unicef | for every child

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Caribbean Multi-Country Multiple Indicators Cluster Survey National MICS Consultant

CONTRACT MODALITY	Individual Consultancy
DUTY STATION	Barbados, Bridgetown (Remote)
DURATION OF CONTRACT	12 months

Purpose of Assignment

UNICEF is a UN organization mandated by the UN General Assembly to advocate for the protection of children's rights, to help meet their basic needs and to expand their opportunities to reach their full potential. In the Caribbean Region, UNICEF is working with its partners to implement a Caribbean Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS) Programme and provide support to the Governments of selected Caribbean Countries in realizing children's rights to survival, development, protection and participation.

UNICEF works in some of the world's toughest places to reach the world's most disadvantaged children. To save their lives. To defend their rights. To help them fulfill their potential.

Across 190 countries and territories, we work for every child, everywhere, every day, to build a better world for everyone.

The MICS is an international household survey programme developed and supported by UNICEF. MICS is designed to collect estimates of key indicators that are used to assess the situation of children and women. Over the past three decades, MICS has evolved to respond to changing data needs, expanding from 28 indicators in the first round to more than 250 indicators in the current seventh round, and has become a key source of data on child protection, early childhood education, and a major source of data on child health and nutrition. In addition to being a data collection tool to generate data for monitoring progress towards national goals and global commitments to promote the welfare of children, MICS has provided valuable data for the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and is currently providing data for Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) monitoring and reporting.

Since the inception of MICS in the 1990s, over 350 surveys have been carried out in 118 countries. As part of the global effort to further develop national capacities to generate and analyse high-quality and disaggregated data, UNICEF launched the seventh round of MICS in 2023, with results of the first surveys expected to be available by the end of 2023. This new round is in accordance with the list of Sustainable Development Goal indicators endorsed by the UN Statistical Commission in 2016, following the global adoption of the 17 SDGs and 169 targets of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The final SDG indicator framework currently includes 231 global indicators, of which around one-third are household survey-based. MICS is well positioned to play a central role in this Agenda alongside other key demographic, health and socio-economic surveys and to complement data from administrative sources and censuses. After undergoing rigorous methodological and validation work to broaden the scope of the tools and include numerous topics that reflect SDG indicators and emerging issues in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development context, MICS7 questionnaires in the new round cover half of the household survey-based SDG indicators.

As governments develop national frameworks to monitor progress toward the SDGs, strategic planning and investments will be required to collect robust, more frequent, and timely data. This round of MICS presents a unique opportunity to support this process.

UNICEF has already supported MICS surveys in Barbados (2012), St. Lucia (2012 and 2026), the Turks and Caicos Islands (2019-2020) and Trinidad and Tobago (2000, 2006, 2011 and 2022). To support the countries that are now part of UNICEF MCO to establish national SDG baselines and monitor progress on children and women outcomes, as well as key objectives of the Multi-Country Programme, UNICEF MCO will support the 7th round of MICS in selected countries as part of the Regional MICS Programme for the Caribbean, in collaboration with National Statistical Offices (NSOs) and development partners.

Following the CARICOM 35th 5th Meeting of the CARICOM Advisory Group on Statistics and Dialogue on South-South Cooperation in Census Readiness, which took place 29 June to 3 July 2026, in Barbados, in partnership with UNFPA, the selected CARICOM countries expressed their interest in the Caribbean MICS Programme. The Caribbean MICS Programme aims to generate timely, high-quality, nationally representative and internationally comparable data on the wellbeing of children, adolescents, women and households. The initiative seeks to strengthen evidence-based policymaking, support monitoring of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), strengthen national statistical systems, and improve the availability of disaggregated data for vulnerable populations.

The Caribbean MICS Programme adopts a harmonized approach to survey implementation through standardized methodologies, common survey tools, shared technical assistance, regional capacity-building initiatives, and coordinated data processing and reporting. This approach is expected to improve efficiency, reduce implementation costs, strengthen national statistical capacities, and facilitate regional comparisons across participating countries.

Surveys will be implemented by National Statistical Offices with technical support from UNICEF MCO, the Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean (LACRO), UNICEF Headquarters' (HQ) Global MICS Team, regional statistical organizations and academic institutions. To ensure that implementation proceeds smoothly and in accordance with MICS standards and timelines, UNICEF will recruit a National MICS Consultant to provide technical and operational support throughout all phases of survey implementation, from planning and preparation through dissemination and archiving final survey results.

