**UNICEF Moldova**

**Terms of Reference**

**Consultancy title:** **Technical support to the National Bureau of Statistics and the Ministry of Education and Research in revision of education statistics indicators and population data**

**Position type:** Individual Consultant (international)

**Location:** Remote work and in-country mission (Chisinau, Republic of Moldova)

**Section/Division:** Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation / Programme/UNICEF Moldova

**Categories:** official statistics, education, demography

**Duration:** 30 billable days – September to December 2023(including 3-day in-country mission)

**About UNICEF**

If you are a committed, creative professional and are passionate about making a lasting difference for children, the world's leading children's rights organization would like to hear from you. For 70 years, UNICEF has been working on the ground in 190 countries and territories to promote children's survival, protection and development. The world's largest provider of vaccines for developing countries, UNICEF supports child health and nutrition, good water and sanitation, quality basic education for all boys and girls, and the protection of children from violence, exploitation, and AIDS. UNICEF is funded entirely by the voluntary contributions of individuals, businesses, foundations and governments. UNICEF has over 12,000 staff in more than 145 countries.

**Background**

This Terms of Reference is developed for consultancy services to provide support to the National Bureau of Statistics of the Republic of Moldova (hereinafter ‘the NBS’) and the Ministry of Education and Research of the Republic of Moldova (hereinafter ‘the MER’) to review of education statistics indicators and population data.

UNICEF has a mandate to safeguard the rights of all children, which is rooted in the 1989 Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), applicable to every child, and since 2015 also in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). UNICEF works to ensure all children are in school and are receiving a quality education. The quality of education is ultimately determined by the learning outcomes that students take from school and the competencies they will carry into their future life and labour market.

To ensure monitoring of the quality and access to education, the NBS regularly collect and calculate relevant indicators, e.g. number of students, pedagogical staff, facilities etc. Currently, the following data sources are available: (i) administrative statistics collected from educational institutions by the NBS and (ii) Education Management Information System (EMIS) maintained by the MER. UNICEF provides continuous support to both institutions to improve education statistics in line with international standards.

Starting from 2019, all relative indicators in the field of education i.e. rates and ratios are calculated based on the population with usual residence, being revised back to the period 2014-2018. When recalculating the rates considering the number of students and school age population with usual residence, the results of calculation for the most of the indicators exceeded 100%, i.e. for 2019/2020 school year the gross enrolment rate in primary education was 107.8%, lower secondary education, respectively, 105,2%; gross intake rate in the last grade of primary education (SDG indicator 4.1.3) was 103.9%; participation rate in formal education of 6-year-olds children (SDG indicator 4.2.2) – 108.1%, etc. These calculations highlighted the importance of both - the number of school-age population with usual residence and number of children enrolled in education. And when the rates/rations exceed 100%, the use of indicators for policy elaboration and monitoring became challenging. And the real situation in the field are different, with children are not enrolled in schools/ pre-schools, school abandonment etc.

As outlined in the current 2023-2027 Country programme of cooperation[[1]](#footnote-2), one of UNICEF’s priority is gathering good-quality evidence to inform policies. UNICEF and the MER will continue to generate high-quality disaggregated data to inform implementation of the Education Strategy 2030. The programme will continue to support the NBS, and other stakeholders to collect equity-sensitive, sex-disaggregated data.

Therefore, UNICEF is seeking for technical expertise to support the NBS and the MER in assessing the number of school-age population with usual residence and elaborating methodological guidelines for normalization of relevant education statistics indicators.

**Purpose of the consultancy**

Purpose: the assignment is aimed to (i) conduct detailed assessment of the number of school-age population with usual residence in relation to the number of children/pupils included in the education system (pre-school, primary and general secondary education) and (ii) recalculate enrolment and graduation rates (gross, net and age-specific, with disaggregation by sex and area) and, document it through elaboration of the Guide/guidelines for the normalization of the indicators calculated on the basis of population with usual residence.

