



UNITED NATIONS CHILDREN'S FUND
Research Specialist – Education (TA- P3)

I. Post Information

Job Title: **Research Specialist – Education (Temporary Appointment)**
Supervisor Title/ Level: **Research Manager, Education P4**
Organizational Unit: **GORaF – Global Office of Research and Foresight**
Post Location: **Florence, Italy O/P to Nairobi, Kenya**

Job Level: **Level 3**
Job Profile No.:
CCOG Code: **1F**
Functional Code: **EDU**
Job Classification Level: **Level 3**

II. Organizational Context and Purpose for the job

Organizational Context

UNICEF Innocenti undertakes and commissions research on emerging or current issues of relevance for children and child rights. The office links research and global trends analyses to influence policies, programming, and advocacy, as well as innovations, and to drive future strategies and vision of the organization and the child rights agenda more broadly amongst governments, private sector, and other institutions.

- UNICEF Innocenti uses foresight to set the agenda for children uncovering emerging trends and deepening understanding of key issues facing girls and boys and serving as a go-to office for advising UNICEF and a diversity of actors, including governments, the United Nations, private sector, civil society and children and young people themselves in the face of the continually changing global economy, political and security environment.
- UNICEF Innocenti also strives to lead global discourse by creating an enabling environment and platform for children and young people along with global influencers and decision-makers to transform their contributions into future strategies, policies and actions of UNICEF and the world. Thereby positioning children and UNICEF at the centre of the global conversation through prominent external engagement, communication, and influence.

Purpose for the job:

UNICEF Innocenti has a dedicated education unit focused on producing high-quality research and evidence to inform and improve education programmes and systems. Since 2018, the team has been leading and supporting education research in over 40 countries around the world. The education unit has a strong focus on generating research to inform improvements in foundational learning. Research undertaken by the education unit at UNICEF Innocenti follows a co-creation approach working closely with Ministries of Education, and local partners, as well as UNICEF programmatic colleagues from country offices, regional offices, other headquarter units, and a host of external education and research partners.

Under the guidance and general supervision of **the Research Manager, Education (Level 4)**, the Research Specialist - Education will support implementation and coordination of research activities in Eastern and Southern Africa. The research specialist will 1) provide technical research support to countries in Eastern and Southern Africa region in close collaboration with the Eastern and Southern Africa Regional Office (ESARO) including in the development and uptake of research and evidence into programming, planning and policy. 2) support coordination and research activities for ongoing research programmes active in the region including the Data Must Speak research, Women in Learning Leadership and the new large scale implementation research programme 3) act as a focal point for UNICEF Innocenti in the region and as a key resource person for the What Works Hub for Global Education (WWHGE) strategic partnership, engaging with evidence in education partners at the regional and country levels, and supporting the Research Manager, Education (Systems Strengthening) with partnership engagement at the global level.

III. Key function, accountabilities, and related duties/tasks

Summary of key functions/accountabilities:

1. **Research Planning and Coordination**
2. **Oversight of Research Designs, Methods and Analysis**
3. **Research Technical Support and Capacity Building**
4. **Knowledge Management, Evidence Uptake and Partnerships.**

1. **Research and programme planning and development.**

- Plan, coordinate and implement co-creation research design with country offices, Government counterparts, implementing partners and other research potential beneficiaries, in coordination and collaboration with ESARO.
- Supervise research field work for research ongoing in the region.
- Manage and supervise research consultants to deliver research in a timely and efficient manner, including through quality assurance of deliverables.
- Participate in strategic programme discussions on embedding research within planning of education programmes. Formulate, design, and prepare programme proposals for the sector, ensuring alignment with UNICEF's Strategic Plan and the Eastern and Southern Africa Regional Office's Management Plan (ROMP) and Collaboration for Children (C4C) approach.

2. **Oversight of Research Designs, Methods, and Analysis**

- Provide oversight and overall guidance on the design and use of mixed methods research led or supported by Innocenti built into the roll out of education programmes in Eastern and Southern Africa.
- Review, quality assure and provide input to research methods and data collection tools ensuring their contextual fit. Methods will include - implementation research, participatory action research, behavioral insights, mixed-methods experimental / quasi-experimental impact evaluations.
- Lead on analysis and synthesis of Innocenti-led education research for research projects active in Eastern and Southern Africa.