Purpose of the Consultancy:

Under the overall supervision of the Data and Analytics (Evidence Generation and Evaluation) Specialist (Team Lead), the National MICS Consultant (NMC) will support and provide technical and operational support to UNICEF MCO and the NSOs of the selected Caribbean countries for the preparation, implementation and completion of the MICS survey. The NMC will advise and support the NSOs, especially the Survey Coordinator and sampling and data processing experts, during survey planning, questionnaire design, sampling, training, fieldwork, data processing, data analysis, reporting, dissemination and archiving, ensuring that MICS protocols and recommendations are being followed at all times. The NMC will communicate effectively between UNICEF MCO and NSOs, responding promptly to MICS-related needs and issues as they arise.

As part of the Caribbean MICS Programme, the NMC will also support efforts to ensure harmonization of survey methodologies, tools, indicators, data processing procedures, and reporting standards across participating countries. The consultant will contribute to the production of nationally representative and internationally comparable data for monitoring child-focused Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), strengthening national statistical systems, and supporting evidence-based policymaking across the region.

The NMC will be responsible for coordinating and supporting the work of other resource people hired by UNICEF to provide technical assistance to the MICS process. The consultant will work in close collaboration with the survey team, the stakeholders, and Steering and Technical Committees and will represent UNICEF in meetings and workshops in relation to the survey as needed. The NMC will also work in close collaboration with the Regional MICS Coordinator at the UNICEF Regional Office (RO) and the MICS Team at UNICEF HQ as well as experts and consultants assigned to support selected countries' MICS (collectively labelled “The UNICEF MICS Team”). The consultant will additionally support coordination and knowledge sharing with regional resource persons,

participating NSOs and other partners involved in the Caribbean MICS Programme.

Scope of Work

Deliverables:

1. Provide technical and managerial support to countries in the MCO across all stages of MICS implementation from survey design to data collection, data analysis and dissemination of results,
2. Present the MICS methodology, tools, and guidelines to partners/stakeholders (e.g., ministries, UN Agencies, etc.),
3. Finalise, in collaboration with national partners and UNICEF MCO, the Survey Plan and Budget, including the timetable, and share with the Regional MICS Coordinator,
4. Ensure that the Ethical Protocol and other ethical recommendations are addressed in the survey implementation process and that all MICS-related documents are shared with the national/international Ethical Committee on time for approval,
5. Oversee each stage of the survey process and ensure that the MICS protocols and standards are followed by the NSOs, more specifically during training and field supervision visits,
6. Communicate regularly with the UNICEF MCO and/or the UNICEF MICS Team, responding to all MICS-related issues in a timely manner,
7. Provide monthly updates on MICS activities to the UNICEF MCO and Regional MICS Coordinator,
8. Coordinate the work of the NSOs specialists and the UNICEF MICS Team, and other resource persons assigned by the UNICEF MCO and/or the UNICEF MICS Team to support different survey stages,
9. Ensure that external technical reviews by experts (i.e., Sampling, Data Processing, and Household Survey experts and consultants) are carried out at key survey stages and coordinate the feedback and response between the UNICEF MCO, the UNICEF MICS Team and the NSOs,
10. Ensure that all survey-related documents and deliverables are properly archived throughout the survey process (for example: Memorandum of Understanding, Survey Plan and Budget, questionnaires, manuals, sample design, training/pre-test reports, expert reports, CAPI application, field check tables, output and tabulation plan tables, syntaxes, datasets, cluster geocodes, boundary shapefiles, Survey Findings Report, Statistical Snapshots, dissemination materials, etc.),
11. Participate in all MICS Steering and Technical Committee meetings,
12. Participate in, and contribute to Caribbean MICS Workshops,
13. Support harmonization of survey tools, questionnaires, tabulation plans, syntax files, and reporting templates across participating Caribbean countries.
14. Facilitate coordination between national survey teams and regional technical resource centres established under the Regional MICS Programme.
15. Contribute to regional knowledge sharing and peer-learning initiatives among participating NSOs.
16. Support production of regional analytical outputs, comparative indicator profiles, regional SDG monitoring products, and harmonized regional databases.
17. Organise, as required, and facilitate the national Data Interpretation and Report Compilation Workshop,
18. Ensure that lessons learned, problems, and good practices are documented throughout the MICS process and rapidly shared with the MICS community (other MICS implementing countries and the UNICEF MICS Team) through all means available,

19. Support planning and customisation of other MICS initiatives (MICS Plus, MICS GIS, MICS Link) in collaboration with the relevant experts of these initiatives from the Global MICS Team.

