

Teaching and Learning in Fragile Contexts (TLFC) Research Grant 2023
Annual Call for Research Proposals
Deadline for submission: November 10, 2023

1.0. PROGRAM STATEMENT

CODE, through its Teaching and Learning in Fragile Contexts (TLFC) program, funds research initiated, designed, and undertaken by African researchers. The grant program builds on the Context Matters program and supports research that is clearly situated in local contexts and recognizes the multifaceted and complex relationships between the local and global in education.

This is the first Call for Research Proposals going out under the TLFC banner. Under this call, CODE will fund up to **ten (10)** research grants of a maximum of **\$20,000 Canadian Dollars (CAD)** each.

The three areas of inquiry for this funding cycle are **Access to Education, Quality Education and Education Policy all in refugee and displacement contexts in Sub-Saharan Africa**. Successful proposals must also address one or more of the four Cross-Cutting Issues namely (1) Gender and Inclusion, (2) Foundational Literacy, (3) Teaching & Learning Materials and locally relevant reading materials and (4) Teaching Quality and Accreditation.

Important Dates

Applications Open: October 06 2023
Online Information Session: October 18th 2023
Deadline: November 10th 2023

Online Information Session October 18th, 2023

Interested researchers are invited to participate in an online information session on October 18th, 2023. Click [here](#) to register. The information session will provide an overview of Teaching and Learning in Fragile Contexts, a review of the process for applying, tips for putting together a successful proposal, and an opportunity to ask questions. The session will be recorded and made available on the CODE website.

Key Application documents

Download the Application Form

Download Annex I Guidelines for completing the application form

Download ANNEX II The Budget Sheet

2.0. TLFC RESEARCH PROGRAM SCOPE

TLFC seeks research proposals that:

- 2.1. Are realistic in terms of scope, number of research questions to be addressed, number of participants, the amount of data collected, timeframe, and budget.
- 2.2. Examine teacher education including but not limited to how teacher educators mentor pre-service teachers in their use of active learning and gender-responsive teaching strategies during practicum.
- 2.3. Examine and or address the capacity of pre-service teachers to use active learning and/or gender-responsive teaching strategies for literacy during practicum.
- 2.4. Address challenges and opportunities of access for girls and other vulnerable groups to gender-responsive and active learning education programming.
- 2.5. Examine the available options, opportunities and or mechanisms to increase awareness of education decision-makers, of the positive impacts of educational programming using active learning and gender-responsive strategies for literacy programming.
- 2.6. Include education decision-makers and other stakeholders in designing evidence-based educational programming models and approaches and the use of active learning and gender-responsive strategies for literacy to overcome crisis barriers to learning and differential impacts on vulnerable children, especially girls.
- 2.7. Increase access to evidence-based research by education decision-makers on the use of gender equality, equity, and differentiated and inclusionary practices in African education programming in refugee and IDP contexts.
- 2.8. Include interventions aimed at increasing access to quality education for children in refugee and fragile contexts and explore ways to ensure that their interests and priorities are taken into account.
- 2.9. Employ, in addition to standard methodologies, indigenous and local epistemologies that draw on local ways of knowing and approaches to research (e.g. participatory action research).
- 2.10. Engage communities in a respectful, reciprocal, and responsive fashion. The proposed studies should describe how you will involve and engage the community in meaningful ways; and describe how participants will be actively engaged in the research process (e.g. data collection, analysis, interpretation of findings, dissemination of findings, and development of recommendations).

2.11. Proposals should demonstrate clearly how the research results will contribute to one or more of the following:

- The use of evidence-based research on gender equality (GE), equity and inclusion in educational programming for refugee and IDPs in fragile and crisis affected African contexts;
- The quality of information and data available on the specific topic;
- The interventions and tools that improve educational opportunities for learners within refugee settlements and or fragile contexts;
- availability and use or lack of the contextually relevant materials;
- The design of larger or further studies;
- The improvement of literacy development;
- Informing education policy;
- Informing education practices;
- The best ways to measure the impact of such interventions on learning,

In essence, proposals should highlight how the proposed research will go beyond theoretical knowledge and actively shape practical approaches and decisions across various levels of education-related operations.

2.12. Submissions can also include:

- Proposals that explore small-scale research projects that could contribute to larger projects, such as a pilot study.
- Proposals that build on successful pilot research projects that address the themes and concepts listed above.
- Proposals that include a reanalysis of national achievement assessments or national-level data from regional or international assessments that address themes and concepts listed above.
- Proposals that include collaborations among researchers from different academic institutions, or between education organizations and academic researchers, or provide mentorship/support to up-and-coming researchers.

