The UNITED NATIONS CHILDREN'S FUND (UNICEF)
TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR TEMPORARY APPOINTMENT
Title: *Market Research Specialist* LEVEL: P3

BACKGROUND

The Audience & Market Insights (AMI) team is part of the Partnership Cone, that focuses on mobilizing individuals, governments, companies and philanthropists to mobilize the resources that make children's rights a reality. As official-development-assistance budgets tighten, UNICEF's forthcoming 2026-29 resource mobilization strategy puts increased emphasis on private-sector growth-engaging millions of individual supporters as well as corporate, foundation and philanthropic partners.

AMI delivers and enables the generation of audience insights that support growth. The team is global in mandate but operates in close collaboration with the fundraising and communications ecosystem. AMI partners closely with National Committees, Regional Offices and in-market teams that hold responsibility for fundraising and communication decisions.

PURPOSE OF THE JOB

This position will help increase UNICEF fundraising net revenues, private sector engagement, and communication and advocacy effectiveness by strengthening the way audience and market insights are identified, connected and translated into action. The role will lead the development of insight and audience engagement ecosystems that bring together business needs, existing knowledge, new research and stakeholder perspectives to enable stronger and more audience-centred decision making across Fundraising, Advocacy, and Communications.

The Market Research Specialist, under the overall guidance and direction of the Lead Market Research Manager, is responsible for leading key audience insight and audience engagement ecosystems, ensuring that insight needs are identified systematically and addressed through coordinated global, regional and market-level research and insight plans. The role will play a key role in connecting insight generation with strategy and implementation, ensuring that research leads to clear recommendations and meaningful action.

The role holder will establish and drive forward listening tours and insight planning processes in partnership with the Market Research Specialist in LAC and the Market Research Specialist in APAC, working closely with stakeholders across HQ, Regional Offices and priority markets. The role will have particular accountability for understanding and coordinating audience insight needs across Europe, Middle East and North Africa (MENA), Gulf Area Office (GAO), West and Central Africa/Europe and Central Africa (WACA/ECA) and South Africa, ensuring that regional and market perspectives are represented within the wider AMI insight agenda.

The role holder will also lead selected strategic insight initiatives, including the Advocacy Moveable Middle Diagnostic and a mediagenic study for the Global Coalition for Youth Mental Health, alongside other priority projects identified by AMI leadership. Across these responsibilities, the role holder will champion the movement from research and insight to action, ensuring that findings are understood, translated into strategic recommendations and embedded into relevant decision-making processes.

The role holder will contribute to AMI strategy and planning, conduct and oversee work progress to ensure the achievement of agreed goals, and collaborate across UNICEF in a way that meets the requirements of the UNICEF Competency Framework and organizational values.

MAIN TASKS

1. Leading the Audience Insight Ecosystem
   a. Lead the development and ongoing evolution of the Audience Insight Ecosystem, creating a structured approach for identifying, prioritizing and responding to audience insight needs across relevant UNICEF teams, regions and markets.
   b. Work with AMI colleagues, along with the Chief of AMI and Marketing, and relevant stakeholders to establish priorities and translate strategic and operational questions into clear insight needs.
   c. Connect existing research, new research requirements, stakeholder knowledge and market-level perspectives to create a coherent view of audience understanding and identify important knowledge gaps.
   d. Facilitate collaboration across teams and markets to identify shared insight needs, reduce duplication and create opportunities for joint research and learning.
   e. Ensure that the ecosystem provides a clear pathway from business question to insight, recommendation and action.
2. Leading the Audience Engagement Ecosystem in partnership with Marketing Colleagues
   a. Act as the technical lead for the insights aspect of the AEE, and provide overall project coordination to ensure development brings insights and marketing action together.
   b. Lead the development of an Audience Engagement Ecosystem that connects audience understanding with the strategies and approaches UNICEF uses to engage priority audiences. This will be done in partnership with Marketing colleagues.
   c. Partner with Fundraising, Communications, and Advocacy and other relevant teams to understand how audience insights can strengthen engagement strategies and decision making.
   d. Identify opportunities to connect audience needs, motivations, attitudes and behaviours with UNICEF engagement priorities.
   e. Facilitate cross-functional working sessions that translate audience understanding into practical implications for engagement.
   f. Ensure that insight is incorporated at appropriate stages of strategy development, planning and implementation rather than being treated solely as a research output.
3. Leading strategic research and diagnostic initiatives
   a. Lead the Advocacy Moveable Middle Diagnostic, working with relevant Advocacy and Communications stakeholders to define the strategic questions, research approach and required outputs.
   b. Ensure that the diagnostic generates actionable understanding of relevant audiences and provides clear implications for advocacy strategy, audience engagement and communications.
   c. Lead a yearly/ once every two years mediagenic survey for the Global Coalition for Youth Mental Health, ensuring that research objectives, methodologies, analysis and outputs are aligned with the strategic needs of relevant stakeholders.
   d. Manage selected strategic research projects from business-question definition through methodology, execution, analysis, interpretation and activation.
   e. Work effectively with external research partners and vendors where required, ensuring appropriate methodological quality, innovation and value.
4. Driving insight into action
   a. Champion the translation of research findings from the “so what” to the “now what”, ensuring that insights result in clear strategic and operational implications.
   b. Work with colleagues across different divisions and countries to identify specific decisions, actions and opportunities arising from research and insight work.
   c. Design and facilitate insight-to-action workshops, working sessions and other activation approaches that enable stakeholders to apply findings to their work.
   d. Develop compelling insight narratives, executive summaries and recommendations that make complex audience and market evidence accessible and relevant to diverse UNICEF stakeholders.
   e. Establish appropriate mechanisms to follow up on agreed actions and understand how insights are being applied.
   f. Identify barriers to the use of insight and work with relevant teams to strengthen the organization's capability to incorporate audience understanding into decision making.
5. Stakeholder leadership, capability building and AMI contribution
   a. Build strong relationships with HQ, Regional Office and Country Office stakeholders to ensure appropriate understanding, ownership and application of AMI recommendations.

