Terms of reference: Review and revision of study on the nature of past and ongoing State and non-State interventions on the Almajiri issue in Northern Nigeria

Partners: Anti-Slavery International (London, UK) and the Resource Centre for Human Rights and Civic Education (CHRICEd) (Kano, Nigeria)

Contextual background

Nigeria is home to the highest number of Quranic students, also called ‘Almajiri’ children, in the region. The National Council for the Welfare of Destitute estimates that there are up to 7 million Almajiri children in Nigeria, but actual figures are likely higher. Almajiri children, concentrated in urban centres of northern majority-Muslim states, typically live in dire conditions, spending most of their time in the streets or Qur’anic schools, where they are frequently subjected to extensive forms of abuse (including forced begging, violence and sexual exploitation).

The situation of Almajiri children has led the Nigerian Government to adopt programmatic interventions and reforms to address the issue, such as former President Jonathan Goodluck’s 2010 ‘Almajiri School Project’ (also known as National Framework for the Development and Integration of Almajiri Education into the Universal Basic Education Scheme) which aimed at providing access to basic education to all Almajiri children of school age. The program was designed to create alternative ‘models’ for Quranic school systems to ultimately discourage and gradually eradicate forced child begging practices. As part of this initiative, the federal government built 89 model Almajiri primary schools in the 19 northern states in the country. However, most of the schools never opened their doors. To a lesser extent, non-state actors such as local and international aid agencies and NGOs, etc. have also initiated projects to address the needs of neglected Almajiri children. Overall, these interventions have fallen well short of addressing the widespread phenomenon of forced child begging in Nigeria or improving Almajiris’ living conditions. The specific causes for these programmatic failures remain unclear.

Background to this assignment

Anti-Slavery International recruited a consultant to conduct research on the nature of past and ongoing State and non-State interventions on the Almajiri issue in Northern Nigeria (Borno, Kano and Nassarawa states). This was part of a research and advocacy project ‘Combating Forced Child Begging in Nigeria,’ funded by the United State Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor. The resulting research had various limitations, notably that it was more descriptive than analytical, and overly long. Even after multiple re-drafts, it was lacking in a clear analysis of the failures of State and non-State interventions to reform the Quranic school system, and it appears the primary data to assess this may also be lacking.

Research assignment tasks

Anti-Slavery is therefore currently looking for a consultant who can:

1. Review the existing research thoroughly and revise the draft research into a more concise format (see suggested structure below);
2. Identify key gaps in the research and pursue the primary research on past and ongoing State and non-State interventions further where necessary;
3. Explicitly analyse the failures and successes of each intervention; what were the factors of failure or success? The analysis generated should deliver clear recommendations to inform governmental and non-governmental interventions and reforms that would effectively end
forced child begging and abuse of Almajiris. It should thus form a framework for Anti-Slavery International’s future advocacy on this issue.

The consultant will work in collaboration with CHRICED and Anti-Slavery International. Tasks will include:

- Agreeing the Terms of References and holding a preliminary discussion with partners to further clarify expectations;
- **Data Review**: Reviewing the data already collected by the previous researcher working on this project - including transcripts of interviews and focus group discussions*; as well as the final version of the draft report - including Anti-Slavery International’s feedback and comments.
- This will allow the consultant to extract and systematically reorganize all usable information and identify gaps.
  *The data already collected are in SPSS files and might include NVivo files.
- **Research Design**: Developing a research methodology including interview and FGD frameworks, identifying specific key informants and the sample size of respondents, based on the gaps identified in the Data Review process.
- **Data Collection**: A targeted exercise that should seek to fill the gaps of the existing data with constrained resources and time. Would include a limited number of highly focused, in-depth interviews with Almajiri children and key stakeholders such as State officials and UN or civil society actors, through remote communications and collaboration with partners in Nigeria *and a potential field visit* (as this currently looks unlikely, research must be done remotely as far as possible in the first instance).
- **Data Analysis**: Providing an in-depth analysis of the Almajiri situation and related interventions’ failures and relative successes; and practical recommendations which would support the project’s advocacy for evidence-based programming.
- **Write-up**: Producing and submitting a first draft study by end of May 2020 and sending subsequent drafts based on our feedback and a final report (no more than 50 pages) by mid-June 2020. The inclusion of graphs and charts in the final report (e.g. actors intervening on the Almajiri issue disaggregated per area of intervention and/or sectoral expertise) is encouraged to facilitate the analysis. (No graphic design expected).

