

Communique Issued at the End of a One-Day Validation of Baseline Study Report on the Community Led Collective Action For Girls Education Project in Adamawa State Held on Thursday 20TH June 2019, At Madugu Hotel, Yola, Adamawa State.

**Preamble**

A one-day validation meeting was convened by the African Centre for Leadership, Strategy and Development (Centre LSD) with the support of Malala Fund on the Community Led Collective Action for Girls Education project (C-CAGE). The C-CAGE project seeks to strengthen systems and cultural norms that will encourage girl’s enrolment, retention and completion of secondary schools in Maiha, Numan and Song Local Government areas of Adamawa state. The baseline study report was with the sole objective of enriching the draft report submitted by the researcher. It also provided a platform for interaction between the various stakeholders including Adamawa State Government and its agencies, the Media and Community leaders/gatekeepers on practical ways to address the issues of girl child education in Numan, Song and Maiha Local Government Areas of Adamawa State.

**Observations:**

Participants at the Validation Meeting observed the following:

1. Cultural and Religious practices have played a major role in limiting the chances of the girl child getting an education in the focal local government areas.
2. While the concerns of out of school children particularly that of the girl child is disturbing, it is traceable to a lot of factors including; kidnapping, insurgency and the general insecurity that pervades the country and the northeast in particular.
3. Adamawa State has a unique case of out of school children and especially amongst girls. This challenge seems to be unending and requires urgent attention from all stakeholders especially the government.
4. One of the major drawbacks to the girl child education in the state is a general lack of awareness on the importance of girl child education. This has led to various kinds of challenges including a high rate of rape cases and teenage pregnancies.
5. Sex education is not taught in the school curriculum due to religious connotations associated with it. Even parents see the topic as a taboo at home.
6. The increasing rate of rape cases, especially in interior communities, has exacerbated the fears of parents sending their female children/wards to school.

**Recommendations**

Participants at the Validation meeting made the following recommendations:

1. Government, its relevant agencies and the community/religious leaders should wake up to the current realities of the education of the girl child with the view to drastically reducing the educational gap amongst girls and in line with the demands of the SDGs.
2. Federal, State, Local governments and community leaders must ensure adequate security of life and properties especially the safety of the girl child anywhere they are found.
3. The Adamawa state government should take adequate measures to ensure girls enrolment and retention in schools and reverse the current trend in line with global expectation.
4. The inhabitants of Maiha, Song & Numan will need to encourage their community leaders and enlighten people on the need to educate girls. Civil Society organizations, the government and its relevant agencies and actors, should ensure they create the needed awareness on the Child Right Act in the state.
5. There is a need for sex education both in schools and at home by teachers and parents alike. It is highly necessary for sex education to be included in all syllabus to be taught to all children especially the girl child and better ways of birth control measures should be taken to the homes by parents no matter their religious inclinations
6. Community vigilante groups should increase their watchfulness and ensure girls are protected from sexual molestation.

**Conclusion**

Stakeholders commended and appreciated the African Centre for Leadership, Strategy and Development (Centre LSD) and Malala Fund for the C-CAGE project and the baseline study report to understand the challenges facing girl child education in Adamawa state. They emphasized the worrisome situation of girl’s education in the state and thanked Malala fund and Centre LSD for taking steps to address the issues. Stakeholders unanimously validated the baseline study. The meeting called on relevant stakeholders to ensure that with the information on the trends, out of school girls is used to strongly advocate for the education of the girl child in order to transform Adamawa for good. They also encouraged the communities and individual to as a matter of urgency send their girls to school and ensure they complete their education at least to Secondary School level.

Signed:

1. Grace Mija-Community Development Officer Numan
2. Abdulrahman Suleiman- Community development Officer Maiha
3. Musa Ngura-Community Development Officer Song
4. Clara Mustapha-Representative of the Director general Gotel Communication
5. Frances Igwilo – African Centre for Leadership Strategy and Development (Centre LSD)

Join the campaign to get #Girls2School and #Girls2SchoolAdamawa