

## **Terms of Reference for a scoping study with data collection to explore potential partners and the prevalence/occurrence of online sexual exploitation in Nigeria**

### **1. General Information**

Terre des Hommes Netherlands (TdH NL) is a child rights organisation and an international NGO. Our vision is that children can flourish in a world free from all forms of child exploitation. Our mission is to protect children by preventing and stopping child exploitation, and by empowering children to make their voices count. In executing our mission we seek to address the root causes of exploitation by creating scalable, evidence-based solutions and influencing systemic change rather than providing one-off remedies. Our work towards systemic change is driven by five core principles: Children at the centre, Safety and well-being, Intersectionality, Power Awareness and Sustainability. The organisation works together with children and their families, communities, governments, institutional mechanisms, civil society organisations, and the private sector.

### **2. Background**

One of TdH NL's thematic programmes addresses the Sexual Exploitation of Children (SEC). This programme envisions a world where "children, in all their diversity, are safe from all forms of sexual exploitation, enjoy their rights, and have influence". Using a comprehensive co-creation process that included input from children, this Programme was designed to prevent and respond to online and offline sexual exploitation through ecological, holistic and whole-of-society approaches that address risk and protective factors at multiple levels and in multiple protective environments, tailored for children most likely to be left behind with gender, intersectionality and evolving capacities in mind.

Under this thematic pillar, SCROL 2.0: Safe Minds Online was launched as the second phase of the SCROL program, which began in late 2022. Building on the evidence and lessons learned from the initial phase, SCROL 2.0 addresses the intersection of mental health and Online Child Sexual Exploitation (OCSE) by promoting healthy relationships and trauma-informed initiatives to protect children.

While SCROL 2.0 is initially rolling out in the original implementing countries (Kenya, Nepal, and the Philippines), Nigeria has been identified as a priority

country for a potential scale-up and pilot intervention in 2027. Nigeria is a leader in digital transformation and economic growth driven by the tech sector, but it faces complex child protection issues. Notably, Nigeria is the country in West Africa with the highest number of reports to the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children (NCMEC) Cybertipline, seeing a sharp increase of over 100% between 2021 and 2022. Fortunately, Nigeria has passed laws to address online child sexual exploitation and abuse (OCSEA), offering significant opportunities for advocacy and systemic interventions.

### 3. Objective of the Scoping Study

The objective of this scoping study is to explore the prevalence and nature of OCSE in Nigeria, and to map out the key stakeholders involved in child protection and digital safety. The research aims to:

1. Gain insight into the types of online risks and exploitation children are experiencing in Nigeria, the specific digital platforms and contexts in which these occur, and the main drivers of vulnerability, particularly those related to mental health challenges and caregiving environments
2. Determine the underlying drivers of these risks, paying particular attention to mental health challenges and caregiving environments.
3. Collect relevant information about the policy and institutional landscape regarding OCSEA laws, child protection systems, and current mechanisms for reporting and responding to cases. Concurrently, assess the barriers children face in accessing support and the key gaps in these current systems to pinpoint the most effective entry points for intervention.
4. Map out relevant stakeholders in the country, including local civil society organisations (CSOs), government ministries, law enforcement agencies, and private sector tech/telecom companies.
5. Evaluate potential partner organisations for future programming, including but not limited to existing TdH NL contacts
6. Assess the operationalisation of TdH NL's strategic operational model in practice, evaluating how its partner-led approach can be successfully established in Nigeria

**4. Expected Deliverables** The main expected outcome is reliable data on the context of OCSE in Nigeria and the associated ecosystem of actors, which will inform the design of a potential SCROL 2.0 pilot. The consultant is expected to deliver a final report (max. 30 pages) including:

1. **A context analysis** detailing the social, legal, and institutional landscape around the broader spectrum of OCSE, examining key SCROL pillars including the mental health nexus, caregiving environments, intersectional vulnerabilities, and the systemic and digital landscape.
2. **A comprehensive stakeholder map and partnership recommendations**, outlining potential partner organisations, their track records, expertise

(particularly regarding OCSE, mental health, parent and private sector engagement, and systems strengthening), and contact persons.