In addition, regular weekly updates to Anti-Slavery International and CHRICED staff by email for the duration of the contract is essential, with options for Skype meetings with CHRICED and Anti-Slavery International if and when necessary. The consultant may also be required to participate in partner calls relevant to the study.

Technical assistance (with basic research needs, translation from Hausa to English, the organization of meetings with key informants in the field, and other logistics) will be provided by CHRICED staff (including a dedicated project assistant and a volunteer), based in Kano, Nigeria. General guidance will be provided by Anti-Slavery International throughout the duration of the assignment. The Consultant will be home-based.

**Suggested structure**

Review and revise the report until it follows the following structure. Aim to have a report of no more than 50 pages:

**Section 1**

Executive Summary (to be rewritten to reflect key points of analysis and recommendations); Glossary of terms (to be reduced);
Introduction – very brief background to the Almajiri system in Nigeria – history and description of the system, causal factors/social value of the system, current problems/links to slavery, timeline of interventions.

Aims of this research.

Methodology, including ethical framework (a brief description; detail to go in annexes);
Review of existing literature, with a focus on interventions – brief background/history/causes (some of this description can go in textboxes).

Section 2
Almajiris’ experiences (to be cut down)
Brief analysis of risks and harms, particularly in terms of how the system might fall under definitions of slavery.
Detail of Almajiris'/community views on Almajiri system and needs

Section 3
State-led interventions – detailed description (include graphs/charts where appropriate)
Almajiris'/community views on state-led interventions
NGO interventions – detailed overview (include graphs/charts where appropriate)
Almajiris'/community views on NGO interventions
Other interventions (to be added if relevant) – e.g. Almajiris'/communities’ own, self-organised efforts to support almajiris, if any, mentioned in the course of the research

Overall analysis of impact and success/failures – this is the key area that needs further research from other data sources – e.g. government officials, programmatic literature – to be triangulated with participants’ responses (include graphs/charts where appropriate).

Key factors behind the success/failures of the interventions – shortfalls, views from Almajiris, communities, officials involved, etc.

Senegal case study to be cut.

Section 4
Conclusions and recommendations addressed to different stakeholders (government, UN, national and international NGOs, regional institutions, research institutes etc.).

Duration

It is anticipated that this revision and further research will take 30 days over a period of approximately 2 months with an expected start date of April 15, 2020. These number of days below are dependent on the final agreed research methodology.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Flow of activity for study</th>
<th>Days</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Review and edits to the initial existing research document</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Literature/Data review</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research design, formulation of key questions &amp; interview template</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary data collection / field research</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>Data analysis</td>
<td>6</td>
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The main points of contact for this assignment will be Sarah Mathewson (s.mathewson@antislavery.org), Africa Programme Manager.

**Budget and payment**

The fee, including any administrative costs (e.g. the cost of calls, printing) is USD 6,000. This budget is non-negotiable.

Payment will be made in two instalments: 40 per cent will be paid within a week of agreement signed by Consultant and CHRICED/ASI, and 60 per cent following successful submission of the final report, including edits agreed by CHRICED and ASI.

It is expected that the Consultant will produce this work over a period of **two months maximum**. This includes the days to finalize the report and present it to the project team.

**Specification of the Consultant**

The consultant must be a qualified researcher or analyst in the fields of Social Research, Statistics, community development, project management, project evaluations and any other related qualification; and have at least 5 years’ experience in research, baseline surveys, evaluations, qualitative and quantitative data analysis and report writing. Preferably, the applicant should have knowledge on governance issues and understanding of local context in northern Nigeria.

Anti-Slavery International will consider the consultancy to be undertaken by either an individual consultant or one consultant with an associate.

Given the current global health crisis, the evaluation will be done remotely, through desk research, as well as liaison/discussion with project partners in London and Kano, Nigeria. The consultant/s should be available as soon as possible to start the research by the 15th of April and finalise the report by mid-June 2020.

**Applications and deadlines**

Applicants should prepare and email the following to be considered for this opportunity:

- CV
- Cover letter
- A brief approach paper (no more than 4 pages) outlining a methodology for conducting the study to s.mathewson@antislavery.org.

The **deadline for applications is Friday 10th of April (midnight London time)**, with interviews to be held via Skype on April 13th and 14th.