

FINAL DRAFT (1 Sept 25)

# Evaluation of UNICEF work on acquisition of transferable skills among adolescents and young people

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## I. Summary

1. The [UNICEF Strategic Plan, 2022–2025](#),<sup>1</sup> sets out the organization's vision for achieving results for children by 2030, and provides a global roadmap for all UNICEF offices, country programmes and National Committees. The core elements of the Strategic Plan include five programmatic goal areas and related outcomes, nine change strategies, and five organizational performance enablers. This evaluation focuses on Goal Area 2 “*Every child, including adolescents, learns and acquires skills for the future*”, within this goal area Result Area 2 ‘*Learning, skills, participation and engagement*’ – children, adolescents and young people are growing up in a transforming world. UNICEF work helps to prepare them for the future by providing opportunities for them to develop life skills, digital skills, transferable skills, and vocational skills for specific jobs. One of the vehicles to achieve Result Area 2 is the programmatic work around acquisition of **transferable skills** for children, adolescents, and young people.

2. **Transferable skills** are also known as **life skills, 21st century skills, soft skills, or socio-emotional skills** allow children, adolescents, and young people to become agile, adaptive learners and citizens equipped to navigate personal, academic, social, and economic challenges. They also support crisis-affected children to cope with traumatic events and build resilience in the face of adversity.

3. In developing the evaluation agenda for evaluations for the 2022-2025 quadrennium, UNICEF identified the need for children and young people to acquire transferable skills (see [Plan for Global Evaluations \(PGE\), 2022-2025](#)). The proposed evaluation aims to generate evaluative evidence on the extent to which UNICEF has supported countries and partners in their work to promote the acquisition of transferable skills that will enable children, adolescents, and young people to be productive and civically engaged people. Accordingly, the EO is commissioning this evaluation pursuant to the PGE. The findings and lessons from this evaluation will inform the reshaping and positioning of UNICEF work around acquisition of transferable skills in the future.

4. The terms of reference (ToR) present the background to the evaluation, its purpose and objectives, the proposed evaluation questions and methodology, management, and governance arrangements. The required qualifications and experience of the evaluation team, and key deliverables are included. The evaluation is expected to be executed for **8 months, from October 2025 to May 2026**.

## II. Background

### Global context

5. Children, adolescents, and young people today face numerous challenges in the form of changing labor markets, migration, and conflicts. They also live in an era of unprecedented technological advancements that some countries have harnessed into enormous opportunities. To succeed in this atmosphere, children, adolescents, and young people require access to quality education that develops essential skills, knowledge, attitudes, and values that will enable them to be lifelong learners, to engage meaningfully in the civic life of their communities, and to make informed decisions. However, many of them lack access to quality learning opportunities, which has often led to skills deficits – especially in the basic but essential skills of reading and writing, as well as other life skills.

6. The work on transferable skills has its foundation in life skills education (LSE) programmes, which were considered in the mid-90's as an integral to preparing children, adolescents, young people, and adults to negotiate and mediate everyday challenges and risks and enable productive participation in society. With their emphasis on the acquisition of competencies and content that is relevant to everyday life, and the use of teaching and learning methods to promote cooperative learning, life skills programmes were a key contributor to the quality of education. During that period, international and national political commitments to LSE were made in key global instruments, such as the [Dakar Framework for Action](#) on Education for All (EFA) and the [UNGASS Declaration of Commitment on HIV and AIDS](#), in the agendas of multilateral agencies such as the World Health Organization (WHO), UNESCO and UNICEF, and in the national sectoral policies and strategies of many countries. However, clearly defining and operationalizing a concept as complex and multifaceted as life skills is a challenge due to the wide spectrum of goals, content, and approaches.

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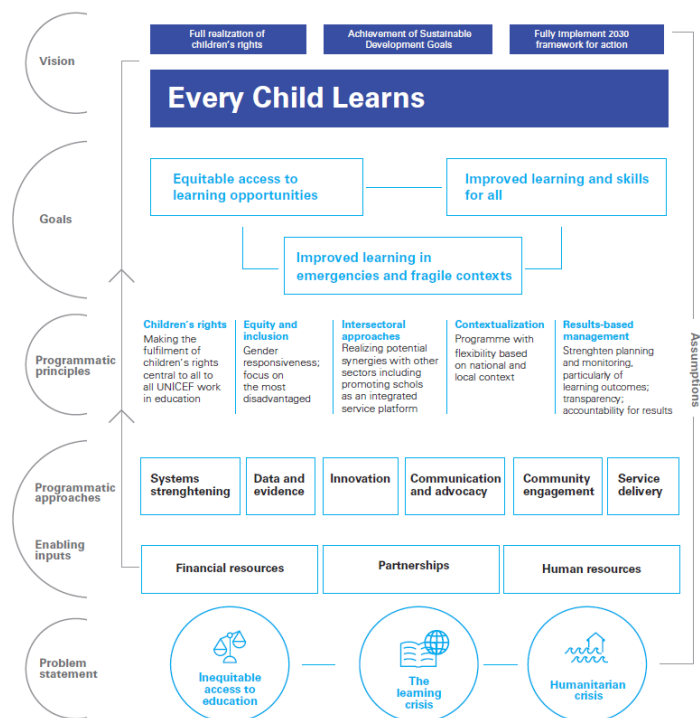
<sup>1</sup> UNICEF (2022), [UNICEF Strategic Plan 2022–2025](#). Renewed ambition towards 2030. UNICEF, New York.

7. The term ‘life skills’ gained currency in the fields of health, education, and social policy, and linked personal and social skills to the realities of everyday life. But because it is difficult and potentially contentious to determine which skills are relevant for life and which are not, the concept became highly elastic and was stretched to embrace a very wide range of skills. This was problematic in that if all skills are relevant for life, the concept has little utility. Hence further conceptualization work was done by academic institutions, think tanks, INGOs (e.g., Pratham, Education Development Center, etc.), bilateral organizations, UN/multilateral agencies (e.g., WHO, UNICEF, UNESCO), and governments e.g., Haiti, India, Singapore). This work was loosely referenced as 21<sup>st</sup> century skills and resulted in the second generation of life skills programmes and frameworks, that are focused on social emotional learning (SEL), addressing six domains – **cognitive**,<sup>2</sup> **emotion**,<sup>3</sup> **social**,<sup>4</sup> **values**,<sup>5</sup> **perspectives**<sup>6</sup> and **identity**.<sup>7</sup> Also, frameworks and programmes cover skills that are applicable to a wide age range. These include [Lego Skills for Holistic Development](#), [Sesame Workshop Global Framework for Learning](#), [Head Start](#), and [Vision of the Haitian Child in Society: Social Emotional Framework](#), with their emphasis on skills acquisition in early childhood, to [the PRACTICE Model: Skills for Success](#) and [Education Development Center Work Ready Now Framework](#), with their emphasis on work readiness and employability skills, to name a few.

### UNICEF’s work on transferable skills

8. The strategic framework for UNICEF work on education is articulated in the education strategy entitled [Every Child Learns: UNICEF Education Strategy 2019-2030](#). The strategy articulates three goals, namely, to create equitable access to learning opportunities, improve learning outcomes and skills development, and improve learning in emergencies and fragile contexts for all children,<sup>8</sup> consistent with SDG4. As indicated in Figure 1, UNICEF also describes five programmatic principles, six programmatic approaches and three enabling inputs to create an enabling environment and support countries to achieve their education goals.

**Figure 1:**  
Strategic framework for UNICEF education work



9. In pursuance of the goal of “improved learning and skills for all,” the UNICEF Education Strategy 2019-2030 identifies four main skill categories necessary for success as follows:

<sup>2</sup> attention control, working memory and planning, inhibitory control, cognitive flexibility, and critical thinking.

<sup>3</sup> emotion knowledge and expression, emotion and behavior regulation, and empathy and perspective-taking.

<sup>4</sup> understanding social cues, conflict resolution and social problem-solving, and prosocial and cooperative behavior.

<sup>5</sup> ethical values, performance values, intellectual values, and civic values.

<sup>6</sup> optimism, gratitude, openness, and enthusiasm.

