

[Terms of Reference for Individual Consultant](#)

<b>Title</b>		<b>Duty Station:</b>
<b>Research Consultant – Implementation Research Improving Education (IRIE)</b>		Global Office of Research and Foresight (Italy) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Remote <input type="checkbox"/> Office Based
<b>Start date:</b> 16-December-2024	<b>End date:</b> 11-July-2025	<b>Total working days estimated:</b> 90 days over 7 months
<b>Purpose of Activity/Assignment:</b>		
The main purpose of the assignment is to support the Education Unit with UNICEF Innocenti – Global Office of Research and Foresight with the inception phase of the Implementation Research Improving Education (IRIE) initiative.		
<b>Background</b>		
<p>The world is grappling with a learning crisis. Seven out of ten children in low and middle-income countries are in ‘learning poverty’ meaning they are unable to read a simple text by the age of ten. When children fail to attain foundational skills early in life, it hinders their capacity for further learning and greatly reduces their prospects for their future employment. Addressing learning poverty at a global level means investing in children’s potential, not only important for increasing every child’s future opportunity, but also critical for creating a more prosperous and peaceful future, reducing inequality, and driving economic growth and innovation to face the challenges of today and the future.</p> <p>Girls, children with disabilities and other marginalized groups face unique challenges with learning opportunities, so how do we address learning poverty to help every child reach their full potential? There have been several innovations in the way education is delivered that have shown to improve learning and equity, but these have generally been at small scale and/or in specific contexts. Less is known about how to make these innovations and programmes sustainable, how to maintain and improve their effectiveness in different contexts and how to scale them to the systems-level, including to the communities that need them most.</p> <p>UNICEF Innocenti is planning the Implementation Research Improving Education (IRIE) initiative to bridge this gap, bringing evidence-generation and programme implementation closer together to improve learning, equity and inclusion for children in sub-Saharan African countries.</p>		
<b>Objectives of the consultancy</b>		
The consultant will support engagement with UNICEF country offices and regional offices to solicit relevant documentation for the IRIE initiative, design research plans and budgets, and input into relevant resource mobilization outputs.		
<b>Major areas of work and responsibility</b>		
The consultant will perform the following activities in collaboration with relevant team members from UNICEF Innocenti, UNICEF country offices and UNICEF regional offices:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Solicit and review relevant country programme documents, proposals and budgets to analyse the feasibility, scale and timelines for inclusion as part of the IRIE initiative.</li> </ul>		

- Engage in bilateral meetings with UNICEF country offices and regional offices to evaluate relevant country programme documents and proposal and further refine evaluation criteria to select a minimum of 10 sub-Saharan African countries.
- Design a high-level research plan, including estimated timelines, scope, and corresponding budget for the countries selected.
- Provide inputs into relevant fundraising materials (including pitch decks, 1-pagers, and/or key messages) to support resource mobilization for the IRIE initiative implementation at country-level.

### **Supervision**

The consultant will work under the direct supervision of the Chief of Education, Global Office of Research and Foresight.

### **Methodologies and Tools**

- Methodologies to be used: Desk research, secondary analysis, qualitative research (key informant interviews)
- Software to be used for data analysis: Microsoft Office
- Subscriptions that will be required: Microsoft Office

### **Conditions of Consultancy**

- UNICEF Innocenti does not issue computer equipment to consultants. The consultant will be responsible for providing the necessary computer equipment for the consultancy themselves and should include the cost implications of this responsibility in their bid for the consultancy. The cost of software and subscriptions that may be necessary to complete the consultancy (e.g., Microsoft Word) also needs to be factored into the bid for the consultancy.
- UNICEF Innocenti will assist consultants with arrangements for visas, work permits, vaccinations, etc.
- UNICEF does not regard Individuals engaged under a consultancy contract as “staff members” under the Staff Regulations and Rules of the United Nations and UNICEF’s policies and procedures. Consultants are therefore not entitled to benefits such as leave, pension 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.
- Payment of professional fees will be based on submission of agreed 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. Prospective consultants are encouraged to ensure that they fully understand (a) the requirements of each deliverable and (b) the workload associated with reaching a deliverable.
- UNICEF Innocenti recognises that, due to the locations of some of its research, events may occur that either delay deliverables or prevent them from being completed. These events need to be reviewed on a case-by-case basis to determine the impact on the payment schedule of the contract. It is UNICEF Innocenti’s objective to be fair to consultants in situations where deliverables are delayed or no longer attainable through no wrongdoing of the consultant.
- Consultants 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.

Minimum Qualifications required:  Bachelors  **Masters**  PhD  Other

Enter Disciplines: Education, social sciences, political sciences, international development, or related field.

**Knowledge/Expertise/Skills required:**

**Essential skills:**

- A minimum of five years of work experience at national or international levels, with developing country level experience being an asset.
- Experience in the education sector across one or more thematic areas, including foundational learning, equity and inclusion, education financing, gender, and/or digital learning.
- Skills in secondary data analysis, including desk review of policy documents, programme documents, etc.
- Experience in qualitative research methodologies, including key informant interviews, focus group discussions, and/or participatory methods, and analysis of primary qualitative data.
- Excellent written and oral communication skills, including in translating research for diverse audiences, including donors.
- Ability to work in a multicultural, multi-ethnic environment.
- Fluency in English required.

**Desirable qualifications:**

- Experience working in the UN, specifically UNICEF, or other international development organizations on in the education sector is an asset
- Fluency in another UN language (Arabic, Chinese, French, Russian, Spanish) is an asset.

**Core Values**

- Care; Respect; Integrity; Trust; Accountability; Sustainability

**Competencies**

- Builds and maintains partnerships; Demonstrates self-awareness and ethical awareness; Drive to achieve results for impact; Innovates and embraces change; Manages ambiguity and complexity; Thinks and acts strategically; Works collaboratively with others.

Deliverable/Output:	Estimated number of working days	Deadline
Solicit and review relevant country programme documents, proposals and budgets to analyse the feasibility, scale and timelines for country inclusion as part of the IRIE initiative; develop and submit a central database for all countries that submitted initial expression of interest	5 days	By/before December 6, 2024
Revised evaluation criteria for country selection developed; scoping calls with a minimum of 9 UNICEF country offices conducted to collect further data needed to finalize country selection; database revised accordingly to include additional data collected.	25 days	By/before February 28, 2025
Submit summary note with recommendations and justification for inclusion of each country in IRIE initiative	5 days	By/before March 10, 2025
Develop high-level research plan, including research objectives, methods, timelines and estimated budget for 10 countries shortlisted for IRIE initiative	50 days	By/before June 30, 2025
Draft inputs, review and/or feedback into a minimum of two resource mobilization products to support donor engagement	5 days	By/before June 30, 2025