N.B: *This application is open to eligible researchers based in all sub-Saharan African countries. Researchers with lived experience in refugee contexts are encouraged to apply. The proposed research must focus on refugee and displacement contexts in Sub-Saharan African. For example, there are 19 countries in Sub-Saharan Africa with more than 100,000 total Refugees and IDPs, this includes: Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia, Sudan, Somalia, Nigeria, Burkina Faso, South Sudan, Uganda, Cameroon, Mozambique, Chad, Niger, Kenya, Central African Republic, Mali, Cote d'Ivoire, Tanzania, Rwanda, Mauritania.*

3.0. AREAS OF INQUIRY



This call for proposals is based on the TLFC research agenda which is built on a matrix of 3 Themes and 4 Cross-Cutting Issues. Successful applicants are expected to address at least one theme and one cross-cutting issue within their research proposals.

Within the context of primary education in fragile, displacement and refugee contexts, we have selected three themes and four cross cutting issues. Every research proposal should include at least one theme and one cross cutting issue.						
Areas of Inquiry >>>>	1. Access		2. Quality		3. Policy	
Cross Cutting Themes ✓ (From TLFC Proposal and ✓ CODE Theory of Change) ✓						
A. Gender and Inclusion	Teachers	Learners	Teachers	Learners	Teachers	Learners
B. Foundational Literacy	Teachers	Learners	Teachers	Learners	Teachers	Learners
C. TLMs and locally relevant reading materials	Teachers	Learners	Teachers	Learners	Teachers	Learners
D. Teaching Quality and Accreditation	Teachers	Learners	Teachers	Learners	Teachers	Learners

3.1. Research Cross Cutting Themes

Teaching and Learning in Fragile Context (TLFC) is interested in education research projects that relate to one or more of the following general themes:

- Foundational Literacy:
 - ✓ Innovative ideas and primary research into advancing literacy practices within refugee and internally displaced populations and/or fragile and conflict affected contexts.
 - ✓ Impact of language and mother tongue on literacy learning in displacement contexts
 - ✓ Strategies for sustainable psychosocial educational support for children and teachers within refugee settlements and fragile contexts.
- Gender and Inclusion:
 - ✓ The impact of gender or other vulnerabilities on inclusion and equity in primary education and teaching in these same contexts.

- ✓ Factors and/or interventions that contribute to reducing barriers to quality education for children, especially girls; in fragile, conflict, refugee and crisis situations; and/or in relation to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic
- TLMs and Locally Relevant Reading Materials:
 - ✓ The role of quality teaching and culturally relevant reading materials on literacy and particularly early grade reading in refugee and IDP contexts.
 - ✓ Relationship between the school, the home, and the community and the role this plays in strengthening culturally relevant teaching and learning materials.
 - ✓ Possible role of digital teaching and learning and the use of appropriate ICT to improve learning outcomes in refugee and IDP contexts
- Teaching Quality and Accreditation:
 - ✓ Role of pre-service teacher education and in-service professional development in the qualifications and capacities of teachers in refugee and IDP contexts.
 - ✓ Impact of host country educational policies and teacher accreditation on refugee teachers

3.2. Three Areas of Inquiry:

Proposals should address at least one of these three areas of inquiry **Access to Education, Quality Education, and Education Policy**. The questions written under each heading are suggested topics to consider. Researchers are encouraged to propose other topics so long as they relate to one of the three areas of inquiry and address access, quality, and policy.

Research proposals must clearly address how the results will contribute to or fill a gap in existing knowledge and understanding.

The studies should capture the primary level of education programming, which includes but is not limited to children or learners from age 4 to 12, pre-service or in-service teacher education (especially as it relates to teaching and learning in fragile contexts); literacy programs; local teaching and learning materials and refugee settlement and or fragile contexts organizations.

Three Areas of Inquiry:

3.2.1. Access to Education

- What are the barriers for refugee/IDP learners to access education? What could be the reasons for/or not enrolling? (Consider circumstances such as their family contexts, tensions in the community or challenges around securing their school records, their experience of education if they are able to enrol – support provided, whether they experienced stigma in school and the impact of their displacement over the longer term on their access to education)

- What is the role of education in promoting social cohesion and peacebuilding? What is the relationship between the level of education attained and relative peace in a country or region would help to build a stronger case for education and open up new areas of scholarship under the peacebuilding agenda.
- Examine the role of language in promoting social cohesion and opportunities for cultural preservation in the face of displacement are identified gaps in research. How best could we understand the unique language-in-education needs of learners in displacement?
- How could the use of *ICTs improve access to education for displaced learners? (could also explore how use of ICTs in the wake of school closures due to COVID-19 restrictions and how this is specifically related to the experience of learners in displacement and the use of ICTs).*
- Explore how conflict-sensitive approaches can enhance access to education for refugees, internally displaced persons (IDPs), and children living in areas with conflict.