<sup>7</sup> self-knowledge, purpose, self-efficacy and growth mindset, and self-esteem.

<sup>8</sup> The three goals referenced in the education strategy align with the three result areas in Goal Area 2 of the Strategic Plan (2018-2021), which were re-packaged in the current Strategic Plan (2022-2025) as Result Area 1 and Result Area 2.

- **Foundational skills:** basic literacy and numeracy; skills that are needed regardless of employment aspirations and are essential for further learning, productive employment, and civic engagement.
- **Transferable skills** (also called ‘life skills’ or ‘21st-century skills’): skills and values that are developed progressively from early years and allow young people to become agile, adaptive learners and citizens equipped to navigate personal, social, academic, economic and environmental challenges, such as problem-solving, negotiation, empathy, communication, participation, play, peacebuilding, environmental awareness, emotional and mental well-being.
- **Digital skills:** skills and knowledge that support the development of digital literacy and to enable children and young people to use and understand technology, search for, and manage information, communicate, collaborate, create, and share content, and solve problems safely, critically, and ethically.
- **Job-specific skills** (also called ‘technical’ and ‘vocational’ skills): skills which prepare young people for entry into specific trades or professions.

10. A new type of skills - **green skills** - have emerged as a necessary skill set as the world contends with increased vulnerability from the effects of climate change. Often related to job skills, these are abilities and knowledge needed to promote sustainability and environmental responsibility in sectors such as renewable energy, energy efficiency, waste management, eco-friendly transportation, environmental management, climate adaptation, to mention a few. However, within green skills, it is critical to also include capacities for engagement to create a generation of leaders who can influence policies, decisions and social norms and stand against the forces of the fossil fuel industry and its influence on governments. Communication and engagement skills also become pivotal to promote sustainability initiatives within communities.<sup>9</sup>

11. To translate the vision of “improved learning and skills for all” (as illustrated in Figures 2 and 3, UNICEF Education Programme developed the **Global Framework on Transferable Skills (GFTS)**. This framework draws inspiration from UNESCO’s seminal 1996 Delors Report, *Learning: The Treasure Within*, which identified four foundational pillars of learning essential for holistic human development.

12. The GFTS reinterprets these pillars into four integrated learning dimensions:

- **Cognitive Dimension (Learning to Know):** Supports individuals in thinking critically, analyzing, focusing, understanding, and creating—laying a strong foundation for lifelong learning.
- **Instrumental Dimension (Learning to Do):** Equips individuals with the skills to participate effectively in economic and societal activities.
- **Individual Dimension (Learning to Be):** Promotes personal development and resilience, enabling individuals to reach their full potential and become balanced, self-aware persons.
- **Social Dimension (Learning to Live Together):** Encourages values-based action rooted in human rights, democracy, intercultural understanding, and non-violent conflict resolution—essential for peaceful coexistence.

13. Building on these dimensions, the Framework advocates for the development of a broad set of transferable skills throughout the life course, across diverse learning pathways. This approach is designed to support the achievement of four core outcomes that align with UNICEF commitment to holistic, inclusive, and equitable education for all.

14. The evaluation theory of change to be developed during the inception phase will mainly rest on the following core assumptions:

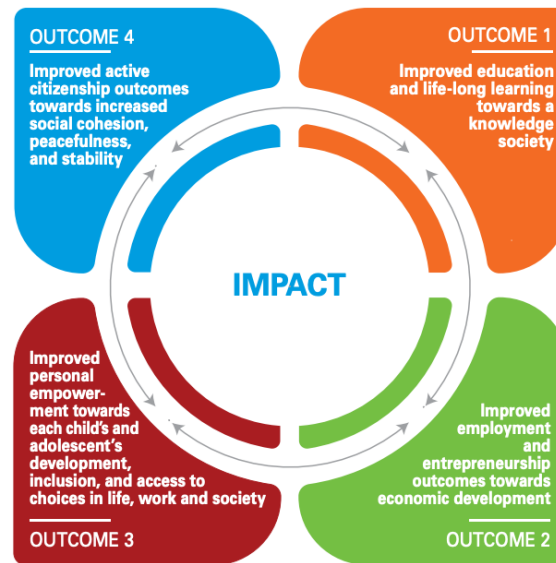
- **Equitable Access:** All children, adolescents and young people must have equal access to learning opportunities through multiple and flexible pathways.
- **Quality and Relevance:** These learning opportunities must be of high quality, place transferable skills at the center, and explicitly contribute to the four intended outcome areas.
- **Foundational Principles:** Programmes must be anchored in key principles such as equity, inclusion, relevance, and sustainability.

15. When these conditions are met, the result will be a generation of learners who are equipped to thrive in the future—empowered to learn, work, participate meaningfully in society, and take charge of their own personal and professional development. The evaluation will retain this framework as its main analytical framework.

<sup>9</sup> [ILO, WB and UNICEF. 2024. Skills for a Green Transition: Solutions for Youth on the Move.](#)

16. Inspired by UNESCO Delors Commission Report,<sup>10</sup> GFTS reinterprets learning into four dimensions that lead to holistic human development: (i) *learning to know* (i.e., fostering cognitive skills for future learning); (ii) *learning to do* (i.e., enabling effective participation in society and the economy); (iii) *learning to be* (i.e., empowering personal growth and resilience); and, (iv) *learning to live together* (i.e., promoting values of human rights and peace). By and large, the framework envisions four key outcomes from the development of transferable skills, namely: (i) improved education and lifelong learning towards a knowledge society; (ii) improved employment and entrepreneurship opportunities towards economic development; (iii) improved personal empowerment and access to choices in life, work and society; and (iv) active citizenship which leads to increase social cohesion, peace and stability. From the MENA-CPF and the work at the global level, UNICEF regions and country offices have adapted this work and customized it to increase its relevance to regional or country context. With the recent emergence of the climate agenda, one could also conceptualize sustainable development/climate adaptation as a high-level outcome within this agenda. Similarly, one could view it as cross-cutting across the four dimensions mentioned earlier.

**Figure 2:**  
Four outcomes of skills development



**Figure 3:**  
UNICEF conceptualization of transferable skills, by purpose and dimensions of learning



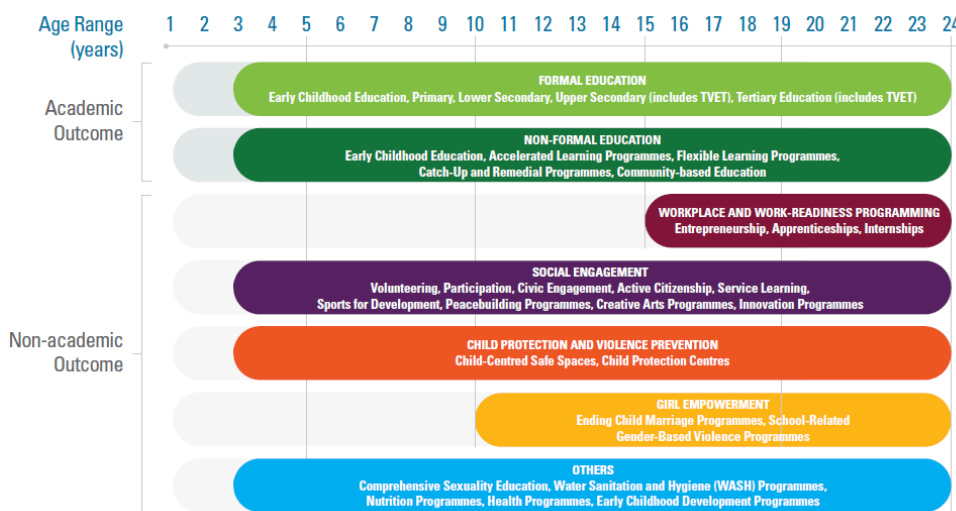
<sup>10</sup> Learning: The Treasure Within (1996). Report to UNESCO of the International Commission on Education for the Twenty-first Century.

