



UNITED NATIONS CHILDREN'S FUND

I. Post Information

Job Title: **Research Manager - Education**
Supervisor Title/ Level: **Chief, Education/P5**
Organizational Unit: **GORaF – Global Office of Research and Foresight**
Post Location: **Florence, Italy**

Job Level: **Level 4**
Job Profile No.:
CCOG Code: **1F**
Functional Code: **EDU**
Job Classification Level: **Level 4**

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. The education unit in UNICEF Innocenti is comprised of two major workstreams:

- 1) The **systems strengthening** workstream co-creates research with Ministries of Education to understand how different policies and practices can improve education

systems to be more equitable, inclusive and learning focused. It focuses on identifying key levers to improve education systems from the national, middle-tier and local levels, including gathering evidence on local solutions from schools and teachers themselves. This workstream includes research projects including the Data Must Speak (DMS) projects, Teachers for All (T4A), and Women in Learning Leadership (WiLL) projects.

- 2) The **programme strengthening** workstream embeds research into programmes, innovations, and initiatives, to understand what works, and how they work to inform improvements in programme delivery and design in real time. Research is undertaken across a number of different types of programmes focused on improving foundational skills including, accelerated and differentiated learning programmes, digital learning, early childhood education, and inclusive education for children with disabilities programmes.

Under the guidance and general supervision of **the Chief of Education (Level 5)**, the Research Manager - Education will lead the **Systems Strengthening** research workstream. The research manager will provide technical leadership for the research of the workstream and strategic guidance, manage day to day operations of the research team and manage partnerships related to the research portfolio, including but not limited to the What Works Hub for Global Education (WWHGE) strategic partnership, and Building Evidence in Education (BE2) initiative.

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

Summary of key functions/accountabilities:

1. **Research and programme planning and development**
2. **Research Management, monitoring and quality control of results**
3. **Oversight of Research Designs, Methods and Analysis**
4. **Education Evidence Partnerships, Resource Mobilization and Advocacy**
5. **Management support of Education Unit, and overall Innocenti Programme Team**

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

- Plan the overall workplan for the systems strengthening research portfolio, advising the Chief of Education on the direction, overall strategy, and implementation of systems strengthening research projects.
- Manage and supervise research specialists who are leading different research projects which fall under the systems strengthening workstream including the Data Must Speak (DMS) Research projects and Teachers and school leadership projects.
- Coordinate internally with, research colleagues in Innocenti, and with programme colleagues in headquarters, regional offices, and country offices to align on research priorities and carry out high quality research which has practical implications at the programmatic level.
- Coordinate with external partners at global and regional level, to ensure alignment and coordination of efforts to build high quality research into education systems.

2. **Research Management, monitoring and quality control of results.**

- Monitor implementation of research projects with respective research teams under supervision liaising, with local, regional and global partners, ensuring clear communication between parties.
- Maintain coordination between research projects and relevant UNICEF country offices, regional offices and HQ offices, as well as government and other local partners.
- Provide project management guidance to the research specialists on the systems strengthening team, in terms of updating workplans, and research timelines. Support in problem solving research implementation challenges when they arise and providing clear guidance and communication to related parties.
- Manage the budget and workplan of the Systems Strengthening workstream, ensuring

research needs are properly resourced and donor reporting is complete, confirming compliance with organizational rules and donor commitments.

- Prepare regular and mandated programme reports for management, donors and partners to keep them informed of programme progress.

3. Oversight of Research Designs, Methods and Analysis

- Provide technical research advice and guidance to each research project under the systems strengthening workstream. Providing technical oversight in both quantitative and qualitative research methods, and analysis techniques.
- Review, quality assure and provide input to research methods and data collection tools ensuring their contextual fit, and their fit for specific research project, country and policy questions to be answered.
- Lead on coordination of research methods and analysis across the systems strengthening workstream, leading on synthesis of research across the workstream to produce global public goods.
- Review technical outputs including analysis, briefs, and reports on a regular basis, ensuring quality and providing tangible recommendations to research team members to improve their quality and production. Review research outputs and provide input and quality control before submitting to Chief of Education for final clearance.
- Coordinate and draw on additional expertise when needed for specific research questions / programmes, drawing on the expertise within Innocenti, within UNICEF, and with external partners.
- Prepare policy papers, briefs and other strategic programme materials for management use, information and consideration.

4. Education Evidence Partnerships, Resource Mobilization and Advocacy

- Represent UNICEF Innocenti as a focal point within key education research partnerships including the What Works Hub for Global Education (WWHGE) Strategic Partnership with FCDO. Coordinating with FCDO and consolidating and providing key updates on partnership progress in line with the approved workplan.
- Coordinate with the education research ecosystem, including active participation in the Building Evidence in Education (BE2) network and other such education research networks to advocate for evidence take up and meaningful research co-creation with policy makers.
- Coordinate the resource mobilization efforts for the systems strengthening research workstream, quality assuring research proposals and providing advice to the Chief of Education on strategic direction.
- Foster strong engagement and networks with education staff across UNICEF including at country level, regional level and HQ, to advocate for the better use of research within education programming.

5. Management support of Education Unit, and overall Innocenti Programme Team

- Act as Officer in Charge of the Education Unit when needed, performing the duties of the education chief.
- Participate in overall strategic planning for the Education Unit in the education team working with the Education Chief and Education Manager (Programme Strengthening).
- Contribute to cross office planning processes including annual workplan, rolling workplan and midterm review.
- Act as responsible party for systems strengthening workstream with operations, communications, and publications.
- Actively participate in cross Innocenti programme planning meetings, engaging with different research and foresight teams on cross team collaboration relevant to education.

IV. Impact of Results

The strategic and effective advocacy, planning and formulation of education programmes/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

ii) Core Competencies

- Nurtures, Leads and Manages People (1)
- Demonstrates Self Awareness and Ethical Awareness (2)
- Works Collaboratively with others (2)
- Builds and Maintains Partnerships (2)
- Innovates and Embraces Change (2)
- Thinks and Acts Strategically (2)
- Drive to achieve impactful results (2)
- Manages ambiguity and complexity (2)

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 and strong experience in management of research programmes** – including experience in field data collection, data collection training, data collection tool development, and data analysis is critical.
- **Demonstrated programme and people management experience**, including experience managing programmes and staff to deliver results.
- **Demonstrated and 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.
- **Good 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.
- **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

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 eight 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.