As the result of the assignment, the answers on the following questions to be provided to better understand the extent to which:

• the number of the population with usual residence influences the enrolment and graduation rates;

• the external migration of school age population influences the number of population with usual residence, including by sex and area;

• the student's residence (locality) and the locality of the educational institution could influence the number of school age population;

• overestimation and/or underestimation caused by duplications, outdated lists of students at the beginning of the school year (at the reference date).

**Accountabilities, related duties/tasks and expected results**

Definitions and calculation methods used for education indicators will be in line with UNESCO guidance and methodology <http://uis.unesco.org/en/glossary>

A comparative analysis will be done of the following:

1. the number of the school-age population with usual residence (NBS data), including its component parts as vital events like birth, death, internal and external migration;
2. the number of enrolled children/pupils (taking into account their area where the institution is located) by education levels collected via statistical surveys from the education institutions (aggregated data by institutions);
3. the number of enrolled children/pupils (taking into account there area of residence), from the database of the Education Management Information System (EMIS) of the MER (in the EMIS database the student is identified by IDNP/other identification documents (GD no.601/2020)), <https://www.legis.md/cautare/getResults?doc_id=122778&lang=ro>.

As mentioned above, the analysis of the impact of the external migration of school age population on the number of population with usual residence will be conducted to ensure data accuracy.

As the results of analytical work, the guidelines will be developed ensure normalization of indicators calculated on the basis of the population with usual residence.

Throughout the process consultative meetings with the NBS and MER will be organized to analyze overall availability and quality of the data used for the production of relative indicators related to the field of education.

All activities will be implemented in close collaboration with the NBS and the MER with the final outcomes to be submitted as follows:

* Analytical report, outlining the analysis of revision of number of school age population with usual residence, detailed methodology to be applied to improve relevant estimation of the population by age, sex and area, as well as final recommendations and proposal to improve calculation of relevant indicators, as outlined above;
* Guide / guidelines for the normalization of the indicators calculated on the basis of population with usual residence, which will contain definitions, methods and formulas for calculation, and the interpretation of the indicators recalculated by the normalization method;
* Documentation of the assignment.

**Key deliverables and delivery dates/timeline \***

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| **Tasks** | **Deliverables and payment schedule** | **Timeline, working days** |
| Conduct initial desk review of guidelines, data sources, reports etc and develop overall assessment schedule and implementation plan (including on-line kick off meeting with the NBS and the MER to agree on the process) | Assessment schedule and implementation plan , List of bibliography/sources (to be further complemented by other sources), kick off meeting documentation (PPT, Q/A etc.) | 5 days |
| Conduct the analysis of the number of school-age population with usual residence and present preliminary findings to stakeholders (on-line) | **Draft analysis**, list of participants, visual presentation of key findings, meeting documentation | 5 days |
| ***First payment – 30% (10 billable days)*** | *Sub-total 10 days* |
| **Tasks** | **Deliverables and payment schedule** | **Timeline, working days** |
| Development of Guidelines for normalizing the indicators calculated based on population with usual residence | Draft Guidelines, including detailed information with reference to definitions, methods and calculation formulas, and the interpretation of indicators | 10 days |
| Consult and finalize draft methodology and guidelines based on NBS and MER comments and suggestions, collected during validation meeting, to be reflected in Synthesis report (3-day in-country mission) | **Final Methodology and Guidelines** | 5 days (including travelling – to be confirmed) |
| ***Second payment – 50% (15 billable days)*** | *Sub-total 15 days* |
| Prepare Synthesis report (Methodology and Guidelines to be attached) and document the assessment by compiling and arranging all deliverables to closure the contract | **Synthesis report and** **Documentation of the assessment** | 5 days |
| ***Final payment – 20% (5 billable days)*** | *Sub-total 5 days* |
| ***TOTAL 30 billable days*** |

*\* Detailed deliverables and exact deadlines will be mutually agreed upon contract signature*

Payments will be rendered upon successful completion of each task, as outlined above. All documents will be presented in English.