17. The strategy also articulates the three key intervention area for skills development where UNICEF support will be focused, namely: (i) *teaching and learning*, which mainly consists of aligning curriculum with pedagogical practices and assessment methods; (ii) *enabling environments*, to create safe, supportive learning spaces and engaging communities; and (iii) *systems strengthening*, by Integrating skills development into educational policies, funding, and partnerships. In addition to partnering with governments, collaboration private sectors, and civil society, will open opportunities such work placement, for children and adolescents to acquire the skills necessary for success in school, work, and life.

18. Another important feature of the GFTS is the emphasis on the [multiple and flexible pathways \(MFP\)](#) approach to education and training as a key vehicle for acquisition of skills. Reflected in Figure 4, this approach envisions skills development that is powered through open learning systems which allow transfer of skills to take place at different times, in various settings and contexts and through various providers. It argues for creating opportunities where knowledge and skills can more easily be updated, where learners can gain agency, and where more innovative ways of working can emerge. MFP address some challenges in education and training enrolment and completion and respond to skills needs created by rapid societal and economic changes and more efficiently use scarce resources for education and learning systems.<sup>11</sup>

19. Multiple pathways include a range of flexible formal, non-formal and informal learning opportunities, such as accelerated education models and child-centered safe spaces that target those over-age and out-of-school to ensure the continuity of learning opportunities for all.<sup>12</sup> Multiple pathways also become critical in situations of conflict and crisis to promote equal access to skills development opportunities for marginalized groups, and for violence and traumatic experiences.

**Figure 4:**  
Multiple and flexible pathways for transferable skills development



Source: Global framework for transferable skills, UNICEF, 2019

20. For instance, pathways can be established progressively to crisis-affected children, adolescents and young people, and for host community population to ease any tensions that emerge over the extra strain on local resources. Social engagement opportunities that build on local culture and traditions such as art, music, drama and sports can foster a sense of belonging, connection, and positive identity where violence and crisis have weakened the social fabric can be used to rehabilitate and empower children, adolescents and young people exposed to violence and traumatic experiences.

<sup>11</sup> Global framework for transferable skills, UNICEF, 2019 <https://www.unicef.org/reports/global-framework-transferable-skills>

<sup>12</sup> Transferable skills are also linked to MHPSS related interventions (with health), positive discipline (with child protection), and "light" certifications for employment (e.g. soft skills, basic computer skills, basic course on how to behave in professional settings).

## Examples of UNICEF programmes on transferable skills

21. Country specific examples of UNICEF programming for transferable skills that track with the intervention areas in the transferable skills framework as provided in Table 1.

**Table 1: Key intervention area for skills development<sup>13</sup>**

| Intervention Areas                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | Indicative elements                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | Examples of UNICEF supported programmes                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
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| <b>Teaching and Learning:</b><br><i>Effective skills development includes careful selection and alignment of curriculum and content, appropriate pedagogical practices, and authentic and continuous assessment of learner skills.</i>                                                                 | Entry points within this area include developing and implementing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>curriculum and content for all education levels and learners through formal and nonformal education;</li> <li>pre-service and in-service professional development programmes to develop teacher/facilitator/trainer active pedagogical practices; and</li> <li>formative and summative assessment approaches to measure skills development.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | <b>LACR: PLAN 12</b> - an online course for adolescents to learn how to develop social impact projects, independently or by collaborating by joining a group of adolescents with similar interests.<br><br>In Egypt, UNICEF is supporting curriculum 2.0 which integrates life skills and digital literacy across the system from kindergarten through secondary schooling.<br><br>UNICEF supported governments across diverse regions including Africa, Asia, Europe and the Middle East to mainstream climate education by upskilling teachers, formulating and rolling out curricular frameworks for climate action and improving the availability of quality learning materials focused on climate action and green skills for the benefit of millions of students. For example, National Life Skills Framework in China and Vietnam.                                                                                                           |
| <b>Enabling Environments:</b><br><i>Effective transferable skills development requires learning environments where all learners can participate, and feel physically, socially and emotionally safe, and where skills can be reinforced through positive interactions with adults and other peers.</i> | Entry points within this area include promoting: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>good governance and accountability mechanisms in schools, including community engagement and parent and child participation in school-based management;</li> <li>teacher wellbeing measures, including professional development programmes to develop the transferable skills of teachers and facilitators;</li> <li>transferable skills components within SBC strategies and frameworks;</li> <li>safe and supportive physical and digital school and learning environments;</li> <li>positive discipline policies, strategies and programmes which fully prohibit corporal punishment and other forms of violence; and</li> <li>psychosocial support mechanisms to support children, adolescents and young people in non-formal development and humanitarian settings.</li> </ul> | In State of Palestine, and to respond to the MHPSS needs of adolescents affected by escalating violence and school closures, in 2021 UNICEF collaborated with the Ministry of Education and implementing partners to offer two-week long summer activities to more than 35,000 adolescents. The programme utilized UNICEF's Adolescent Kit for expression and innovation which supports adolescents to develop key competencies and skills to cope with stressful circumstances and to engage in their community.<br><br>In Albania, UNICEF supported development and distribution of training packages for school psychologists and school council students and supported the appointment of 458 school psychologists as gender focal points, to support mental health and psychosocial needs of girls.                                                                                                                                            |
| <b>Systems Strengthening:</b><br><i>To achieve scale and sustainability, skills development must be addressed throughout upstream components of education and learning systems and multiple pathways</i>                                                                                               | Entry points within this area include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>embedding skills components in upstream work such as education sector analysis and planning as well as policy and strategy development;</li> <li>embedding skills development activities within budgeting processes;</li> <li>developing and implementing effective coordination and partnerships between government, donors, civil society and the private sector;</li> <li>embedding skills components within human resource strategies, frameworks, and standards;</li> <li>developing and strengthening skills assessment frameworks to measure the outputs, outcomes, impacts of skills development programming.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                              | The UNICEF-International Labour Organization (ILO) i-UPSHIFT programme in Uganda targets out-of-school youth with TVET and NFE. Similar programmes in Afghanistan, DRC etc.<br><br>In Malaysia, UNICEF collaborated with the Ministry of Education and other stakeholders to endorse Future Skills for All, an online platform to enhance the teaching and learning of digital skills and computer science.<br><br>Alternative Learning Programme for Out of School Adolescents in Bangladesh and Philippines.<br><br>In Egypt, Vietnam, India, Burundi, UNICEF-supported countries to institutionalize the holistic skills development for children, adolescents, and youth (2019, 2023).<br><br>In Nepal, UNICEF is implementing "Rupantaran" package for equipping girls including boys with transferrable skills to navigate through communication, negotiation and other practical skills to help them make better life choices and decisions. |

<sup>13</sup> See Annex 1 for a list of UNICEF monitoring indicators related to skills development.

### III. Purpose, objectives, use and scope

22. This independent evaluation serves a dual purpose of accountability and learning, aligned with the midterm implementation of UNICEF's Global Learning Strategy. From an accountability perspective, the evaluation will generate evidence on UNICEF's performance in supporting countries to equip children, adolescents, and young people with transferable skills that enable them to become responsible, engaged, and productive citizens. It will assess the conceptual foundations of UNICEF-supported transferable skills programming, the extent to which organizational commitments to programme countries have been fulfilled, and the achievement of intermediate outcomes.

23. From a learning perspective, the evaluation will distill UNICEF's unique experiences, practices, and lessons across diverse contexts to inform adaptive programming and policy decisions. The aim is to identify what works, or did not work, where why and for whom? — in supporting more effective design and implementation of transferable skills initiatives across different settings, in alignment with UNICEF's strategic priorities in education and adolescent development.

24. Specific objectives of this evaluation are as follows (to be refined during the inception phase):

1. To assess how relevant UNICEF's strategic positioning and conceptual approach to transferable skills development is, including its alignment with global and national education and skills agendas.
2. To assess whether UNICEF transferable skills framework(s) meet the emerging needs of all adolescents, and young people, and sufficiently target marginalized groups (LNOB), such as girls, most deprived and urban poor.
3. To examine the coherence<sup>14</sup>, and progress towards intended results of UNICEF-supported programming on transferable skills across different countries and regional contexts, with attention to the contribution of UNICEF inputs on delivery mechanisms, and partnerships.
4. To determine the extent to which UNICEF commitment to partner governments and other stakeholders on transferable skills development have been met, as well as the factors that have enabled or hindered these efforts and lessons learned.

