

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Gender & Education Consultant

CONTRACT MODALITY Individual Consultancy

DUTY STATION Nairobi, Kenya (remote)

DURATION OF CONTRACT 12 months

Purpose of Assignment

UNICEF's fundamental mission is to uphold the rights of every child, everywhere. Guided by the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Sustainable Development Goals, UNICEF Strategic Plan 2026–2029 places equity at the center of its education work to deliver results on learning and skills development of every child. The education programme offer is designed to ensure that every child and adolescent has access to quality, inclusive, and resilient learning opportunities. It prioritizes three key transitions in a child's learning journey: readiness for school, acquisition of foundational and transferable skills, and preparation for life and work. These transitions underpin UNICEF's focus on equitable access, improved learning outcomes, and continuity of education in emergencies and fragile contexts.

Within this framework, gender equality is recognized as both a right and a powerful driver of education system transformation. Girls continue to face barriers that limit their access to and success in education, including discrimination, violence, poverty, and restrictive social norms. At the same time, there is a growing concern about boys' disengagement in education in many countries. Addressing these inequities is essential to achieving sustainable and transformative progress for all children.

The United Nations Girls' Education Initiative (UNGEI), established in 2000 within UNICEF, catalyses action locally, nationally, regionally, and globally for girls' education and gender equality through education. Its mission is to influence global policy, promote evidence-based solutions, and facilitate the sharing of good practice across contexts. By strengthening cross-sector collaboration and engaging diverse development actors, UNGEI accelerates progress towards gender-transformative education. UNGEI and UNICEF's programmatic success strengthens partnerships and further creates advocacy opportunities.

As part of this mandate, UNGEI provides technical leadership and partnership support to strengthen gender equality in education policies, systems and practice. A key area of work is the Gender at the Centre Initiative (GCI), which UNGEI has co-led with IIEP-UNESCO since 2019 and which is currently being implemented in 13 countries. GCI brings together governments, civil society and young feminists to strengthen gender-responsive education systems through enhanced technical capacity, political commitment and collective action to transform discriminatory gender norms and practices. UNGEI also supports the Ending Gender Stereotypes in Schools (EGS) initiative, which is generating evidence and promising practices to address harmful gender norms and stereotypes in and through education. As these initiatives mature, demand is increasing for high-quality technical assistance to support implementation, learning, sustainability and scale-up. Countries and UNICEF Country Offices require support to institutionalize gender-transformative approaches within education sector policies, planning processes, financing and programme implementation, while strengthening national ownership and capacity for long-term impact. There is also growing interest in applying lessons and evidence from existing initiatives to broader education sector reforms and emerging areas of work.

UNGEI continues to strengthen its role as a global thought leader on girls' education and gender transformative education (GTE). Increasing demand for clearer conceptual frameworks, measurement approaches and practical

guidance requires continued investment in research, evidence generation and knowledge products that help translate emerging concepts into policy and programme action. Attention is needed in areas such as digital innovation and artificial intelligence, disability-inclusive education, and the intersections between multiple forms of exclusion.

UNGEI also plays a critical convening role, bringing together diverse stakeholders to promote collective action, strengthen accountability and advance policy influence for girls' education and gender-transformative education. To support these priorities, UNICEF seeks a consultant to provide technical expertise across country support, knowledge generation, learning and partnership engagement, contributing to the advancement of gender equality in and through education.

Scope of Work

The consultancy will support the advancement of gender equality in and through education through country-level technical assistance, knowledge generation and partnerships. Working with UNICEF country offices, UNGEI and partners, the consultant will strengthen the design, implementation, monitoring and sustainability of initiatives that promote gender-transformative education.

A key focus of the assignment is providing technical support to UNICEF country offices implementing the Gender at the Centre Initiative (GCI) and related programmes. This includes support for programme planning, implementation, stakeholder engagement, learning and evidence generation, while strengthening the integration of gender-transformative approaches into education policies, sector plans and programmes.

The consultancy will also contribute to UNGEI's thought leadership on gender-transformative education (GTE) through research, evidence synthesis and stakeholder consultations. This includes supporting the development of conceptual and measurement frameworks, as well as generating knowledge products on emerging priorities such as digital innovation and accountability.