3.2.2. Quality Education

- How can innovative pedagogical approaches be developed or adapted to cater for the unique learning needs of students in conflict-affected environments?
- What role can student-centred and participatory teaching methods play in enhancing the quality of education for displaced learners?
- How do culturally sensitive and contextually relevant pedagogical strategies contribute to effective learning outcomes in areas impacted by conflict?
- What are the existing and possible alternatives to traditional certification and accreditation for teachers? (This could also reflect on teacher profiles, required competencies, alignment with national curricula and policy barriers and enablers).
- What could be the quality education provided within the low-cost private schools being established by refugee parents and community members in camp settings? (There is a need to understand both the push and pull factors for government vs. private schools).

- How could the use of ICTs improve learning for displaced learners? What is the role of ICTs in providing psychosocial support for learners in displacement?
- What are professional development opportunities and gaps for teachers working in displacement contexts? What efforts have been put in providing professional development for teachers in displacement contexts and what lesson could be drawn from such efforts?
- How can conflict-sensitive approaches contribute to maintaining or improving the quality of education in these contexts. This might involve investigating curriculum adaptation, teacher training, and pedagogical methods that address the unique challenges posed by conflict while upholding educational standards.

3.2.3. Education Systems and Policy

- This might include examining policy frameworks, guidelines, and strategies that address the needs of learners and educators in conflict-affected environments.
- What are the existing models of inclusion within displacement contexts and what are the strengths and weaknesses of each? (For example, “full inclusion” could look like refugee teachers working with students from the displacement community to deliver the curriculum of the host country but translated into the language of the country of origin)
- What are the current practices in measuring learning outcomes in displacement contexts? Are there any policy-related challenges and or how could learning assessment data be used to strengthen educational policy on education in displacement or fragile contexts?
- How could we understand and address data gaps in displacement education? (This could include prioritizing the safe identification of refugees in existing data collection tools such as EMIS, using unique IDs or nationality; disaggregating data on refugee education; optimizing the added value of enhanced identification and disaggregation to expand coverage on indicators beyond enrolment and attendance; and or understanding the best way to coordinate and set standards for refugee education data collection to avoid duplication, using models such as the UNHCR-UNICEF Blueprint for Joint Action and the Inter-agency Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE) Data Reference Group for Education in Emergencies (EiE), as models for better data-sharing and coordination)

4.0. TERMS OF RESEARCH

The studies can be of any duration but are envisioned to cover a period between 8 to 24 months.

5.0. FUNDS

The grant is issued in Canadian dollars **up to \$20,000.00**. (see section 8 – Budget for details on allowable expenses)

6.0. REVIEW PROCESS

- **Information Session.** Interested researchers are invited to participate in an online information session on September 18, 2023 (see <https://code.ngo/approach/research-initiatives/> for registration and more details). The information session will provide an overview of Context Matters, tips for putting together a winning proposal, and provide an opportunity to ask questions.
- Proposals will be reviewed by CODE for adherence to the stated submission requirements indicated in the Call for Proposals, Application Form, and Submission Guidelines.
- A panel of anonymous jurors comprised of African researchers and/or researchers from African institutions will then review all eligible applications and provide recommendations to the International Advisory Committee.
- The International Advisory Committee will then provide feedback, recommendations, and requests for more information as needed.
- Research teams may be assigned a mentor to assist in the revision of proposals.
- CODE will then determine which proposals to fund.
- All efforts will be made to notify all applicants of the status of their applications on or before January 1, 2024.

6.1. Proposals will be evaluated using the criteria below:

Intellectual Merit: Will the research results and analysis advance knowledge in the fields of study outlined in the Call for Research; contribute to the evidence base on access to education or quality education; or education policy within education and fragile contexts? How best to measure the impact of interventions that improve the educational opportunities, and well-being of learners and teachers within displacement contexts? Does the proposal go beyond existing research?

Potential Impact: Will the research results make an impact on an aspect of the education system, the community engaged in the project, or society as a whole? Will the results of the project help African countries meet the UN's sustainable development goals? Will it contribute to evidence-based decisions regarding policy, better data collection, and evaluation of gender equality? In what ways will it contribute to Teaching and Learning in Fragile Contexts' targeted areas of interest (such as access to education, quality education, or education policy)?