25. The **temporal scope** of this evaluation is from 2020 to 2024. The time-period tracks well with most recent developments in the evolution of the work on skills development within UNICEF, including pronouncements in the Education Strategy (2019-2030) and the current Strategic Plan (2022-2025). This period will be examined to determine whether the new corporate commitments and UNICEF-supported programmes build coherently on the foundation and seminal work that was achieved in the past few years, and to capture the latest developments and thinking around skills development and learning outcomes, and to generate findings and actionable recommendations.

26. The **evaluation's geographical scope** is intended to be global. It will adopt a mix of deep-dive and remote desk-based country cases. The plan is to cover all seven regions, with a mix to be determined at the inception phase pending consultation.

27. **Thematic scope:** This global evaluation will focus on UNICEF support to the development of transferable skills for adolescents and young people aged 10–24 years, with a particular emphasis on two interdependent thematic pillars: Enabling Environments and Systems Strengthening. These domains are critical for ensuring that skills development is inclusive, scalable, and sustainable, particularly for marginalized groups such as girls, adolescents with disabilities, and urban-poor youth.

28. Some thematic areas of focus may be further refined in consultation with key users and stakeholders, including UNICEF country and regional offices, government partners, and young people, during the inception phase of the evaluation.

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<sup>14</sup> Coherence assesses the extent to which interventions are compatible and synergistic with other interventions, policies, and institutional arrangements in a given context. It comprises two distinct but interrelated dimensions: 1-Internal Coherence: The alignment and complementarity among the different components of the same organization's interventions (e.g., between sectors, programs, or levels of engagement within UNICEF). It asks: Are different parts of the intervention working together in a logical and mutually reinforcing way? 2-External Coherence: The consistency and coordination of an intervention with the strategies, policies, and actions of other actors, including governments, donors, NGOs, and private sector. It assesses whether the intervention is harmonized and avoids duplication or contradiction. In OECD (2019), *Better Criteria for Better Evaluation: Revised Evaluation Criteria Definitions and Principles for Use*, OECD Publishing, Paris, <https://doi.org/10.1787/15a9c26b-en>.

### ***a. Enabling Environments for Transferable Skills Development***

29. The evaluation will assess how UNICEF-supported interventions have contributed to creating safe, inclusive, and empowering environments that enable the effective development of transferable skills. Key focus areas may include:

- School and community-level governance and accountability mechanisms that promote participation, voice, Teacher and facilitator well-being, including psychosocial support, motivation, and the capacity to foster social and emotional competencies.
- Safe, inclusive, and gender-responsive learning environments, particularly for adolescent girls, adolescents with disabilities, and those in urban-poor or crisis-affected settings.
- Promotion of positive discipline and the integration of non-violent, supportive behavioral practices in school and non-formal education settings.
- Access to mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) for adolescents as part of a holistic approach to skills development and resilience-building.

### ***b. Systems Strengthening for Sustainability and Scale***

30. The evaluation will explore how UNICEF has contributed to embedding transferable skills within national systems and frameworks to ensure long-term sustainability and impact. Areas of focus include:

- Integration of transferable skills in national policies, strategies, and education sector plans, including Coordination and partnerships: UNICEF's role in promoting inter-sectoral collaboration across education, social protection, youth development, and labor sectors.
- Budgeting and financing mechanisms that support the scaling and institutionalization of transferable skills, including efforts to prioritize underserved populations.
- Human resource and institutional capacity development, including the professional development of educators and youth practitioners.
- Monitoring, evaluation, and data systems: The extent to which skills-related indicators and evidence are integrated into national systems and inform decision-making.

31. The target age group will be adolescents and young people aged 10-24 years.

32. **Evaluation uses and users:** Table 2 below presents the uses of the evaluation that should lead to better targeting and tailoring of programmatic activities when developing country programme and planning documents, as well as primary and secondary target users.

**Table 2. Primary and secondary users and uses**

| <b>Primary users</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | <b>Primary uses</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>UNICEF staff at HQ, ROs and COs:</b> UNICEF leadership, and education, ADAP and GenU teams at every level, responsible for the strategic choices of transferable skill development programming and reporting within the organization, and those directly accountable for the design, implementation, coordination, and monitoring-evaluation-learning aspects of acquisition of transferable skills related programmes in country offices. | Provide evidence to review the strategic and programmatic choices made in support the expansion of opportunities for development and acquisition of transferable skills, as well providing additional updates, operationalization, and customization of frameworks in the area. The evaluation also aims to inform: (i) the midterm assessment of the Global Education Strategy (2019-2030); (ii) annual results reporting (ARR) on system strengthening for the area of acquisition of transferable skills; (iii) development of new CPDs and strategic moments of reflection, where applicable; and, (iv) lessons from various programming contexts on how acquisition of transferable skills programme strategies have worked, and where they require strengthening. |
| <b>Secondary and other intended users</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | <b>Secondary uses</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| <b>UNICEF staff in other sectors:</b> UNICEF staff in the Programme Group (e.g., Health and Child Protection, among others).                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | Children, adolescents, and young people acquire skills from all learning that they are exposed to. However, there are skill sets that are heavily dependent on content from other sectors, hence staff in those sectors will have the opportunity to use the findings from this evaluation for their work.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| <b>External partners:</b> Other UN agencies and strategic education partners such as UNESCO, ILO, GPE, and the World Bank, Education Cannot Wait, etc.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | Inform partners in the UN system on UNICEF good practices in support to substantially increase the number of young people who have relevant skills, including technical and vocational skills, for employment, decent jobs and entrepreneurship (SDG Target 4.4) and reduce the proportion of youth not in employment, education or training (SDG Target 8.6).                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |

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|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>External partners:</b> UNICEF Executive Board, UN Member States at the international level that support education and acquisition of transferable skills programmes with technical and financial resources, and Government counterparts | Inform government and private sector partners on UNICEF good practices in support to substantially increase the number of young people who have relevant skills, including technical and vocational skills, for employment, decent jobs and entrepreneurship (SDG Target 4.4) and reduce the proportion of youth not in employment, education or training (SDG Target 8.6). |
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#### IV. Evaluation questions

33. Based on the purpose and objectives described above, the following preliminary evaluation questions are proposed (see Table 3), which are expected to be refined during the inception phase of this evaluation.

**Table 3. Evaluation questions**

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Objective 1:</b> To assess how relevant UNICEF strategic positioning and conceptual approach to transferable skills development is, including its alignment with global and national education and skills agendas.                                                                    |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| 1. To what extent is UNICEF strategic positioning and conceptual approach to transferable skills development relevant and well aligned with global and national education and skills development priorities?                                                                             | 1.1 How well does UNICEF global framework and theory of change for transferable skills respond to evolving education, skills, and adolescent development priorities at global and national levels?                                                                                      |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | 1.2 To what extent has UNICEF positioned itself strategically within key global and national policy dialogues and platforms on skills development?                                                                                                                                      |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | 1.3 To what extent UNICEF effectively addressing the diverse needs and contexts of adolescents and young people aged 10–24 years, including the most vulnerable group of adolescents and young people (e.g. those with disability, urban poor)?                                         |
| <b>Objective 2:</b> To assess whether UNICEF transferable skills framework(s) meet the emerging needs of all adolescents, and young people, and sufficiently target marginalized groups (LNOB), such as girls, most deprived and urban poor.                                             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| 2. To what extent UNICEF transferable skills framework(s) are guiding the development of programmes that are agile, adaptable, and targeting the most vulnerable group of adolescents, and young people, in countries with different typologies?                                         | 2.1 To what extent UNICEF-supported transferable skills building programs are designed to benefit marginalized groups of children, adolescents and young people, and children with disability?                                                                                          |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | 2.2 To what extent UNICEF transferable skills building programmes agile and meeting the emerging skill demands/needs of adolescents, and young people?                                                                                                                                  |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | 2.3 To what extent does UNICEF capacity at various levels able to meet the emerging demands/needs in transferable skills programming?                                                                                                                                                   |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | 2.4 To what extent UNICEF transferable skills framework influenced the national policies and plans geared to build transferable skills among adolescents and young people?                                                                                                              |
| <b>Objective 3:</b> To examine the coherence and progress towards intended results of UNICEF-supported programming on transferable skills across different countries and regional contexts, with attention to the contribution of UNICEF inputs on delivery mechanisms and partnerships. |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| 3. How coherent and effective are UNICEF-supported transferable skills programmes across different contexts, and what progress has been made toward intended and unintended results or consequences?                                                                                     | 3.1 To what extent do UNICEF interventions demonstrate internal coherence (i.e., alignment across sectors, levels, and programmatic components within the organization)?                                                                                                                |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | 3.2 To what extent do UNICEF interventions demonstrate external coherence, working synergistically with the efforts of governments, donors, and other actors to avoid duplication and enhance complementarity?                                                                          |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | 3.3 What progress has been made toward the achievement of intended and unintended results (positive and negative) related to the development and application of transferable skills among adolescents and young people, especially girls, adolescents and young people with disability? |