The consultant will report to the Education Specialist (Gender Equity) based in Nairobi, under the overall supervision of the Senior Education Advisor (Gender and Inclusion) and Head of the UNGEI Secretariat in Amman. The consultant will work closely with the Programme Specialist (UNGEI Communication and Partnership), other UNGEI Secretariat staff, and relevant members of the Global Education Practice Team, particularly the Equity, Disability, Gender and Inclusion pillar.

Assignment 1: Country Technical Support

- Provide technical assistance to key partners and UNICEF country offices for the implementation of the workplan under the Gender at the Centre Initiative (GCI), monitoring, learning and stakeholder engagement.
- Provide technical support and advisory services to UNICEF country offices and partners implementing the GCI, Ending Gender Stereotypes (EGS) and other gender equality in education initiatives in diverse contexts including emergencies and protracted crises.
- Above activities include:
 - Supporting the integration of gender-transformative approaches into workplan activities.
 - Providing technical advice for preparing and delivering meetings and workshops as part of the workplans to ensure alignment with the global standards on gender and education.

Assignment 2: Knowledge Generation and Learning

- Conduct technical research and analysis on gender transformative education (GTE), including a review of global evidence, frameworks and promising practices, and support the development of a working definition and measurement framework, including proposed indicators, in diverse contexts including emergencies and protracted crises.
- Facilitate consultations with UNICEF, UNGEI and key partners to refine and validate the conceptual framework, definition and indicators for GTE.
- Prepare technical guidance and knowledge products on GTE, including technical materials tailored to different audiences.

- Undertake evidence reviews and prepare a technical note on the role of digital innovation and technology in advancing gender equality in and through education, with analysis of the current use of digital technologies
- and AI in advancing gender equality in and through education, examples of best practices and practical recommendations for policy and programming.
- Compile and analyse evidence, country experiences and partner practices related to gender equality in education in emergencies and protracted crises; identify emerging lessons and promising approaches; and develop three brief technical notes to support learning and programme strengthening across UNICEF and partner organizations, and one summary note.
- Provide technical support for the design, delivery and follow-up of an international gender-transformative education learning event, ensuring the integration of an EiE lens, documentation of country experiences, facilitation of peer learning, and dissemination of key lessons for programme improvement.

Assignment 3: UNGEI technical and programme support

- Conduct a mapping and analysis of existing governance, coordination, and accountability mechanisms for girls' education and gender-transformative education; identify strengths, gaps, and opportunities through stakeholder consultations; and develop recommendations to strengthen governance structures, cross-sector coordination, leadership, and accountability for sustainable progress.
- Provide technical support to the UNGEI Secretariat in the planning, design, facilitation and follow-up of meetings, workshops, webinars, knowledge-sharing events and reports, including the preparation and review of agendas, concept notes, presentations, briefing materials, meeting summaries and other technical resources.
- Provide technical support to the UNGEI Secretariat to strengthen its programmatic collaboration with partners, including the preparation of programme progress reports, documentation of good practices and lessons learned, and development of technical inputs.

Work Assignments Overview	Deliverables/Outputs	Delivery deadline to complete the deliverable
1. Country Technical Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gender equality education technical assistance provided to key partners and UNICEF country offices for the implementation of the Gender at the Centre Initiative (GCI), including programmatic and technical support. Two trips planned, details to be confirmed at a later phase 	31.12.2027 – 30 days
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gender equality education technical support provided to UNICEF country offices and partners implementing the Gender at the Centre Initiative (GCI), Ending Gender Stereotypes in schools (EGS) and other gender equality in education initiatives to strengthen programme design, implementation and learning. One trip planned, details to be confirmed at a later phase 	30.11.2027 – 10 days
2. Knowledge Generation and Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A working definition and measurement framework for Gender Transformative Education (GTE) developed, including a proposed set of indicators. Delivery includes stakeholder consultation and implementation of inputs and feedback. 	30.04.2027 – 15 days
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One technical note on Gender Transformative Education (GTE), and GTE programme-focused technical input for a GTE advocacy brief. 	31.07.2027 – 10 days

