UNITED NATIONS CHILDREN'S FUND
Innocenti Global Office of Research and Foresight

I. Post Information

Job Title: Research Specialist (Education)
Supervisor Title/ Level: Chief, Education P5
Organizational Unit: UNICEF Innocenti Global
Office of Research and Foresight
Post Location: Florence, Italy

Job Level: P3 TA
Duration: 1 year
Job Profile No.:
CCOG Code:
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 research team focused on producing high-quality 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. As part of the research portfolio for UNICEF Innocenti there is a strong focus on foundational learning, early childhood education and inclusive education.

Under the guidance and general supervision of the Education Chief (P5), the Research Specialist (Education) will support the co-creation and delivery of research of education programmes. The

Research Specialist (Education) will co-manage the multi-country, multi-year Data Must Speak (DMS) Positive Deviance and Strengthen Capacity and Advance Local Evidence Use (SCALE) research. They will provide technical guidance to country offices, regional offices, and headquarters based on research in education in support of UNICEF education priorities, and the priorities of UNICEF Innocenti.

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

Summary of key functions/accountabilities:

1. **Research planning and coordination**
2. **Oversight of Research Designs, Methods, and Analysis**
3. **Technical Guidance and Capacity Building**
4. **Resource Mobilization, Knowledge Exchange, and Partnerships**
5. **Contribute to Innocenti GORaF operations and support the cross- cutting agenda**

1. Research planning and coordination

   - Plan, coordinate and implement DMS/SCALE research with Government counterparts, implementing partners and other research's potential beneficiaries.
   - Manage and supervise researchers to deliver research in a timely and efficient manner, including through quality assurance of concept notes, proposals, and research deliverables.
   - Supervise and provide technical guidance for the research field work in the participating countries.
   - Participate in strategic programme discussions on embedding research within planning of education programmes with country offices, regional offices, and UNICEF HQ.
   - Contribute to the overall research activities of the office and to support uptake of evidence by decision makers at country level.
   - Participate in and/facilitate interdisciplinary research through involvement in selected cross functional teams and consultations, including Annual Reports and office seminars.

2. Oversight of Research Designs, Methods, and Analysis
   - Provide oversight and overall guidance on the design and use of DMS/SCALE mixed methods robust research built into education systems, with Ministries of Education and UNICEF field offices.
   - Review, quality assure and provide input to DMS/SCALE research methods and data collection tools ensuring their contextual fit, and their fit for the stage of implementation of the programme under study. Methods will include – quantitative research, qualitative research, implementation research, participatory action research, behavioral insights, mixed-methods experimental / quasi-experimental impact evaluations as well as scaling sciences.
   - Lead on analysis and synthesis of DMS/SCALE evidence for education programmes with a particular focus on data use and uptake at middle-tier level (i.e., regional, district and/or circuit).

3. Technical Guidance and Capacity Building
   - Working with regional and country office teams, support research for policy dialogue and capacity strengthening of Government and Implementing partners.
   - Strengthen the capacity of Government counterparts and UNICEF country offices for the design and implementation of research, through the DMS/ SCALE learning-by-doing and co-creation approaches.

4. Resource Mobilization, Knowledge Exchange, and Partnerships
   - Maintain and strengthen donor networks through routine communications and reporting. and ensure donor contributions are well managed, donor expectations are met, and

donor reports are completed with high quality.
- Contribute to the dissemination and exchange of DMS research findings and related policy recommendations and best practices.
- Establish and maintain partnerships with networks of researchers, policymakers, practitioners, and donors to identify global / regional / country priorities and fundraising windows.
- Lead on the design and implementation of the DMS/SCALE strategy for the creation, curation, and publication of global public goods.

5. Contribute to Innocenti GORaF operations and support the cross- cutting agenda
- Help strengthen and support the use of DMS/SCALE research findings for policy dialogue, programme improvement and system strengthening.
- Provide guidance and quality assurance of research on education.
- Synthesize and organize materials and contribute to relevant sections of UNICEF Innocenti and partners websites.
- Prepare inputs and participate in relevant conferences, workshops, and meetings at global, regional, and country level.
- Contribute to the education units research strategy, planning, reporting and operations

IV. Impact of Results

Evidence co-created with Governments and other relevant local stakeholders is used to inform Government's, Implementing Partners' and UNICEF's policies and programmes. The post holder will ensure that research findings are reliable and can be used to inform the achievement of UNICEF and UN mandates related to child rights in all settings. The incumbent will contribute to expanding the evidence base through the best design and implementation of DMS/SCALE research and outputs. This rigorous evidence will inform governments, the international community in general, and UNICEF in particular, on how to strengthen DMS/SCALE participating countries and improve their impact learning outcomes and universal access to quality, equitable and inclusive education.

V. UNICEF values and competency Required

I) Core Values

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

II) 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)

VI. Technical Competencies

Technical competencies must be demonstrated in the following areas:

- Good understanding of the overall global development context, including issues such as: poverty, conflict, and the impact of these factors on education and vice-versa; and inter-sectoral approaches to address such issues in collaboration with other sectors (including Social Policy, Child Protection, Nutrition, WASH, Health, and Communications within UNICEF).

- Demonstrated knowledge of global developments in education and international engagement strategies, including the application of the equity lens and human rights perspectives to programming.

- Clear understanding of gender and inequity issues in relation to education and development and the application of gender / equity analysis to policy and planning in education.

- Strong demonstrated experience of designing, implementing, analyzing, and reporting on mixed-methods research, including utilizing both quantitative and qualitative research methods, implementation research, mixed-methods experimental and quasi- experimental research, and participatory action research methods, research related to behavioral insights, as well as scaling sciences.
- Experience in supporting 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.

- Education sector planning knowledge/ability, including the range of modalities for delivering education, linkages between different sub-sectors (e.g., ECD, Primary, Secondary, Tertiary, Inclusive Education), cost-effectiveness and efficiency issues, key institutional structures, components, and processes, as well as governance issues.

- Experience in programme management in education, including programme design, costing, monitoring and evaluation and reporting.

- Experience in supporting engagement with partners e.g., Local education groups, Global Partnership for Education, Education in Emergency Clusters, Education Provider Forums, Delivering as One, Inter-sectoral partnerships such as in ECD, as well as networking with other key partners.

VII. Recruitment Qualifications

Education:	An advanced university degree in one of the following fields is required: education, economics, social policy, or other social sciences.
Experience:	Required: • A minimum of five years of progressively responsible professional work experience in education research at national or international levels in education, with low/middle-income country level experience essential. • Demonstrated experience and knowledge of some of the areas related to DMS/SCALE research: education

	management information systems/administrative education data; learning assessment; education sector analysis; education sector planning; school typologies. • Demonstrated experience in management of complex projects. • Demonstrated experience in fundraising and resource mobilization. • Demonstrated ability to work well as part of a team and to forge and manage partnerships. • Excellent written and oral communication skills. • Commitment to UNICEF's core values of care, respect, integrity, transparency, and accountability. • Ability to work in a multicultural, multi-ethnic environment. Desirable: • Experience in behavioral and scaling science, and/or implementation research is an asset. • Experience in quality assuring research publications, including report and policy briefs is an asset. • Experience working in the UN or other international development organization is an asset.
Language Requirements:	Fluency in English is required. Knowledge of another official UN language (French, Arabic, Chinese, Russian, or Spanish) is an asset.