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Objective 4:</b> To determine the extent to which UNICEF commitments to partner governments and other stakeholders on transferable skills development have been met, as well as the factors that have enabled or hindered these efforts and lessons learned. |                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| 4. To what extent has UNICEF met its commitments to national governments and other stakeholders on transferable skills development, and what factors have influenced its performance?                                                                           | 4.1 To what extent UNICEF commitments to partners (e.g., policy advocacy, technical assistance, financing, coordination) are clearly defined and communicated at global, regional and country levels?       |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | 4.2 How do national governments and key stakeholders perceive the fulfillment, quality, and consistency of UNICEF's commitments in supporting transferable skills development?                              |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | 4.3 What enabling or constraining factors (e.g., institutional capacities, political economy, partnerships, financing, internal systems) have affected the ability of UNICEF to deliver on its commitments? |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | 4.4 What lessons can be learned and whether any innovative practices have been adopted?                                                                                                                     |

## V. Evaluation approach and methodology

34. The evaluation will follow a robust methodological framework that provides a structured plan for the conduct of the evaluation, including the overall approach, data collection methods and analysis techniques, and principles related to evaluation ethics and quality standards. The methodological framework proposed below serves as a roadmap to ensure that the evaluation is conducted in a systematic, rigorous, and transparent manner that promotes the independence, utility, and ethical integrity of its findings. A detailed evaluation methodology will be developed as part of the inception phase but is anticipated to be based on the elements outlined below.

### Evaluation Approach

35. Evaluation approaches are conceptual, analytical models that encompass specific ways of structuring and conducting data collection and analysis. This evaluation will rely on a combination of principles and approaches, including the following:

36. **Utilization-Focused Evaluation:** The evaluation will be planned and conducted in close consultation with identified users to enhance the likely use of both the findings and the evaluation process itself. The evaluation will prioritize active engagement with UNICEF staff at global, regional, and country levels, government partners, and other key stakeholders to ensure findings are relevant, timely, and actionable. Emphasis will be placed on understanding the information needs of different users to support decision-making, improve programming, and inform strategic directions for transferable skills development.

37. **Analytical Framework:** The evaluation will apply UNICEF Global Analytical Framework on Transferable Skills to structure its inquiry. It will assess the relation between inputs, outputs, and outcomes by interrogating the underlying assumptions and causal linkages. Specifically, it will analyze how UNICEF's support has contributed to creating enabling environments, strengthening systems, and achieving progress toward the acquisition and application of transferable skills among adolescents and young people.

38. **Comparative Case Study Analysis:** The evaluation will adopt a comparative case study approach to generate in-depth, context-sensitive evidence. Selected countries (5 in-person – including the pilot and 10 remote deep drive) will be analyzed individually and comparatively to draw lessons across different regional, socio-economic, and programmatic contexts.

39. Deep dive case studies will involve a combination of document review, key informant interviews, and, where feasible, participatory methods involving adolescents and young people. Remote desk-based reviews will complement these by focusing on secondary data analysis and key informant consultations.

40. The comparative analysis will aim to identify patterns of success, challenges, and contextual factors that influence the effectiveness, relevance, and coherence of UNICEF support to transferable skills development across different settings. Findings from case studies will be synthesized to draw cross-country conclusions and inform broader strategic recommendations.

41. Methodology will be refined during the inception phase, after team onboarding.

## Data collection

42. Data collection and analysis will be based on mixed methods and building on the strengths of each to gain a comprehensive understanding of the relevant issues to be assessed. Three types of data collection methods are envisaged.

a) **Document review**, including the following types:

- *Strategy and Planning Documents* generated at the global, regional, and country levels, related to the design, operationalization and implementation of the skill development programmes, including related official publications and Executive Board documents, frameworks and theories of change, planning documents, or implementation guidelines (see Table 4 for UNICEF SP and SDG indicators related to transferable skills).
- *Annual Results Reports, Results Assessment Module, Core Standard Indicators* which provide comprehensive overviews of the organization's activities, achievements, challenges, and financial performance over a specific reporting period.
- *CPDs*, which articulate the strategic positioning UNICEF support, inputs, and its contribution to national efforts towards the realization of child rights and the achievement of the SDGs.
- *Budget and Financial Documents*, including budget allocations, expenditure reports, and financial statements and funding trends, to provide insights into the allocation of resources and financial sustainability.
- *Evaluation Reports*, providing insights on performance, lessons learned, and areas for improvement.
- *Research and Studies* that provide evidence-based insights into key issues and challenges affecting children and the role of skills development initiatives in addressing those challenges.
- *Policy Documents*, including position papers and advocacy materials which can provide insights into the organization's policy priorities, advocacy strategies, and contributions to global development agendas.
- *Partnership Agreements*, which provide insights into UNICEF partnership strategies and their role within the broader education sector.
- *Other data sources* such as reports from academic studies, and other international databases (e.g., UNESCO, WB) provide context and comparative analysis.

Based on the above documents and data, the review expected to generate two types of analytical outputs:

- A desktop review of background documents**, with the main aim of providing a comprehensive understanding of UNICEF work on development and acquisition of transferable skills. It will assist in further developing and refining the evaluation theory of change and identify assumption and causal claims to be further validated by the primary data collection and analysis phase.
- Country profiles** containing key information about programme achievements and gaps (*deep dive countries only*).

**Table 4: Indicators for development and acquisition of transferable skills**

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>UNICEF SP 2022-2025 indicators</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| 2.7. Percentage of youth not in employment, education, or training (SDG 8.6.1).                                                                                                                                                       |
| 2.1.1. Percentage of countries with inclusive and gender-equitable system for access to learning opportunities.                                                                                                                       |
| 2.2.6. Percentage of countries institutionalizing holistic skills development to support learning, personal empowerment, environmental sustainability, active citizenship, social cohesion and/or employability and entrepreneurship. |
| 2.2.10. Number of adolescents and young people who participate in or lead civic engagement initiatives through UNICEF-supported programmes.                                                                                           |
| <b>Other relevant SDG Indicators</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| SDG 4.4.1 Proportion of youth and adults with information and communications technology (ICT) skills, by type of skill.                                                                                                               |
| SDG 4.6.1 Proportion of population in a given age group achieving at least a fixed level of proficiency in functional (a) literacy and (b) numeracy skills, by sex.                                                                   |
| SDG 4.7.1 Extent to which (i) global citizenship education and (ii) education for sustainable development are mainstreamed in (a) national education policies; (b) curricula; (c) teacher education; and (d) student assessment       |
| SDG 4.c.1 Proportion of teachers with the minimum required qualifications, by education level                                                                                                                                         |