Specific Activities:

In consultation and collaboration with the UNICEF MCO and the selected NSOs, the NMC will be responsible for ensuring the following activities have been undertaken following the MICS guidelines and will contribute to the coordination of these activities:

1. **Survey Planning:**

- A Steering Committee is established and composed of all relevant national and international stakeholders, including the National Ethical Committee,
- A Technical Committee comprised of all relevant technical experts is established,
- The Survey Plan and Budget, including the timetable, are finalised and shared with all stakeholders,
- Ensure alignment of country survey implementation with the Regional MICS Programme framework, including harmonized methodologies, standardized questionnaires, common indicators, data processing procedures, and reporting templates adopted across participating countries.
- A Memorandum of Understanding between UNICEF MCO and the selected NSOs is signed before funds are spent on survey activities,
- Survey supplies are procured and distributed in time for training and data collection,
- Ensure that other MICS initiatives (MICS Plus, MICS GIS, MICS Link) are discussed with national partners and properly addressed during survey planning stage,
- Sample design:
    - The UNICEF Sampling expert/consultant is provided with the necessary information, and visits are well managed and coordinated within survey plans,
    - Sample design is prepared by the sampling expert of NSOs with the guidance and review of the UNICEF Sampling expert / consultant,
    - Listing and Mapping materials and operations are reviewed by the UNICEF Sampling expert/consultant,
    - Cluster geocodes (cluster centre points, multi-points, or boundaries), either existing or collected during the mapping and household listing operation, are assessed by the survey team and communicated to the UNICEF MICS Team, together with the boundary shapefiles representing the sampling frame, including the boundaries of one level lower than the sample stratification,
    - Sample design is reviewed by the UNICEF MICS Team before finalisation,
    - The final selection of households is reviewed, and
    - The weights are reviewed.
- MICS questionnaires:
    - Appropriate UNICEF programme staff and the Technical Committee are involved in reviewing the customisation of relevant sections of the MICS questionnaire,
    - Selected Modules address country data gaps and address SGD data needs,
    - Questionnaires undergo translation and back translation process,

- Questionnaires and manuals undergo an ethical review,
- Questionnaires are pre-tested, and a pre-test report is produced,
- Questionnaires are reviewed by the UNICEF MICS Team before finalisation.

- Manuals:
  - MICS Household Listing and Mapping (GPS Data Collection, if applicable), Supervisor, Measurer, and Interviewer Manuals are customised for the country-specific context and translated.
- CAPI application template:
  - CAPI application template is customised by the data processing expert of the selected NSOs with the guidance of the UNICEF Data Processing expert/consultant,
  - Customised CAPI application is reviewed by the UNICEF MICS Team before finalisation,
  - Secondary editing guidelines and Field Check Table tabulation plan and syntax are customised by the data processing expert of the selected NSOs with the guidance of the UNICEF Data Processing and Household Survey experts / consultants.

2. Listing and Mapping, Training and Fieldwork, and Data Processing:

- Listing and mapping are planned and carried out per MICS guidelines,
- Training schedules are adequately adapted to the county context while following MICS guidelines,
- Appropriate resource persons are identified to facilitate training (i.e., nutritionists for anthropometry training, survey experts for methodology, etc.),
- Contribute to the pre-test, CAPI test, and fieldwork training,
- Fieldwork and fieldwork monitoring visits are planned and performed according to MICS guidelines,
- Field Check Tables are produced weekly, immediately analysed by survey coordinator/managers, and the main findings are reported to field supervisors for action. Field Check Tables are immediately shared with the Regional MICS Coordinator,
- UNICEF CO staff are trained and organised to assist in monitoring data collection,
- UNICEF Household Survey and Data Processing experts/consultants are timely provided with the necessary information, and country visits are well managed and coordinated,
- Hardware is made available for the CAPI application (data collection and central office menu components), the software is properly installed, and a working data transfer system and data backup system are established,
- Monitor sample selection with the selected NSOs after the listing and mapping exercise is completed,
- Monitor pre-test, CAPI test, and main data collection,
- Monitor data processing and secondary data editing.

