

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Consultancy for Design of Upper Primary Math Assessment

CONTRACT MODALITY Individual Consultancy

DUTY STATION Florence, Italy / remote

DURATION OF CONTRACT 15 months

Purpose of Assignment

UNICEF launched the MICS Foundational Learning Skills (FLS) module in 2017 as the first standardized, globally implemented household survey assessment of children’s foundational reading and math skills, contributing to SDG indicator 4.1.1(a). By 2025, more than 60 countries have collected or are preparing to collect comparable data using the module, helping to spotlight early grade learning and learning inequalities.

The purpose of this assignment is to develop a new assessment tool to measure minimum proficiency in mathematics at the end of primary school (SDG indicator 4.1.1b) that will complement the lower primary component of the FLM2.0, and to advise UNICEF on the integration of both components (lower and primary) for a comprehensive instrument to assess learning skills in MICS.

Scope of Work

In close collaboration with the UNICEF project team, and based on input from UNICEF, the consultant will develop items to measure mathematical skills of children, interpret results from field testing data and provide advice on technical issues regarding the administration protocol of these items in a household survey context. Specifically, this assignment involves the development of a new household-based assessment to measure minimum proficiency level in mathematics at the end of primary education (SDG indicator 4.1.1b). Two parallel forms of the assessment will be created; each form will include a minimum of 20 items. These forms will be vertically aligned with the FLM2.0 at the end of lower primary. In 2022-23, items were written to assess end of upper primary students’ mathematics proficiency, as described by the Global Proficiency Framework. In January 2024, data from think aloud interviews with these items were analyzed and 14 items were recommended to be retained. These items will be examined for alignment with the current UIS criteria for reporting.

Work Assignments Overview	Deliverables/Outputs	Delivery deadline (in weeks/months) and input days to complete the deliverable
<p>1. Development of a new household-based assessment to measure minimum proficiency level in mathematics at the end of primary education (SDG indicator 4.1.1b). This will involve developing a test blueprint, reviewing existing items, determining the alignment with the test blueprint and proposing the number of new items that are needed to meet the UIS criteria for reporting (including the number needed for each domain and subconstruct). The assignment will also include developing specific mathematics items that can be added to the FLM2.0, supporting the external expert review process by reconciling comments and revising the items, and supporting field test preparations including determining the item ordering and selecting items from the FLM2.0 for early primary for vertical alignment.</p>	<p>1. Technical report for development of FLM2.0 end of primary assessment at grade 5. The report will include the blueprint and a spreadsheet with the proposed items. The items will conform to the format (e.g., multiple choice) and administration (e.g., group or individually administered) specified by UNICEF in consultation with the specialist and will be delivered in an Excel spreadsheet attached to the report with sample graphics provided as needed. Final graphics for each item will be created by the UNICEF project team. The report will also include a summary of the reconciliation efforts of external reviewers' input.</p>	<p>31 May 2026 20 days</p>

<p>2. Support efforts to field test the items (school-based Field Test 1) and review output from the statistical and psychometric analyses to select items. This will include providing recommendations on the design of Field Test 1, reviewing statistical and psychometric output from Field Test 1 to recommend the items that are viable to be retained, and selecting items based on the review of Field Test 1 data.</p>	<p>1. Technical report describing the process of reviewing results from Field Test 1 and selecting items.</p>	<p>31 August 2026 10 days</p>
<p>3. Support efforts to field test the items (school-based Field Test 2) and review output from the statistical and psychometric analyses to select items. This will include providing recommendations on the design of Field Test 2, reviewing statistical and psychometric output from Field Test 2 to recommend and select the items that are viable to be retained, for the final operational testing in households (Field Test 3).</p>	<p>1. Technical report describing the process of reviewing results from Field Test 2 and selecting items.</p>	<p>30 November 2026 6.5 days</p>
<p>4. Development of guidance and materials for the integration of the</p>	<p>1. Technical report documenting recommendations and</p>	<p>15 December 2026 6.5 days</p>

<p>lower and upper primary modules, including screening criteria to decide which module to administer to each child, considerations for administration and training, and written feedback on finalization of the instrument.</p>	<p>feedback.</p>	
<p>5. Development of materials for operational testing (household-based Field Test 3), including written feedback on training materials, a proposal on item-level and test-level scoring procedures, written feedback on customization guidelines and feedback on the end of primary roll-out package.</p>	<p>1. Supporting documentation for the operational testing program</p>	<p>15 April 2027 10 days</p>

Payment Schedule:

Payment will be made on submission and acceptance of deliverables. UNICEF reserves the right to withhold payment in case the deliverables submitted are not up to the required standard or in case of delays in submitting the deliverables on the part of the consultant.

Important Notes

- Individuals engaged under a consultancy or individual contract will not be considered “staff members” under the Staff Regulations and Rules of the United Nations and UNICEF’s policies and procedures and will not be entitled to benefits provided therein (such as leave entitlements and medical insurance coverage). Their conditions of service will be governed by their contract and the General Conditions of Contracts for the Services of Consultants and Individual Contractors. Consultants and individual contractors are responsible for determining their tax liabilities and for the payment of any taxes and/or duties, in accordance with local or other applicable laws.
- The selected candidate is solely responsible for ensuring that the health insurance (and visa if applicable) required to perform the duties of the contract are valid for the entire period of the contract. Selected candidates are subject to confirmation of fully-vaccinated status against SARS-CoV-2 (Covid-19) with a World Health Organization (WHO)-endorsed vaccine, which must be met prior to taking up the assignment. It does not apply to consultants who will work remotely and are not expected to work on or visit UNICEF

premises, programme delivery locations or directly interact with communities UNICEF works with, nor to travel to perform functions for UNICEF for the duration of their consultancy contracts.

- UNICEF offers reasonable accommodation for consultants with disabilities. This may include, for example, accessible software, travel assistance for missions or personal attendants. We encourage you to disclose your disability during your application in case you need reasonable accommodation during the selection process and afterwards in your assignment.

**QUALIFICATIONS / SPECIALIZED KNOWLEDGE / EXPERIENCE/ COMPETENCIES
(CORE/TECHNICAL/FUNCTIONAL) / LANGUAGE SKILLS REQUIRED FOR THE ASSIGNMENT**

- **Minimum requirements:**
 - Advance University Degree (PhD) IN PSYCHOMETRICS FOR EDUCATIONAL ASSESSMENT
- **Work Experience:**
 - At least 10 years of experience in TEST DEVELOPMENT, SKILLS ASSESSEMENTS OR SIMILAR
 - Peer-reviewed publications in the field

Please refer to the e-mail received from ICCS@unicef.org