Methods: Are the methods employed ethical, culturally sensitive, gender-sensitive, and inclusive? Is there a sufficient level of detail provided in the proposal in relation to how data will be

collected, analyzed, and interpreted? If appropriate, does the research methodology clearly demonstrate the procedures for how research participants will be engaged in activities such as data collection, analysis, interpretation of findings, developing recommendations, and sharing these with potential users? Will the methods employed result in relevant, meaningful, and valid findings regarding literacy development, enhanced in-service teacher education programs, or advancing gender-responsive practices? How do the methods align with the “best practices” of education researchers? How do the methods align with the goals of the research? How do the methods align with the interests of the community or research site?

Ethical considerations: CODE expects research teams to engage communities in a respectful, reciprocal, and responsive fashion. How will the research process ensure the health and safety of researchers and research participants? How will the research process approach or address interactions between male/female researchers and male/female research participants? Have issues around consent for children under 18 to participate, child protection, and a code of conduct including prevention of sexual exploitation been identified and addressed?

Qualifications of Researcher: Does the research team have the necessary skills (personal, social, and technical) to carry out the proposed research project? Is there evidence that the team has an adequate track record? Do the researchers have experience, knowledge, or qualifications related to the topic? Are the researchers affiliated with an institution with adequate subject matter and methodological expertise to monitor their work? Can the researchers clearly demonstrate the strategies that will be used to build trust and rapport with participants around sensitive topics?

Collaborations: While not required, collaborations among researchers from the same or from different academic institutions, or between literacy/education organizations and academic researchers, or collaborations that provide mentorship/support to up-and-coming researchers will be noted.

Budget: Is the proposed budget adequate to complete the research? Are the costs outlined aligned with the stated requirements in the Call for Proposals? Are the overhead costs in line with the Teaching and Learning in Fragile Contexts’ requirements?

If the proposed budget is beyond the \$20,000.00 CDN grant, be sure it is clear where the remaining funds will come from. Collaborations/joint research projects are encouraged and acceptable.

ANNEX I: GUIDELINES FOR SUBMISSION

Please review these Guidelines for Submission carefully before completing the Application Form. Click [here](#) to Apply.

All proposals should be submitted in English using the attached Application Form. Proposals should be a maximum of 7 single-spaced pages, not including references and required attachments (CVs, work plan, budget, letters of reference). Follow the guidelines below for each section.

CODE strongly encourages women, underrepresented groups, and persons with disabilities to participate fully in all programs.

Section 1:

Contact information: Title, Name and Institutional Affiliation: The Principal Investigator must have a formal institutional affiliation evidenced by the signature of a senior official from the affiliated institution in section 6 of the Application Form.

Section 2:

Project title, country (region/city), proposed start date (Jan 2024 is earliest recommended date), duration of the research (a max of two years) and a list of investigators (include the names, titles, institutions, departments or organization names, and the gender of the co-researchers).

Section 3: Project Summary

The summary should be one 500 words maximum (1 page, 12 pt font, single spaced) and must include the following:

- Proposed title;
- Statement of purpose, objectives, and research questions;
- Description of the intellectual merit (contribution to the field) of the proposed research;
- Significance of the proposed activity to the research participants;
- Expected impact and/or potential influence on policy, teaching practices, learning outcomes, teachers, students, or community.

Section 4: Project Description

2,500 words maximum (about 5 pages, single-spaced, 12 pt font) and must include:

- Background (a brief literature review or description of the context) of the topic under investigation;
- Proposed target population (be specific about ages and include the estimated number of participants) being investigated;

- Objectives and research question;
- Methodology (qualitative, quantitative, action research, methodologies that are rooted in Indigenous and local epistemologies, etc.);
- Activities to be undertaken;
- Definitions of key terms/concepts including precise definitions of any variables to be measured;
- If using focus group discussions (FGD) give sample questions and indicate strategies for building trust and rapport with participants when discussing sensitive topics;
- Data collection tools, instruments;
- Proposed data analysis procedures;
- Intended outcomes including a note on what would make this research project a 'success';
- A brief plan for sharing the results with the community or participants involved, as well as with national or international audiences: such as a final visit to the field sites, conferences, publications, media outlets, coalitions, or education sector meetings;
- Work plan with a timeline.

Section 5: Ethical Clearance

- CODE expects research teams to engage communities in a respectful, reciprocal, and responsive fashion.
- CODE expects strict adherence to ethical standards and procedures and the rules of attribution.
- Describe the ethical standards and clearance procedures of your institution and how you will (intend to) meet these.
- If your institution does not have such standards or procedures in place, describe the standards and procedures you will follow to ensure compliance with best practices. Note that this section must be completed in order for the proposal to be forwarded to the review jury.
- Successful research teams will be expected to read and agree to CODE's policies: Code of Conduct, Preventing Sexual Exploitation and Abuse Policy; and the Child Protection Policy.