- b) **Primary data collection:** semi-structured **key informant interviews** (also known as expert interviews) will be conducted mainly virtually, while **focus group discussions** will be conducted in a sample of countries, and face-to-face, with the following groups:
- *UNICEF Staff*, directly involved in the development, implementation, monitoring or evaluation of LSE and transferable skills programmes. This may include senior management, managers, and technical experts.
  - *Government Officials* involved in the design and implementation of policy or overseeing relevant education policies.
  - *Donor Representatives* from agencies, foundations, and international development organizations that provide funding or support to UNICEF programmes and initiatives.
  - *Implementing Partners and Civil Society Representatives* from organizations collaborating with UNICEF on programme implementation or advocacy activities.
  - *Academics and Researchers* with expertise in areas relevant that can offer insights into emerging trends, good practices, and evidence-based approaches.
  - *Institutions and facilities* implementing transferable skills programmes will be visited to observe the programme implementation in real-time as well as representatives from private sector partners, UN agencies, or international organizations.
  - *Observational field data* from the institutions and facilities implementing transferable skills programmes will be gathered during in-country visits. The observational data will be used to triangulate monitoring data and to learn the conditions and situations in which the children, adolescents and young people are receiving the transferable skills-related training/service.
- Other key stakeholders*, children, adolescents, and young people targeted as beneficiaries, youth groups.
- c) **Online surveys** to be used as a complementary data collection method, especially if this seems helpful for obtaining data from a larger number of stakeholders simultaneously and/or testing hypotheses that emerge during the evaluation. It can also be used as a tool to validate and ascertain the generalizability of findings beyond the offices that were invited to participate in the primary data collection.

## Data analysis

43. Data analysis involves various techniques to organize, interpret and synthesize information collected and is critical to gaining meaningful insights. The following key data analysis techniques are expected to be used:

- **Transcribing and coding data:** Qualitative data collected through interviews or focus group discussions is transcribed into written text to ensure accuracy and facilitate subsequent analysis. Following transcription, data is coded by systematically categorising and labelling text segments based on themes, concepts, or patterns to identify recurring themes and extract relevant information.
- **Artificial intelligence (AI) techniques:** AI techniques, such as machine learning and natural language processing (NLP), provide advanced capabilities for efficiently analysing large amounts of documents and could greatly benefit this evaluation's document review. NLP techniques enable the extraction of insights from unstructured text data, such as sentiment analysis. To ensure the accuracy of AI/NLP outputs, the auto generated outputs will be manually reviewed and validated by the evaluation team members.
- **Statistical analysis:** Quantitative data collected through surveys or as part of the data review (e.g., monitoring and financial data, other secondary data sources) will be analysed to determine distributions, relationships and trends using relevant statistical techniques.
- **Evaluation framework:** The methodology is expected to be guided by an evaluation framework that forms the primary analytical framework for the evaluation. The evaluation framework reflects the evaluation questions to be answered and, for each of them, indicates the most appropriate and feasible method to collect and interpret data for answering them.
- **Triangulation:** Triangulation will enhance the reliability and validity of findings by cross-validating them from multiple data sources, methods, or perspectives. By integrating different sources of data, triangulation helps mitigate biases, corroborate evidence, and provide a more comprehensive understanding of the evaluation topic. If triangulation is not possible, this shall be stated, and any findings based solely on a particular source or group of respondents are to be indicated as such.
- **Strength of evidence:** Where possible, the evaluation shall use a systematic approach to weigh or indicate the power or strength of evidence derived from data analysis. Such a framework may include criteria such as the consistency of results across different data sources or methods, the coherence of findings with existing theories or empirical evidence, the robustness of statistical analyses, and the potential for bias or confounding factors. By systematically estimating evidence power against these criteria, the evaluation can provide a

nuanced interpretation of the findings and ascertain the level of confidence that can be placed in the findings and conclusions drawn.

## Evaluation principles

44. The evaluation approach and methodological framework shall be in line with UNICEF and UNEG standards and principles on evaluation ethics and quality, as outlined in the [UNEG Norms and Standards for Evaluation](#), the [UNICEF Adapted UNEG Evaluation Reports Standards](#), the [UNEG Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation](#), and the [UNICEF Procedure on Ethical Standards in Research, Evaluation, Data Collection and Analysis](#).<sup>15</sup>

45. The following principles will be of utmost importance:

- **Credibility and utility:** The evaluation findings shall be trustworthy, relevant, and useful for decision-makers and stakeholders. Credibility will be safeguarded by ensuring a rigorous methodology, a transparent process and robust quality assurance systems, among other things. Utility is fostered by aiming to meet the information needs of stakeholders and providing timely and actionable insights to guide future improvements.
- **Independence and impartiality:** Due care will be taken to avoid outside influence and conflicts of interest to ensure that the evaluation is conducted free from undue pressure or vested interests and that its conclusions and recommendations are based solely on the evidence at hand.
- **Confidentiality:** The privacy of individuals providing input to the evaluation will be protected by ensuring that the information provided is secure and protected from unauthorized access or disclosure. All data collected, including survey responses, interview transcripts, and any other sensitive information, will be treated with utmost care and kept strictly confidential.
- **Informed consent:** The informed consent of individuals providing input to the evaluation will be obtained by clearly explaining the purpose of the evaluation, how their information will be used, and any potential risks or benefits. They will also be given the opportunity to ask questions to ensure a clear understanding of what their participation entails and may withdraw their consent at any time.
- **Participation:** To enhance its credibility, relevance, and usefulness, the evaluation will seek to maximize participation by actively engaging key stakeholders throughout the evaluation process, from planning to implementation and dissemination of findings.
- **Cultural sensitivity and non-discrimination:** The evaluation will seek to ensure equitable participation and treatment of its key stakeholders and their opportunity to voice their perspectives. Due care will be taken to respect differences in culture, local customs, religious beliefs and practices, personal interaction, gender roles, ability, age, and ethnicity and to be mindful of the potential implications of these differences when carrying out and reporting on the evaluation.
- **Child-rights-based approach and gender equality:** The evaluation will prioritize human rights, including child rights and gender equality, by upholding related principles throughout the design and implementation process. This includes ensuring inclusive and accessible language and products and meaningful disaggregation of data by factors such as gender, age, adolescents and youth with disability.

## VI. Management and governance arrangements

46. **The UNICEF EO has commissioned this evaluation.** An Evaluation Specialist in the EO will manage the exercise to ensure independence, impartiality, and credibility under the overall oversight of the Senior Evaluation Specialist. The evaluation manager will supervise the work of an evaluation team to be recruited externally to conduct the evaluation, while the Director of the EO will approve the final report.

47. **Independence rests with the EO**, which hires an external team to bring additional expertise and capacity to support it in this role and in ensuring the independence of this evaluation. Accordingly, the external evaluation team must respond adequately to any concerns, and the manager retains the prerogative to amend deliverables to achieve an acceptable quality level.<sup>16</sup> The evaluation manager will coordinate the evaluation with key stakeholders such as the Education and ADAP teams, Regional Evaluation Advisers, Regional Education Advisers, and education teams in select country offices.

48. Furthermore, an **Evaluation Reference Group (ERG)** will support the evaluation in an advisory capacity. The ERG will consist of internal resource persons. It will mainly focus on supporting quality assurance during the

<sup>15</sup> A comprehensive overview of relevant procedures, guidance and resources can be found online in the [UNICEF Evaluation resource center](#).

<sup>16</sup> UNICEF (2023), [Revised evaluation policy of UNICEF](#), Executive Board, Second regular session 2023, E/ICEF/2023/27, p. 11.

evaluation process, reviewing the main deliverables, and supporting and validating the conclusions and recommendations. Where necessary, additional quality control protocols and processes established by the EO will be followed to ensure quality assurance and close management throughout the exercise.

## VII. Qualifications of the evaluation team

49. The evaluation will be carried out by a core team of up to 6 members who have experience and capacities to execute a global evaluation effort, comprising of a Team lead, Principal evaluator, three evaluators, and one data analyst. Three team members including Team lead will be from the Evaluation Office. Where feasible, a national consultant may be recruited from each of the countries hosting field data collection missions. The qualifications and required experience for members of the evaluation team are outlined below.

50. **Team Lead (from EO):** Attributes listed in (a) through (d), are **required** for the team lead role, while (e) will be considered an added advantage.