b. Partner with AMI colleagues, Marketing colleagues, and other teams to make the best use of expertise available across UNICEF and demonstrate the value of integrated audience and market insight.
c. Contribute to AMI strategic planning, operational effectiveness, standards and best practices.
d. Bring external innovation and best practice into UNICEF's approach to audience insight, engagement and research.
e. Provide technical guidance, knowledge sharing and mentoring to colleagues and junior team members within the role-holder's areas of expertise.
f. Utilize agreed processes and systems within AMI and PFP and ensure that projects are delivered according to agreed standards, timelines and resources.

DELIVERABLES

- Audience Insight Ecosystem advanced beyond pilot and increasingly operationalized across regions.
- Audience Engagement Ecosystem structure and pilot started.
- Pragmatic but robust approach relating to understanding insight needs across MENA, GAO, WACA/ECA and South Africa.
- Advocacy Moveable Middle Diagnostic successfully scaled to 2 additional markets, delivered and translated into actionable strategic recommendations.
- Research to Show for GCYMH successfully delivered and leveraged across participation markets, with findings translated into relevant strategic and operational implications.
- Insight-to-action sessions and activation plans delivered for priority research initiatives, with clear ownership of resulting actions.

QUALIFICATIONS AND SPECIALIZED KNOWLEDGE/EXPERIENCE REQUIRED

- An advanced university degree in one of the following fields is required: sociology, business, marketing, data analytics, market research or any other related field.
- Alternatively, a first level University Degree in a relevant field combined with (2) additional years of qualifying professional experience may be accepted in lieu of the advanced university degree.
- A minimum of five (5) years of relevant professional experience in market research, audience insights, consumer research, marketing analysis or a related technical area, of which at least 4 years of experience gained in an insights, strategy, communications or marketing agency environments is required.
- Proven experience in data analysis and translating data into actionable insights is required.
- Demonstrated experience and understanding of how to apply insights in a multifaceted, global organization to drive meaningful action is required.
- Proven experience in navigating multi-stakeholder environments and achieving alignment and consensus is required.
- Strong command of quantitative, qualitative, and secondary research methodologies, with full research method neutrality is required.
- Demonstrated experience driving insights adoption within complex global organizations is required. Experience working with UN organizations or multinational organizations is an asset.
- Demonstrated experience leveraging AI and LLMs to optimize audience insights functions (for example., optimising workflows, building new analytical approaches etc) is required.
- Fluency in English is required. Knowledge of another official UN language (Arabic, Chinese, French, Russian or Spanish) or a local language is an asset.

COMPETENCIES

- Demonstrates Self Awareness and Ethical Awareness
- Works Collaboratively with others
- Builds and Maintains Partnerships
- Innovates and Embraces Change
- Thinks and Acts Strategically
- Drives to achieve impactful results
- Manages ambiguity and complexity

NOTE: Level 1 for staff with no formal reporting lines and Level 2 with posts with formal reporting lines.

ESTIMATED DURATION OF THE CONTRACT AND PROPOSAL

364 days

REPORTING TO

Market Research Manager

WORK PLACE

Rome, Italy (PFP)