Section 6: Institutional Affiliation

The Principal Investigator must have a formal institutional affiliation included in the research proposal. This stipulation requires the signature of an official from the Institution.

Section 7: Appendices.

Complete and attach the following to your application:

- Annex II. Proposed Research Project Budget Template (separate Excel template)
- Reference list (up to one (1) page single-spaced,).
- Letters of support from those involved in the project (for example target group, government officials, community members, school administrators, up to 3 letters). Please note that letters of support are not required for jury review. However, if your proposal is accepted, you will be asked to provide these letters of support.
- CV of the Principal Investigator
- CVs of co-researchers

8. Budget

- Complete Annex II. Proposed Research Project Budget Template (separate Excel template). The proposed budget should clearly link your expected results to the amount requested.
- If the proposed budget exceeds the \$20,000.00 Canadian dollar amount, indicate other funding sources that will be used to cover additional costs.

Collaborations/joint research projects are acceptable.

Funds may be used to support:

- Items needed for the research and not routinely available through the applicant's place of employment.
- Implementation of research activities;
- Materials and supplies (paper, books, etc.);
- Travel and accommodation directly related to the research;
- Books: for student and teacher use, for library reference, for implementation of activities;
- Administrative expenses (postage, duplication costs, printing);
- Payment in support of a graduate student or research assistant.

Funds may NOT be used to support:

- Contribution toward the salary of the Principal Investigator;
- Equipment (computers, mobile devices, audio-visual equipment) not directly related to the research initiative;
- Indirect costs (costs not directly associated with the project such as charging for existing office space) other than the allowable 8% overhead;
- Costs of conference attendance and/or support for the dissemination of the research, will not be supported. (However, upon successful completion of the study, new funds may be made available for this purpose);

ANNEX II: PROPOSED RESEARCH PROJECT BUDGET TEMPLATE

Provide an estimated budget for your research projects including notes with justifications using the Excel provided, download

[<Budget Sheet>](#)

- Complete Annex II. Proposed Research Project Budget Template (separate Excel template). The proposed budget should clearly link your expected results to the amount requested.
- If the proposed budget exceeds the \$20,000.00 Canadian dollar amount, indicate other funding sources that will be used to cover additional costs.

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- Costs of conference attendance and/or support for the dissemination of the research, will not be supported. (However, upon successful completion of the study, new funds may be made available for this purpose);

[<Click here to Apply>](#)

ANNEX III: LIST OF COUNTRIES WITH MORE THAN 100,000 REFUGEES OR IDPS

	Country	Refugees Hosted in 2021	IDPs in 2021	Total IDP and Refugees		
1	Congo, Dem. Rep.	520,544	5,686,000	6,206,544		
2	Ethiopia	879,598	3,852,000	4,731,598		
3	Sudan	1,097,128	3,553,000	4,650,128		
4	Somalia	160,233	3,864,000	3,880,023		
5	Nigeria	912,753	3,646,000	3,737,275		
6	Burkina Faso	343,753	1,882,000	1,916,375		
7	South Sudan	308,369	1,475,000	1,783,369		
8	Uganda	1,463,523	4,800	1,468,323		
9	Cameroon	473,887	987,000	1,460,887		
10	Mozambique	499,200	1,030,000	1,034,992		
11	Chad	592,764	300,000	892,764		
12	Niger	255,307	372,000	627,307		
13	Kenya	504,473	30,000	534,473		
14	Central African Republic	112,133	516,000	527,213		
15	Mali	606,373	380,000	440,637		
16	Cote d'Ivoire	5,636	302,000	307,636		
17	Tanzania	206,229	-	206,229		
18	Rwanda	120,753	-	120,753		
19	Mauritania	100,981	-	100,981		

Ranking By # of Refugees Hosted		Ranking by # of IDPs	
1	Uganda	1	Congo, Dem. Rep.
2	Sudan	2	Somalia
3	Ethiopia	3	Ethiopia
4	Chad	4	Nigeria
5	Congo, Dem. Rep.	5	Sudan
6	Kenya	6	Burkina Faso
7	Cameroon	7	South Sudan
8	South Sudan	8	Mozambique
9	Niger	9	Cameroon
10	Tanzania	10	Central African Republic
11	Rwanda	11	Mali
12	Mauritania	12	Niger
		13	Cote d'Ivoire
		14	Chad