- (a) Strong skills and expertise in evaluation and experience of managing research/evaluation teams.
- (b) Comprehensive evaluation experience of development evaluation in various contexts, including countries implementing humanitarian programmes, or countries characterized by fragility.
- (c) Previous experience in conducting global evaluations and/or research a multi-country assignment, particularly in programme countries.
- (d) Excellent level of English (oral communication, reading documents, writing complex reports).
- (e) Functional proficiency in Arabic, French, Russian and/or Spanish will be an asset.

51. **Principal Evaluator (Consultant):** Attributes listed in (a) through (f), are **required** for principal evaluators role, while (g) will be considered an added advantage.

- (a) Strong skills and expertise in evaluation theory and conceptual frameworks.
- (b) Comprehensive evaluation experience as lead evaluator in evaluations of education and/or transferable skills programmes implemented in various contexts, including countries implementing humanitarian programmes, or countries characterized by fragility.
- (c) Previous experience in conducting global evaluations and/or research a multi-country assignment, particularly in programme countries.
- (d) Readiness to travel to countries selected for primary data collection, and to undertake domestic travel in the country.
- (e) Familiarity and satisfactory experience executing a contract with UNICEF evaluation (at any level) is an added advantage.
- (f) Excellent level of English (oral communication, reading documents, writing complex reports).
- (g) Functional proficiency in Arabic, French, Russian and/or Spanish will be an asset.

52. **Three evaluators (2 Consultants and 1 from EO):** The evaluation team will include two consultants/evaluators, both with the relevant content expertise in education. Attributes listed in (a) through (g), are **required** for team leader role, while (h) will be considered an added advantage.

- (a) Master's degree in education or social sciences, or a related field (e.g., developmental psychology).
- (b) Practitioner as a subject matter expert in education policy, learning and/or skills development, with a minimum of 8 years post-qualification work experience.
- (c) Technical expertise in high-level and high-quality programme and/or considerable experience in conducting evaluations of education and/or transferable skills programmes implemented in various contexts, including countries implementing humanitarian programmes, or countries characterized by fragility.
- (d) Working knowledge of UNICEF programming strategies, field work, procedures, and organizational culture (prior UNICEF employment experience should be declared to enable assessment of possible conflicts of interest).
- (e) Strong qualifications and demonstrated experience in quantitative and qualitative data collection methods and analysis.
- (f) Readiness to travel to the countries selected for primary data collection, and to undertake domestic travel in the country.
- (g) Fluency in English (oral communication, reading complex documents, writing reports).
- (h) Functional proficiency in Arabic, French, Russian and/or Spanish.

53. **Data analyst (from EO):** The Data analyst will also act as the assistant to the team lead, providing support on the day-to-day management of the project and logistics (e) and (f).

- (a) Social and development sector data analysis, and data presentation/display skills.
- (b) Strong skills in quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis.
- (c) Fluency in English (oral communication, reading complex documents, writing reports).
- (d) Functional proficiency in Arabic, French, and/or Spanish.
- (e) Excellent organization, consistency, deadline keeping and follow-up.
- (f) Effective communication /people /team coordination skills.

54. **National consultants:** Working under the supervision of EO and the evaluation team leader, and the purview of the case study leader, the main attribute of each of the national consultants will be their knowledge and experience of the education sector in the country where they are recruited. Key qualifications and experience of the national consultants are as follows:

- (a) Master's degree in education or social sciences or a related field (e.g., developmental psychology), and a minimum of 4 years post-qualification work experience.
- (b) Experience working in the public sector and understanding the history and key developments of the education sector, national education policy frameworks, and the Sustainable Development Goals.
- (c) Knowledge of the key actors in the Education sector (e.g., Government officials/employees at national, district or local level, NGOs/CBOs participating in the education sector, etc.).
- (d) Familiarity with UNICEF education programming in the country, including experience in research/evaluation of education in emergencies if the country is implementing a humanitarian programme.
- (e) Experience in qualitative data collection and interpreting qualitative data.
- (f) Effective communication skills, verbal and written, and organizational skills.
- (g) Fluency in one or more of the national languages, and the ability to conduct interviews/FGDs in one or more national languages.
- (h) Fluency in English (written and spoken).

55. Former UNICEF staff or consultants that have worked on education and/or transferable skills programmes may be members of the evaluation team if they meet the technical qualifications for skills. However, any prior involvement with UNICEF should be declared during the bidding/contracting stages so that prospective team can be vetted and cleared of possible conflicts of interest.

56. The duration for the evaluation team is estimated at 8 months, from **October 2025 to May 2026**. Applicants and prospective team members are invited to apply for their desired role following the guidance provided in **Section VIII**. **Attention will be given to selecting a gender-balanced, geographically, and culturally diverse team and the complementarity of subject matter and evaluation experience.**

## VIII. Timeline, process, and deliverables

57. The evaluation is envisaged to last around eight (8) months, from **October 2025 to May 2026**. This evaluation is expected to contribute insights to refining the UNICEF's transferable skills framework and programme design during the next Strategic Plan 2026-2029. The evaluation is organized into five phases that are delineated in Paras 57-61, the duration of each phase mentioned are indicative and some of these tasks/activities will be executed concurrently.

58. **Inception (Phase 1)** (6-8 weeks): During this phase, the evaluation team is expected to gain a deep understanding of the evaluation topic, review available documentation and datasets, assess possible information gaps, and refine the evaluation questions and methodology. Exploratory key informant interviews will be conducted as deemed helpful. Deliverables for this phase include:

- **PowerPoint presentation** outlining the refined evaluation questions and methodology for presentation to the Education, ADAP and GenU programme teams (drawn from country offices, regional offices, and the Education and ADAP Section of the Programme Group).
- **Draft inception report** confirming a refined and shared understanding of what is to be evaluated and how for review by the evaluation manager, the Evaluation Reference Group. The inception summary will include (i) an initial overview and analysis based on data collection and review, (ii) the refined scope and set of evaluation questions, (iii) the evaluation methodology, (iv) an engagement strategy for key stakeholders, including an approach of how the evaluation can best feed into the development of the next Strategic Plan, and (v) the evaluation work plan. The evaluation framework, draft data collection tools, a list of suggested key informants and other key tools and resources will be presented in the annexes in a Word document. The draft inception report will be presented to the Evaluation Reference Group for their technical and expert advice.
- **Final inception report** that is revised and updated based on the comments and feedback received.

59. **Data collection (Phase 2)** (8-10 weeks): The evaluation team will conduct a more in-depth document and data review and carry out key informant interviews, focus group discussions, as well as online surveys or site visits as deemed helpful. The deliverables of this phase will be:

- *An assessment synthesis* provides an initial overview of the main preliminary findings for all key data collection methods (i.e., document review, data review, interviews and focus groups, online survey). The synthesis can be consolidated into one document or divided into different documents according to data collection methods. It should provide preliminary areas for improvement that will feed into the new Strategic Plan.

60. **Analysis and reporting (Phase 3)** (6-8 weeks): In this phase, the evaluation team can fill existing data gaps and deepen the analysis and triangulation of evidence to identify findings, preliminary conclusions, and suggested areas for actions/recommendations. Based on these, a first draft of the final evaluation report will be produced. Deliverables include:

- **PowerPoint presentation:** *This deliverable will be used* to facilitate the validation of findings, preliminary conclusions, and suggested areas for actions/recommendations by the Evaluation Reference Group, and other key stakeholders.
- **Draft and final evaluation report:** The report should not exceed sixty pages, excluding the executive summary and annexes, for review by the Evaluation Reference Group and other key stakeholders. Before being shared, the report will be quality assured by the evaluation manager and will be circulated only when it is of sufficient quality in line with UNICEF quality standards for evaluation and based on the evaluation reporting template.
- **Good practices notes:** Document a couple (2 or 3) of good practices notes to be identified by EO and the evaluation team during the evaluation data collection and analysis. The document should not exceed four pages, including graphics/charts.
- **Thematic or country reports:** will be developed based on demand.