Reporting

The Consultant will work under direct supervision of the Monitoring & Evaluation Specialist and in close collaboration with the Education Specialist. UNICEF will regularly communicate with the Consultant and provide feedback on deliverables performance and all other necessary support to achieve objectives of the assignment, as well as remain aware of any upcoming issues related to the Consultant performance and the quality of work. All the activities and deliverables undertaken by the Consultant shall be discussed and planned in consultation with UNICEF. Throughout the assignment, necessary guidance will be provided by UNICEF and the NBS, as a key stakeholder, will provide all necessary data and clarifications, facilitate liaison with the MER etc.

All products will be subject to UNICEF and the NBS review before approval. As outlined above, all deliverables need to be submitted in electronic format (Word, Excel, Visual etc,) in English. UNICEF will facilitate English-Romanian translation during on-line consultations and in-country mission, as well as written translation of Final methodology and Guidelines in Romanian

**Branding, communication and audiences**

All resources developed will remain the property of UNICEF. These resources may be utilized for other purposes, now, in the future and/or with other partners with which UNICEF collaborates.

**Performance indicators for evaluation of results**

The performance of work will be evaluated based on the following indicators:

* Completion of tasks specified in ToR;
* Compliance with the established deadlines for submission of deliverables;
* Quality of work;
* Demonstration of high standards in cooperation and communication with UNICEF and counterparts.

**Qualifications**

Education:

* Advanced university degree (Masters or higher) in statistics/demographics, social and economic development, or related areas;

Knowledge / Experience:

* Minimum five years of progressively responsible professional experience in demographics and social statistics and demonstrated track record of having undertaken similar assignments;
* Analytical capacity and proven experience in quantitative analysis of statistical data in the area of demographic and/or education statistics (references to relevant documents/analytics need to be provided);
* Knowledge of international standards in calculation of demographic and education statistics indicators (UNESCO);
* Experience in working with international organizations (working with UNICEF/other UN Agencies highly preferred);
* Experience in working in Europe and Central Asia region is desirable;

Skills:

* Strong writing and communication skills especially in team environments, highly preferred;
* Ability to work independently with confidence and self-motivation, necessary;
* Highly organized and proactive with timely production of materials, necessary.

Language Proficiency

* Fluency in English (knowledge of Romanian will be an asset).

**Requirements**

* Completed profile in UNICEF's e-Recruitment system; with copy of academic credentials
* Cover letter including summary of relevant experience with similar type of assignments;
* Curriculum Vitae
* Technical proposal that will include:

(i) proposed approach and methodology;

(ii) estimated timeline and milestones;

(iii) potential risks and mitigation measures and

(iv) references to related work previously conducted by the consultant.

* Financial proposal (in US$), that will include daily fee to undertake the deliverables listed in the ToR, as well as estimated travel costs for 3-day in-country mission (to be reflected in a separate line, specifying airfare, DSA etc.).
* Indication of your availability to undertake the assignment.

Technical evaluation will be performed through a desk review of applications, and if necessary, may be supplemented by an interview.

Payment of professional fees will be based on submission of agreed satisfactory 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. The contract does not allow payment of off-hours, medical insurance, taxes, and sick leave. UNICEF reserves the right to withhold all or a portion of the payment if performance is unsatisfactory, if work/output is incomplete, not delivered or for failure to meet the agreed deadlines. Considering international consultancy services required under the current terms of reference, USD will serve as contract currency.

**Work location, official travel involved and support provided by UNICEF**

Considering the time period for implementation of the assignment, all the planned tasks will be mainly done remotely (with on-line meetings and consultations). In-country travel is envisaged ( 3-day in-country mission, tentative schedule end-October - beg-November 2023) and will be confirmed upon the needs.

UNICEF will work in close collaboration with the NBS to provide the Consultant with relevant policies, documents, reports etc., as well as facilitate the contact with the MER and relevant stakeholders and partners. UNICEF will ensure timely feedback to all deliverables to be presented by the Consultant.

