![unicef | for every child]

Terms of Reference for Individual Consultant

Title Research consultant – AI in education			Duty Station: Global Office of Research and Foresight – Remote
Start date: 01-September-2024	End date: 30- December-2024		Total working days estimated: 36 days over a period of 4 months

Purpose of Activity/Assignment:

Conduct scoping research of current opportunities and challenges related to the use of AI in education as relevant to UNICEF Country programmes and partner governments to inform research and foresight direction.

Background

UNICEF Innocenti – Global Office of Research and Foresight has built a strong evidence base on education, investigating what works to improve education systems, and testing innovative education practices to improve children's learning. Innocenti has built implementation research into digital learning programmes in both development and humanitarian settings, focusing on how technologies are utilized in practice in classrooms and built into education systems. The Innocenti team has also generated multi-country evidence on children's broader digital engagement and online safety (Disrupting Harm, Global Kids Online) and is leading policy work on AI and children, and strong ethical frameworks. Building on this evidence base and expertise, together with PG Education we have identified an initial list of five possible areas where UNICEF could responsibly, ethically, and effectively guide the potentially transformative power of AI in education to:

- Power more effective personalized learning systems.
- Support teachers' professional development
- Support cheaper and faster educational content production to improve accessibility.
- Drive AI literacy as a core education outcome.
- Drive system-level change where AI can support better decision making through analyzing trends and patterns in education data, including potential for use of AI in research and analysis of pedagogical practices through classroom observations.

There may be other areas where UNICEF could focus, or some of the above may not be areas where we can best invest our efforts.

Objectives of the consultancy

UNICEF is seeking to develop a strategy for engagement on AI in Education that is laser focused, avoids duplication (including with other UN agencies), meets real needs, and builds on our evidence base and AI strengths. The consultant will conduct a scoping exercise investigating the current state of play and interventions (and by whom), gaps, challenges, and opportunities for intervention based on needs of education systems with a focus on LMICs.

The work should draw on the list above as a starting point but adapt as needed from the research and interviews, including with relevant UNICEF Innocenti teams. Overall, there should be a particular focus on relevance to UNICEF country programmes. As an outcome, the consultancy

should inform UNICEF about the current map of AI in education activity areas and make recommendations on where we can best add value in ways that leverage UNICEF's strengths. The consultancy will guide our future workplans and funding efforts, and should include insights into funded topics and opportunities.

Major areas of work and responsibility

1. Conduct desk research into the use of AI in education, current state of implementation, with case studies on its use in different country contexts from low- and middle-income countries.
2. Design and carry out interviews with key UNICEF staff across the organization relevant to work on AI in education, including from regions, countries, and HQ (Innovations office, Programme Group, ICT-D).
3. Draft final report on the scoping exercise, and presentation with key messages.

Supervision

4. The consultant will work under the direct supervision of the Policy Specialist, Digital Engagement and Protection. Work would be reviewed, guided and completed in close collaboration with the Education Unit, with the Education Manager acting as focal point for education.

Methodologies and Tools

Software to be used and subscription required for data analysis: N/A

Conditions of Consultancy

1. This consultancy may require the consultant to travel in order to complete the required deliverables effectively and efficiently. Travel costs should NOT be included in the bid for the contract as travel costs will be provided at time of travel and approved by consultant's direct supervisor. UNICEF Innocenti does not make travel arrangements for consultants. The consultant will arrange their own travel, clear the anticipated cost with UNICEF and invoice UNICEF for the travel cost as soon as the travel has been completed. UNICEF Innocenti will assist consultants with arrangements for visas, work permits, vaccinations, etc.

2. All other costs related to completing the deliverables such as hardware, required software, certificates/ subscriptions and associated running costs are expected to be factored into the proposed professional fees.

3. UNICEF Innocenti will assist consultants with arrangements for visas, work permits, vaccinations, etc.

4. 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.

5. 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.

6. UNICEF Innocenti recognizes 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.

7. 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, Information Systems, Computer Science or related social sciences.

Knowledge/Expertise/Skills required:

Essential skills:

- A minimum of eight years of progressively responsible professional work experience in conducting research.
- Experience researching or implementing education technology programmes, with experience in low- and middle-income countries preferred. Experience researching or implementing AI in education technology programmes is considered a strong asset.
- Excellent written and oral communication skills in English and excellent attention to detail.
- Strong interpersonal skills and demonstrated ability to work well as part of a geographically dispersed team and to forge and manage partnerships.
- Commitment to UNICEF's core values of care, respect, integrity, transparency, and accountability.

Desirable qualifications:

- Experience working within large scale innovative education partnerships.
- Ability to work in a multicultural, multi-ethnic environment; experience working in the UN or other international development organization.
- Fluency in another UN language (such as Arabic, Chinese, French, Russian, Spanish) in addition to English.

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	Delivery Date
Draft of research outline and workplan, informed by interviews with UNICEF stakeholders (5 people)	5	September 15, 2024
Desk review of areas of inquiry (at least 5) with 2-page briefs on key findings for each.	14	October 15, 2024
Conducting interviews (10 people) to review key findings and identify additional research	8	November 10, 2024
Final report of maximum 6,000 words (excluding annexes), outlining findings from scoping exercise and recommendations to UNICEF	7	December 5, 2024
PowerPoint Presentation of key messages and recommendations on next steps in terms of programmes, research and foresight around AI in education. Meeting with UNICEF to present and discuss findings	2	December 14, 2024