61. **Co-creation of recommendations (Phase 4)** (2 weeks): While the evaluation report will be refined, the evaluation recommendations will be co-created through a collaborative and participatory process involving key stakeholders. Co-creating recommendations will help ensure they are practical, actionable, and aligned with the evaluation's purpose and objectives. The deliverables of this phase will be:

- A *PowerPoint presentation* to support conducting participatory workshops to co-create evaluation recommendations.

62. **Finalization and communication (Phase 5)** (4-6 weeks): The evaluation team will consolidate the final evaluation report based on feedback received and focus on producing other products that will support the communication and sharing of the evaluation. The deliverables for this final phase are:

- **Final evaluation report** revised based on the comments and feedback received and incorporating the co-created recommendations. The evaluation manager will review the report for final approval by the Director of the Evaluation Office.
- **Complementary communication products**, at a minimum, infographics (for inclusion in the final evaluation report and other products); a standalone four-page evaluation brief (distinct from the executive summary in the evaluation report) intended for a wider audience, as well as **1-2 policy/thematic briefs**, and a final PowerPoint presentation to be presented in a concluding webinar.

63. Additional deliverables throughout the process may include PowerPoint presentations summarizing work progress and minutes or high-level summaries of key meetings, e.g., those with the Evaluation Reference Group.

64. **Additional requirements for deliverables:** The evaluation manager will review each deliverable and provide feedback to the evaluation team within five working days, while the Evaluation Reference Group will be given a lead time of 10 working days to comment on the draft inception summary and draft evaluation report.

65. All reports must be in Microsoft Word format, and presentations must be in Microsoft PowerPoint. The EO will have access to all data collected for the evaluation, including anonymised summaries of interview transcripts, survey data, photos/videos taken, and analyses produced, including any resources needed to replicate them. Graphs, charts, and maps used in final documents or presentations must also be available in an editable format.

66. Deliverables must be in professional-level standard English<sup>17</sup>, written in concise, clear, and easy-to-understand language, and comply with the most recent UNICEF Style Book and the UNICEF Brand Book. Reader-friendly techniques such as bullet points, tables, graphs, photos, or videos embedded in presentations, reports, and other

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<sup>17</sup> The Evaluation Office will translate final evaluation products in other UN languages as required.

visualisation methods are strongly encouraged and desired. Final evaluation products will be available on the UNICEF evaluation website and widely shared with key stakeholders.

## IX. How to apply

67. The evaluation team will comprise of a team leader, two evaluators and one data analyst, and national consultants recruited from each of the countries that will be hosting a field data collection mission. Each prospective team leader, evaluator or data analyst should submit the application **as an individual consultant**. The application packet should contain the following:

- (a) a letter of expression of interest, stipulating: (i) the specific role for which the applicant wishes to be considered; (ii) expertise in the area of life skills and/or transferable skills; (iii) availability to undertake international travel; and (iv) the level of effort (in person days) to be contributed towards each of the deliverables in Table 5, and the proposed remuneration fee;
- (b) updated CV/resume; and,
- (c) a writing sample (i.e., evaluation or research/study reports, etc.).

**Table 5: Deliverables and timeline**

| Deliverables                                                                                                                | Timeline (by) | Level of effort (Days) | Total fees (in USD) |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------|------------------------|---------------------|
| Deliverable 1: Final inception report and power point presentation (see para 58)                                            | 15-Nov-25     |                        |                     |
| Deliverable 2: Primary data collection completed, and preliminary results produced (see para 59)                            | 31-Jan-26     |                        |                     |
| Deliverable 3: Data analysis completed, and synthesis/first draft of global evaluation report produced (see para 60 and 61) | 31-Mar-26     |                        |                     |
| Deliverable 4: Final draft global evaluation report and complementary products submitted (see para 62)                      | 15-May-26     |                        |                     |

**Note:** Based on demand from the regional offices and country offices, and availability of funds, additional deliverables such as regional report(s) and country cases studies will be added. However, this should not be included in the initial proposal consultants are submitting.

68. We encourage team applications; hence applicants are free to indicate the name(s) of the person(s) that they would like to team up with. However, **all prospective team members should submit an individual application** (as indicated in Para 52 above), specific to the role they want to fill in the evaluation team.

69. As reflected in the indicative work plan (Table 5), the evaluation has a timeline of approximately 26 weeks (6 months) from the beginning of the inception period to the submission of the final report, with some activities overlapping. **Adequate effort should be allocated to all evaluation activities to ensure timely submission of all deliverables. Payment will be made only upon acceptance by UNICEF, of the work performed**, in accordance with fulfilment of agreed quality assurance standards, schedule of payment and/or contract milestones.

70. Upon receipt of letters of expression of interest, the EO will revert with instructions to each applicant inviting them to submit a technical task which will be used to assess the applicant's expertise/skill, vis-à-vis the role they wish to be considered for, and a proposed date and time to present the task to an assessment panel. Additional instructions will be issued for applicants who wish to be considered as a team.

71. Other administrative processes such as travel missions and in-person meetings, accommodation, and incidental expenses will be planned with consultants, and discussed, agreed, and approved by the Evaluation Manager, EO in accordance with UNICEF rules and regulations governing such matters.

72. Members of the selected team bidder must each sign the *UNEG Pledge of Ethical Conduct in Evaluation* and the non-disclosure agreement to abide by UNICEF's security protocols to protect sensitive data.

## Annex 1: UNICEF programme monitoring indicators relevant to this evaluation

| Developmental outcome indicators                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | Output indicators                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Share of government expenditures allocated for life-skill based education/training.</li> <li>• Youth at the end of lower secondary education achieving at least a minimum proficiency level in core subjects.</li> <li>• Literacy rate of youth aged 15–24 years.</li> <li>• Percentage of youth/adults with ICT skills.</li> <li>• Percentage of youth not in employment, education, or training (NEET).</li> <li>• Employment rate of lower secondary education graduates.</li> <li>• Employment rate of secondary education graduates.</li> <li>• Employment rate of TVET graduates.</li> <li>• Enrolment rate of TVET per 100,000 inhabitants.</li> <li>• Percentage of TVET students studying science, mathematics and/or technology.</li> <li>• Existence of a multi-sectoral, adolescent policy/action plan (reflecting sectoral commitments for adolescents).</li> </ul> | <p><b>Service delivery:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Schools that have life skills and citizenship education included in their school plans with UNICEF support.</li> <li>• Number of children who have participated in skills development programmes for learning, personal empowerment, active citizenship and/or employability through UNICEF-supported programmes.</li> <li>• Schools have life skills and citizenship education included in their school plans with support from the UNICEF ECM programme (Gender).</li> <li>• Number of children and adolescents accessing skills development programmes.</li> <li>• Number of adolescent girls and boys who completed a skills development program.</li> <li>• School-aged children targeted by UNICEF with access to psychosocial support in schools/learning spaces during and after a humanitarian situation.</li> <li>• Percentage of schools implementing skills-building, civic engagement, and entrepreneurship programmes.</li> <li>• # of adolescent girls and boys who participate in or lead civic engagement initiatives.</li> <li>• Number of adolescent girls and boys who participate in or lead civic engagement initiatives through UNICEF-supported programmes.</li> <li>• School aged children targeted by UNICEF that have access to psychosocial support in their schools/learning spaces during and after the humanitarian situation (Emergency response).</li> <li>• UNICEF-targeted children and youth in humanitarian situations provided with life skills training (Emergency response).</li> </ul> |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | <p><b>System Strengthening:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• National curricula and training support the mainstreaming of skills development within the national system.</li> <li>• National education/training policies and plans support the mainstreaming of skills development within the national system.</li> <li>• Community engagement supports the mainstreaming of skills development within the national system.</li> <li>• National skills development programmes are responsive to the demands of the labour market.</li> <li>• National education/training policies and plans support the mainstreaming of gender equity in opportunities for skills development.</li> <li>• Existence of a strengthened system for adolescent participation.</li> <li>• Number of UNICEF-supported countries with effective community participation within education system</li> <li>• Level of effectiveness of student and community participation within the education system (index)</li> <li>• Extent to which the systems for learning and skills development are gender-responsive (index)</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |

**Note:** The list of indicators will be reviewed and updated during the inception phase.