3. Data Analysis and Report Writing:

- Sampling Weights are included in the datasets and reviewed by the sampling expert of the selected NSOs with the guidance and review of the UNICEF Sampling expert/consultant,
- MICS tabulation plan and standard syntax are customised, reviewed by the UNICEF MICS Team, and used in generating SPSS datasets and tables,

- Datasets/Tables, including the wealth index, are substantively reviewed by technical experts (e.g., sampling and household survey experts) and subject matter experts at the selected NSOs, as well as by the UNICEF MICS Team before the report writing commences,
- Support preparation of regional comparative analyses by ensuring consistency of datasets, indicators, metadata, and tabulations in accordance with regional requirements.
- Contribute to the preparation of regional knowledge products including comparative indicator profiles, regional SDG monitoring products, policy briefs, and regional analytical reports as requested by UNICEF.
- Facilitate communication on the process of anonymisation of geocodes between the UNICEF MICS Team and the selected NSOs as per the Memorandum of Understanding,
- Coordinate and contribute substantively to the elaboration of the Survey Findings Report and Statistical Snapshots, using the MICS template and according to MICS standards to ensure a timely release,
- Ensure that the Survey Findings Reports and Statistical Snapshots undergo the technical review process by the UNICEF MICS Team,
- Coordinate the printing and distribution of the Survey Findings Report and Statistical Snapshots,
- Organise and facilitate the presentation of the Survey Findings Report and Statistical Snapshots through a national seminar,
- Provide technical expertise and advice for the wide dissemination of the Survey Findings Report, Statistical Snapshots, and main results,
- Ensure that the MICS survey archive with all final survey documents and materials (Memorandum of Understanding, Country Survey Plan, questionnaires, manuals, sample design, field reports, CAPI application, syntaxes, database, cluster geocodes, boundary shapefiles, tables, Survey Findings Report, and Statistical Snapshots, dissemination materials, etc.) is being produced by the selected NSOs.

4. **Attend all MICS Regional and/or National Workshops**

- Field trip reports
- Regional workshop trip reports
- Presentations and training materials used in training, workshops, and other meetings.

Confidentiality of Data and MICS Documents:

The NMC must respect the complete confidentiality of the MICS data as well as any specific MICS documents that will be produced throughout the MICS process. The NMC can use the documents and the datasets only for the tasks related to these Terms of Reference.

Office Arrangements and Travel Requirements:

During the contract period, the NMC is expected to travel within the selected countries and participate in the MICS Regional Workshops organized under the Caribbean MICS Programme, including:

- Regional Data Processing Workshop
- Regional Data Interpretation and Report Compilation Workshop
- Additional Regional Technical Meetings as required.

Travel costs associated with approved regional workshops and country missions will be covered by UNICEF in accordance with applicable policies. The travel costs will be reimbursed by UNICEF upon submission of receipts and based on applicable UN DSA rates. All travel is to be conducted in accordance with UNICEF travel rules and regulations.

The exact timing of the travel will depend on the survey schedules of the countries. A travel budget will be determined by UNICEF and included as a provision of the final contract.

The NMC will be home-based. The selected consultant is expected to provide his/her own laptop. UNICEF will provide dedicated account access.

Estimated Duration of Contract and Fees:

The NMC should be recruited at the start of MICS planning and should remain on board until the Survey Findings Report, Statistical Snapshots, and the survey archive are produced. Without significant and unforeseen delays, the MICS survey activities can be completed within 12 months.

The duration of this consultancy is 12 months starting from December 2026, with the possibility of extension depending on the time it will take to finalize the whole MICS process.

The consultant is to indicate an all-inclusive (lump sum) fee for the services to be provided, including all associated administrative and international travel costs, if applicable (including, but not limited to, costs for obtaining visas and travel insurance). ALTERNATIVE: (actual travel costs will be covered separately by UNICEF and should not be included in the lump sum fee).

Local travel and accommodation costs related to survey planning, implementation, and dissemination activities and any international travel to attend MICS regional workshops will be covered by UNICEF MCO and should not be included in the lump sum fee.

The fees payable to a consultant shall follow the “best value for money” principle, i.e., achieving the desired outcome at the lowest possible fee. This contract does not allow payment of off-hours, sick leave, or taxes.

UNICEF reserves the right to withhold all or a portion of payment if performance is unsatisfactory, if work/output is incomplete or not delivered, or for failure to meet deadlines.