**Child Safeguarding**

Is this project/assignment considered as “[Elevated Risk Role](https://unicef.sharepoint.com/sites/DHR-ChildSafeguarding/DocumentLibrary1/Guidance%20on%20Identifying%20Elevated%20Risk%20Roles_finalversion.pdf?CT=1590792470221&OR=ItemsView)” from a child safeguarding perspective?

[ ]    YES [ ]     NO  [ ]  [x]

More information is available in the [Child Safeguarding SharePoint](https://unicef.sharepoint.com/sites/DHR-ChildSafeguarding/SitePages/Amendments-to-the-Recruitment-Guidance.aspx) and [Child Safeguarding FAQs and Updates](https://unicef.sharepoint.com/sites/DHR-ChildSafeguarding/DocumentLibrary1/Child%20Safeguarding%20FAQs%20and%20Updates%20Dec%202020.pdf)

**Ethical considerations**

Potential contractor will need to agree to meet the standards set in the [UNICEF Procedure for Ethical Standards in Research, Evaluation, Data Collection and Analysis](https://www.unicef.org/supply/files/ATTACHMENT_IV-UNICEF_Procedure_for_Ethical_Standards.PDF). No major ethical, cultural or organizational risks are foreseen. The Consultant should be sensitive to beliefs, manners and customs and act with integrity and honesty while interacting with stakeholders and beneficiaries. Furthermore, the Consultant should protect the anonymity and confidentiality of individual information. and use documents and information provided only for the tasks related to these terms of reference.

As per the [DHR Procedure on consultants and individual contractors](https://unicef.sharepoint.com/sites/portals/RF/Regulatory%20Framework%20Library/DHR%20Procedure%20on%20Consultants%20-%20DHR_PROCEDURE_2018_005.pdf), together with the Notification letter, the Consultant will be sent the [link on Agora](https://agora.unicef.org/course/view.php?id=15620) containing UNICEF policies on Prohibiting and Combatting Fraud and Corruption; Prohibition of discrimination, harassment, sexual harassment and abuse of authority and other relevant policies for their information and acknowledgment. The selected candidate must complete the applicable mandatory online courses on UNICEF’s learning platform prior to signature of contract.  All certificates should be presented as part of the contract.

**Evaluation criteria for selection**

The Consultant is expected to reflect in the submission the qualifications, knowledge and experience related to the requirements listed above. Technical evaluation will be performed through a desk review of applications, evaluation of technical proposals, and if necessary, may be supplemented by an interview.

The selection process is aimed at selecting the applicant who obtains the highest cumulative score (technical evaluation + financial offer evaluation points) following “best value for money” principle. UNICEF will provide timely feedback to all deliverables to be presented by the Consultant

**Core Values and Competences**

UNICEF's values of Care, Respect, Integrity, Trust, Accountability, and Sustainability (CRITAS). To view our Competency Framework, please visit [Here](https://www.unicef.org/careers/media/1041/file/UNICEF%27s_Competency_Framework.pdf#:~:text=UNICEF%E2%80%99s%20Competency%20Framework%20establishes%20common%20standards%20of%20behaviour,values%20of%20Care%2C%20Respect%2C%20Integrity%2C%20Trust%20and%20Accountability.).

UNICEF is committed to diversity and inclusion within its workforce, and encourages all candidates, irrespective of gender, race, sexual orientation, nationality, culture, appearance, socio-economic status, ability, age, religious, and ethnic backgrounds, to apply to become a part of the organization.

UNICEF has a zero-tolerance policy on conduct that is incompatible with the aims and objectives of the United Nations and UNICEF, including sexual exploitation and abuse, sexual harassment, abuse of authority and discrimination. UNICEF also adheres to strict child safeguarding principles. All selected candidates will, therefore, undergo rigorous reference and background checks, and will be expected to adhere to these standards and principles.

1. CPD 2023-2027 Moldova Final [2022-PL27-Moldova\_CPD-EN-ODS.pdf (unicef.org)](https://www.unicef.org/executiveboard/media/12651/file/2022-PL27-Moldova_CPD-EN-ODS.pdf) [↑](#footnote-ref-2)