3. **Technical advice and recommendations** to guide TdH NL's programming options based on the socio-ecological approach (engaging children, parents, communities, and systems), including targeted regions and operational hotspots where a potential SCROL 2.0 pilot project would be most impactful. This must include a detailed identification of existing programmatic gaps (mapping out what other organisations are already implementing and where the unmet needs lie), an evaluation of whether these gaps are more prominent in prevention or in response, and an assessment of TdH NL's added value and potential to produce systemic change.
4. **A comprehensive methodological note and data package**, detailing the qualitative methods used with stakeholders (such as focus group discussions or interviews based on TdH NL guidelines), explicitly incorporating dedicated, safe, and ethical consultations with children and caregivers. This must be accompanied by all raw data, filled-out note-taking templates, and verbatim transcripts in both the original language of capture and translated into English

## 5. Timeline and Deadline:

We aim for this assignment to be carried out within Q3/Q4, with the final deliverables due in early November.

Proposed Timeline:

- **Phase 1:** Preparatory phase and stakeholder mapping. Desk research and co-designing interview guides.
  - Deliverable: scoping study concept note, including interviewees selection
- **Phase 2:** Stakeholder engagement. Conducting 8-10 qualitative interviews with selected stakeholders (community, local/national government, CSOs, tech sector) alongside 6-8 safe, participatory, and age-appropriate focus group discussions with children and caregivers to explore OCSE prevention/response measures.
- **Phase 3:** Data analysis and reporting.
  - Deliverable: Final report

Based on the preliminary stakeholder mapping, a 2-person fact finding mission from the SEC and SCROL teams is expected to join the consultants during interviews to key stakeholders in early October. The aim of this mission is to get to know the most important stakeholders and to get a better understanding of the situation on the ground, guided by the consultant.

**Note:** The consultant is expected to lead the technical design and execution of this assignment. The research methodology, stakeholder engagement strategy, and selection of interviewees will be developed by the consultant and will be subject to validation and approval by TdH NL to ensure alignment with the broader TdH NL evidence-building strategy.

## 5. Budget

The available budget for this scoping study is between to **15,000-18,000 EUR**, inclusive of VAT, research, and travel costs (and excluding travel costs of the 2 person mission from TdH NL)

## 6. Profile and Application Process

Desired consultants will have:

- Extensive experience in conducting participatory and qualitative research methodologies.
- Strong understanding of child protection, online sexual exploitation of children (OCSE), and ideally, knowledge of mental health and psychosocial support systems.
- Preference for candidates or agencies based in Nigeria to ensure cultural and contextual understanding.
- Ability to communicate fluently in English and relevant local languages.
- Proven experience in conducting ethical, safe, and age-appropriate qualitative research with children

**Who can apply:** Any individual or agency fitting the profile can apply. Agencies must have no conflict of interest, and a due diligence check will be part of the procedure.

### Important Integrity Measures

The consultant must adhere to the Tdh NL Integrity Framework<sup>1</sup>; therefore, as a condition of entering into a consultancy agreement, the individual/firm must:

- Read and Sign the TdH NL Code of Conduct
- Read and sign the Annex 2 Conflict of Interest Policy Declaration..
- Read and Sign the TdH NL Ethical Content Policy

Additionally (as will also be stated in the contract):

- The consultant or consultancy firm is solely responsible for safely recruiting, training, and managing all staff and subcontractors (including researchers, enumerators, and translators), ensuring their safety, support, and strict compliance with safeguarding standards throughout the scoping study.

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<sup>1</sup> Integrated by Code of Conduct, Safeguarding Policy, Sexual Harassment Policy, Anti-Fraud, corruption, terrorism and money-laundry Policy, Conflict Of Interest Policy.

- A clear map of active hotlines, local child protection CSOs, and MHPSS providers in Nigeria for immediate referral if a child discloses abuse or experiences distress.
- TdH NL's prior review and green light on all child assent and parental consent forms.
- A Safeguarding Risk Assessment covering "Do No Harm" field standards (e.g. session length limits, safe schedules, and local language suitability).

## 7. How to Apply

Please send your application via email to Lucía Montes at [l.montes@tdh.nl](mailto:l.montes@tdh.nl). The deadline for submission is **16 August (inclusive)**.

The following should be included in applications:

- CV (individuals) or Credentials (Agency)
- Motivation letter
- Proposed Approach and Work Plan: A brief paper outlining your proposed methodology and a simple work plan aligned with the Q3/Q4 2026 timeline.
- Financial Proposal: A budget breakdown (up to a maximum of 18,000 EUR) that clearly conveys how the funds will be distributed across the assignment (e.g., consultant daily rates, travel, and data collection costs)