations on process, the review and editing of mid-term and final reports, answering questions and providing guidance at critical points in the research.

The research projects relate to one or more of the following:

- the intersection between literacy, education and girls' empowerment;
- the role that pre-service teacher education and professional development plays in strengthening the educational opportunities for girls;
- the concept of "comprehensive sexuality education" and how it is approached in both teacher education programs and in schools (formally, informally);
- the factors and/or interventions that contribute to reducing barriers to quality education for women and girls (especially in fragile, conflict, refugee and crisis situations).

Benefits to the mentor: Along with compensation for your time (between \$2,000 and 5,000.00 CAN), as a mentor you will have the opportunity to share your knowledge and skills with new and established researchers, support the creation of meaningful research in the field of literacy and education in Africa, and help CODE build a network of supporters committed to building a body of knowledge improving literacy and learning around the world.

Benefits to the researchers: The research teams will have the opportunity to benefit from a personalized and dedicated 'critical friend' to support them in the process and to improve the writing and presentation of their research.

We are looking for mentors who:

- Have strong writing and editing skills in English.
- Have an in-depth understanding of the research and reporting process.
- Have experience providing mentorship and feedback to professionals at different stages in their careers (from senior and experienced academics, to researchers from NGOs and new to the academic field.)
- Have expertise and experience in the field of education, with an understanding of one or more of these areas: Teacher Education; Literacy Practices; Sexual Health Literacies; the intersection between literacy, education and girls' empowerment; pre-service teacher education and professional development.
- Have experience working in the African context in the field of education.
- Have experience writing and editing research papers, academic publications, and/or public presentations.
- Are available to work with 2 researchers in October and November 2020.
- Can commit to work with researchers for up to a year (for current research projects).
- Can commit to work with researchers for up to two years (for the new research projects).

If you are interested in becoming a 'critical friend' or mentor, please complete the expression of interest form on page 3 and submit to CODE **by October 25, 2020**. For more information, please contact Context Matters at contextmatters@code.ngo

The six (6) existing research projects require:

- input to finalize two papers (approx. 2 months)
- input to deliver four (4) mid-term and final papers that are due late 2021, early 2022 (1 year).

Mentors who work with existing researchers would be asked to:

- Review mid-term reports before submission to CODE.
- Answer questions and make suggestions as needed.
- Review and edit final research papers before submission to CODE.

The five (5) new research projects will require input for up to 2 years. Starting in Nov 2020 and ending 2023.

Mentors who work with new researchers would be asked to:

- Refine and focus new proposals and workplans
- Review mid-term reports before submission to CODE
- Answer questions and make suggestions as needed
- Review and edit final research papers before submission to CODE

The mentor and mentee will mutually agree upon the frequency and format of communication, which can take place by phone, email, skype/zoom, or in-person.

EXPRESSION OF INTEREST FORM

CODE's Context Matters

Please complete the form below and send to contextmatters@code.ngo

1. Name:	
2. Address:	
3. Telephone (land line / cell /whatsapp):	
4. Email:	
5. Website:	
6. Skype (if applicable):	
7. Areas of focus/experience/expertise	
8. Affiliated academic institution	
9. Reference: provide the name and contact of one person you have worked with as a supervisor or in a mentorship role.	
<p>10. Indicate if you have a preference:</p> <p>Area of study (topic)*(see page 5 for a detailed list of topics that researchers are asked to focus on)</p> <p>Region of Africa</p> <p>Research method (e.g. quantitative, qualitative, action research etc.)</p>	
11. Share your experience as a supervisor of research projects:	

12. Share your experience mentoring researchers/students/professionals:

13. Share any experiences you have as a researcher/academic/practitioner the areas of interest listed on page 5, in Africa:

14. Are you willing to work with more than one researcher? Yes No
If yes, indicate any conditions that would apply.

15. Can you commit to mentoring a researcher for 3 months between **November 1, 2020-January 2021?**
Yes No

If yes, is there a particular time within this period that your availability is limited?

16. Can you commit to mentoring a researcher for 1 year between **November 1, 2020-December 2021?**
Yes No

If yes, is there a particular time within this period that your availability is limited?

17. Can you commit to mentoring a researcher for 2 years between **November 1, 2020-December 2023?**
Yes No

If yes, is there a particular time within this period that your availability is limited?

18. Any questions for CODE?

In 2020, CODE is primarily interested in research projects that relate to one or more of the following:

- the intersection between literacy, education and girls' empowerment;
- the role that pre-service teacher education and professional development plays in strengthening the educational opportunities for girls;
- the concept of “comprehensive sexuality education” and how it is approached in both teacher education programs and in schools (formally, informally); (see <https://en.unesco.org/news/why-comprehensive-sexuality-education-important> for a full definition); and
- the factors and/or interventions that contribute to reducing barriers to quality education for women and girls (especially in fragile, conflict, refugee and crisis situations).

Teacher Education

- How do schools and/or teacher education programs support and prepare teachers to address gender equity, and sexual health and wellbeing?
- What are the attitudes toward sexuality education (comprehensive sexual education) of pre-service, in-service teachers of adolescent girls? How do these influence the messaging, lessons, practice of teachers?
- What are the barriers and/or successful pathways to implementing curriculum related to comprehensive sexual education?
- What is the level of sexual health literacy of pre-service teachers and practicing teachers of adolescent girls?
- How do teachers and students define empowerment and what are effective interventions for supporting the further empowerment of teachers, girls and boys?
- What are the experiences of pre-service and practicing teachers who have attended training related to sexuality, preventing gender-based violence, discrimination, sexual harassment, sexual and reproductive health, etc.?
- What is the impact of government policies and the formal curriculum in comparison to civil society or community initiatives? (For example, what are the messages reflected in the formal curriculum and directives versus the messages in society/community / sexual health messaging and programs?)
- What is the role and the impact of formal and informal instruction within clubs, coaching programs, mentorship programs, etc.?
- How can communities of practice support teachers as they strive to promote empowerment and equality in their classrooms and schools?

Literacy Practices

- How do classrooms, community agencies, networks and structures support adolescent girls' empowerment and education? (For example, in book clubs, writing circles, reading groups, gender clubs and human rights clubs).
- How are new technologies and digital literacies being used in these contexts? How do we measure the impact that such interventions have on the wellbeing of adolescent girls and boys?
- What is the relationship between literacy and empowerment?

Sexual Health Literacies

- What is the role of information about sexual and reproductive health and rights, as adolescents negotiate safer and more gender equitable relationships in education systems and in society at large? How is gender, puberty, menstrual hygiene represented in reading materials? (For example, in mass media/pop culture.)
- How are these various representations understood by youth in a variety of contexts? For example, how do these materials work in classrooms, after-school programs, families and communities?
- How do literacy policies support or discourage girls' education and empowerment?