3. **Research Technical Support and Capacity Building**

- Support the Eastern and Southern Africa Regional Office (ESARO) to provide Country Offices and governments in region technical support based on the latest education evidence, and advice on research methods / designs for research in line with Innocenti priorities.
- Support the development of joint proposals between programming and research to contribute to fundraising around evidence-based programming.

- Contribute to activities aiming at increasing the use of research findings by decision makers at country level.

4. Knowledge Management, Evidence Uptake and Partnerships.

- Act as a focal point for the What Works Hub for Global Education in the Eastern and Southern Africa region, and other evidence in education regional networks. Participate in coordination meetings and engage with research partners at country and regional level.
- Gather, analyze, synthesize, and help disseminate the latest evidence on education from UNICEF and partners in the Eastern and Southern Africa region and facilitate its uptake at the country, regional and global level.
- Support the Research Manager (Systems strengthening) with engagement at a global level with the WWHGE, and engagement with the strategic partners to bring latest global insights on implementation science to regional research initiatives.
- Actively participate in cross Innocenti programme planning meetings, engaging with different research and foresight teams on cross team collaboration relevant to education, and regularly engage with ESARO programme planning meetings when relevant for evidence in education initiatives.

IV. Impact of Results

The strategic and effective advocacy, planning and formulation of education programme s/projects and the achievement of sustainable results, contributes to the achievement of goals and objectives to improve learning outcomes and universal access to quality, equitable and inclusive education in the country. Achievements in education programmes and projects in turn contribute to maintaining/enhancing the credibility and ability of UNICEF to provide programme services for mothers and children that promotes greater social equality in the country.

V. UNICEF values and competency Required (based on the updated Framework)

i) Core Values

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

Core Competencies

- Demonstrates Self Awareness and Ethical Awareness (1)
- Works Collaboratively with others (1)
- Builds and Maintains Partnerships (1)
- Innovates and Embraces Change (1)
- Thinks and Acts Strategically (1)
- Drive to achieve impactful results (1)
- Manages ambiguity and complexity (1)

*The 7 core competencies are applicable to all employees. However, the competency Nurtures, Leads and Managers people is only applicable to staff who supervise others.

VI. Technical Competencies

Technical competencies must be demonstrated in the following areas:

- **Expert understanding and experience with use of research and statistical methods**, including firsthand experience conducting and explaining applied research in low- and middle-income settings.
- **Demonstrated experience managing programmes and / or research at country level**, including managing education or research teams to carry out programmes, with governments, local partners and other stakeholders.
- **Excellent knowledge of global developments in education evidence**, including the latest evidence, and initiatives for building evidence into education systems and programmes.
- **Demonstrated ability to support policy dialogue**: translation of analytical findings and evidence into development programme and policy discussions around equity and learning with partners, including government, development partners, CSOs and academia in relevant areas.
- **Excellent ability to support engagement with partners at a global, regional level and country level** e.g. What works hub for global education, Sector Wide Approaches, Global Partnership for Education, Education in Emergency Clusters, Education Provider Forums, Inter-sectoral partnerships such as in ECD, as well as networking with other key partners.

VII. Recruitment Qualifications

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| Education: | An advanced university degree in one of the following fields is required: education, economics, psychology, sociology or another relevant technical field. |
| Experience: | <p>A minimum of five years of professional experience in education research, social science research, education programming or related fields.</p> <p>Strong experience in statistical analysis utilizing large data sets, is required.</p> <p>Demonstrated people management skills and the ability to forge and manage partnerships.</p> <p>Proven experience drafting quality research outputs for different stakeholders and audiences is required.</p> <p>Experience working in a development setting, managing programmes and / or research is required.</p> <p>Knowledge of econometric models and identification strategies to test impact of programmes required.</p> <p>Experience with qualitative data collection methods and analysis techniques highly desirable.</p> <p>Relevant experience in a UN system agency or organization is considered as an asset.</p> <p>Familiarity/ background with emergency contexts is considered as an asset.</p> <p>Excellent written and oral communication skills.</p> |
| Language Requirements: | Fluency in English is required. Knowledge of another official UN language (Arabic, Chinese, French, Russian or Spanish) or a local language is an asset. |