Work Assignments Overview	Deliverables/Outputs	Delivery deadline to complete the deliverable
Month 1 – Inception Report and Workplan	**Deliverable 1** – Inception report submitted, including workplan, survey implementation schedule, stakeholder mapping, and coordination arrangements for participating countries.	31 December 2026 (15 days)
Month 2 – Survey Planning Support	**Deliverable 2** – Survey planning support provided; Steering and Technical Committee arrangements documented; Survey Plan and Budget review completed. Monthly progress report submitted.	29 January 2027 (15 days)
Month 3 – Questionnaire Harmonization	**Deliverable 3** – Support provided for questionnaire customization and review; harmonization requirements across participating countries documented. Monthly progress report submitted.	26 February 2027 (20 days)
Month 4 – Sampling Support	**Deliverable 4** – Support provided for sampling activities and coordination with sampling experts; technical feedback consolidated and documented. Monthly progress report submitted.	31 March 2027 (20 days)
Month 5 – Questionnaire Finalization	**Deliverable 5** – Questionnaires, manuals and survey documentation reviewed and submitted for technical clearance. Monthly progress report submitted.	30 April 2027 (20 days)
Month 6 – Pre-test Activities	**Deliverable 6** – Pre-test planning and implementation support provided; pre-test findings documented and	31 May 2027 (20 days)

	recommendations submitted. Monthly progress report submitted.	
Month 7 – CAPI Development Support	**Deliverable 7** – Support provided for development and testing of CAPI applications and fieldwork systems. Monthly progress report submitted.	30 June 2027 (20 days)
Month 8 – Training Support	**Deliverable 8** – Training materials finalized and support provided for interviewer, supervisor and data processing training. Monthly progress report submitted.	30 July 2027 (20 days)
Month 9 – Fieldwork Readiness Assessment	**Deliverable 9** – Fieldwork readiness assessment completed and recommendations submitted. Monthly progress report submitted.	31 August 2027 (20 days)
Month 10 –Fieldwork Monitoring	**Deliverable 10** – Fieldwork monitoring support provided; field quality assurance findings documented. Monthly progress report submitted.	30 September 2027 (20 days)
Month 11 –Fieldwork Monitoring	**Deliverable 11** – Fieldwork monitoring support provided and corrective actions tracked with NSOs. Monthly progress report submitted.	29 October 2027 (20 days)
Month 12 – Mid-Year Review	**Deliverable 12** – Mid-year implementation review completed, including progress against survey timetable and regional harmonization requirements. Monthly progress report submitted.	30 November 2027 (20 days)
Travel	Estimated 5 days per month	

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.
- Contracts are conditional upon the selected candidate's willingness to comply with any current or future vaccination requirements that may be established by UNICEF, where applicable. Failure to comply with applicable vaccination requirements, where required and without an approved medical exemption by UNICEF, may result in the withdrawal of the consultancy offer or termination of the contract in accordance with the General Terms and Conditions of Contract.
- 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:** Advanced university degree (Master's degree or higher) in Demography, Statistics, Social Sciences, Epidemiology, or any other related technical field is required.
- **Work Experience:**
  - Proven minimum of 5 years' experience in the coordination and/or management of quantitative household surveys (prior MICS or Demographic and Health Survey (DHS) preferred,
  - Strong computer skills and strong expertise in statistical analysis (familiarity with data processing and data analysis software, particularly SPSS),
  - Experience with CAPI data collection,
  - Training experience and ability to organize and facilitate training and presentations,
  - Experience in data analysis and survey report writing.
- **Skills:**
  - Excellent communication and interpersonal skills,
  - Excellent oral and written communication in English required,
  - Familiarity and previous experience of working in at least 2 of the selected countries and/or in the

region are highly desirable,

- Experience coordinating MICS in the region,
- Experience supporting multi-country or regional statistical programmes is an asset,
- Experience contributing to SDG monitoring and reporting framework is an asset,
- Familiarity with child-focused indicators and evidence generation for social sector planning is highly desirable,
- Demonstrated ability to work in a multicultural environment and to establish harmonious and effective relationships both within and outside the organisation, more specifically with the selected NSOs.
- Demonstrated leadership, managerial and supervisory ability,
- Ability and willingness to travel in-country extensively and to attend regional workshops.

- **Language Requirements:** Fluency in English is required
- **Technical Proposal:** Applicants are requested to submit a brief (max 6 pages) proposal outlining their methodology for carrying out the assignment.