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One technical note on leveraging digital innovation to advance gender equality in and through education, featuring analysis of current situation, best practices and practical recommendations. 	31.05.2027 – 15 days
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Three brief technical notes (3-5 pages each) documenting country and partner experiences, good practices, and key lessons for advancing gender equality in education in emergencies and protracted crises, and one summary note. 	30.11.2027 – 20 days
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A discussion paper and recommendations on accountability for gender equality in and through education, drawing on country and partner experiences to identify mechanisms that support the transition from commitment to implementation and results. 	30.09.2027 – 15 days
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technical inputs and materials developed to support the design, delivery and post-event follow-up of an international gender-transformative education event, incorporating an EiE lens and facilitating country learning and programme strengthening. One trip planned, details to be confirmed at a later phase	31.10.2027 – 10 days
3. UNGEI technical support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A set of recommendations to enhance governance, coordination, and accountability for girls' education and gender-transformative education. • Technical inputs provided to the UNGEI Secretariat for the design and delivery of meetings, workshops, knowledge-sharing events and reports, with a focus on diverse settings including education in emergencies and protracted crises. • Technical inputs provided to the UNGEI Secretariat to support programmatic collaboration with partners. One trip planned, details to be confirmed at a later phase	31.03.2027 – 15 days 31.12.2027 – 15 days 31.12.2027 – 15 days

Payment Schedule:

Payment will be made on submission and acceptance of 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.

Important Notes

- Individuals engaged under a consultancy or individual contract will not be considered “staff members” under the Staff Regulations and Rules of the United Nations and UNICEF’s policies and procedures and will not be entitled to benefits provided therein (such as leave entitlements 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 and Individual Contractors. Consultants and individual contractors 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.

- The selected candidate is solely responsible for ensuring that the health insurance (and visa if applicable) required to perform the duties of the contract are valid for the entire period of the contract. Selected candidates are subject to confirmation of fully-vaccinated status against SARS-CoV-2 (Covid-19) with a World Health Organization (WHO)-endorsed vaccine, which must be met prior to taking up the assignment. It does not apply to consultants who will work remotely and are not expected to work on or visit UNICEF premises, programme delivery locations or directly interact with communities UNICEF works with, nor to travel to perform functions for UNICEF for the duration of their consultancy contracts.
- UNICEF offers reasonable accommodation for consultants with disabilities. This may include, for example, accessible software, travel assistance for missions or personal attendants. We encourage you to disclose your disability during your application in case you need reasonable accommodation during the selection process and afterwards in your assignment.

QUALIFICATIONS / SPECIALIZED KNOWLEDGE / EXPERIENCE/ COMPETENCIES (CORE/TECHNICAL/FUNCTIONAL) / LANGUAGE SKILLS REQUIRED FOR THE ASSIGNMENT

Minimum requirements:

- Education:
 - Master's Degree in gender or women's studies, child rights, international relations, international development, political science, sociology, psychology, economics
- Work Experience:
 - At least 8 years of professional experience in education, gender equality or child rights in diverse contexts including emergencies and protracted crises.
 - At least 5 years of professional experience in programming related to gender equality in education.
 - At least 5 years of experience working with governments, especially the Ministries of Education.
 - Experience partnering with other education and gender stakeholders, including CSOs and youth networks.
 - Demonstrated experience in working for women's and girls' rights.
 - Experience in preparing and providing training to MoE officials and partners using standard tools, including the Gender Responsive Education Sector Planning tool.
- Language requirement:
 - Fluency in English and French, orally and in writing, is required.
- Skills:
 - Expert knowledge of gender equality in education issues, including intersectional gender equality frameworks, Gender-Responsive Education Sector Planning and Gender-Transformative Education.
 - Expert understanding of the education sector, including the functioning of Ministries of Education, education sector dialogue, education sector analysis and planning and education in emergencies.
 - Strong data analysis skills, knowledge of gender and education data sets, national education data

systems.

- High level of initiative and autonomy, ability to undertake complex tasks in a time constrained context.
- Excellent communication skills, excellent writing competencies, strong oral presentation skills.
- Excellent interpersonal skills, including an ability to create collaborative work relationships with people from diverse cultural backgrounds.
- Strong commitment to gender equality.

Desirables:

- Experience partnering with young activists is an asset.
- Relevant experience in a UN system agency or organization is an asset.