



UNITED NATIONS CHILDREN'S FUND

Junior Professional Officer Programme (JPO) Chiffre Nr. 2026-1-19

I. Job Description

Title: JPO Disability Inclusion Officer

Organizational Unit: Disability Section, Global Programme

Agency: United Nations Children's Fund UNICEF

Post Location: 1st and 2nd Year New York, USA (opt. 2nd Year Nairobi, Kenya)

Duration of assignment: 2 years with possibility of extension for another year. The extension of appointment is subject to yearly review concerning priorities, availability of funds and satisfactory performance.

Please note that for participants of the JPO-Programme two years work experience are mandatory! Relevant work experience can be counted. In order to assess the eligibility of the candidates, we review the relevant experience acquired after obtaining the first university degree (usually bachelor's degree).

II. Post Information

Training and Learning Plan

- Participate in a one-week JPO Induction Programme in New York.
- Guidance and advice in relation to training opportunities within the field of expertise.
- Use of yearly JPO training funds for internal/external training opportunities.
- Participation in the Mentoring, Coaching, and Career Counselling and Career transition programmes.
- Encourage field mission and/or stretch assignment during and after the 2nd year.

In addition, the JPO will benefit from the following specific learning opportunities in the receiving office:

- Missions to country offices in the region.
- Field monitoring visits to implementing partners in the region.
- Participation in relevant trainings, workshops and events in the region.

Supervisor's experience

Supervisor of the post is the current Global Lead on Disability and Development (P5). Prior to assuming the position of UNICEF's Global Lead in December 2022, he was a Senior Social Affairs Officer in the Executive Office of the Secretary-General (EOSG) from August 2019 — December 2022, where he led the Disability Inclusion Team that was established subsequent to the launch of the UN Disability Inclusion Strategy (UNDIS) by the Secretary General in June 2019. His role in the EOSG involved setting up the UNDIS implementing and monitoring mechanism and working with UN entities and country teams on coordinated implementation of the Strategy across all UN Pillars, in both programmes and operations. While at the EOSG, he worked closely with the UN System Staff College (UNSSC) to lead the development of a 90-minute training course "The United Nations Disability Inclusion Strategy — Putting Worlds into Action", available across the UN system.

He also worked with UNICEF from 2012 to 2019, and led &Torts in the areas of disability policy, disability inclusive humanitarian action, accessibility and assistive technology. He supported UNICEF Country Offices in different Regions to mainstream disability inclusion both in development and humanitarian contexts; and co-chaired the Inter-Agency Standing Committee Task Team which developed the IASC Guidelines on Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in Humanitarian Action. During this period, he supervised both staff, consultants and a JPO from Norway. He also worked with the Bluvard Education Initiative as a mentor for the [Leaders of Leaders Africa Fellowship](#).

The supervisor will leverage their extensive network to connect the JPO with experts and peers, creating valuable opportunities for growth.

Potential for Retention:

UNICEF is committed to retaining top talent. UNICEF prioritizes internal promotions and advancement based on performance and potential. While we cannot guarantee retention, we will actively explore opportunities for the JPO to stay with our organization if they demonstrate exceptional skills and commitment during their initial tenure.

Disability Inclusion is a cross-cutting area of work that covers both programmes and organizational processes, and this is an opportunity for incumbent of the JPO position to engage with colleagues across the organization. There are many opportunities for networking, both internally within UNICEF and with external partners. Working with various HQ, Regional and Country Offices will enable the JPO to build a robust professional network, opening doors to various career opportunities. UNICEF values mentorship and the JPO will continue to receive guidance and support from their supervisor and other senior staff, ensuring a smooth transition to the next phase of their career.

With the launch of the Disability Inclusion Policy and Strategy (DIPAS), demand from country offices for support on the disability agenda within UNICEF has increased. In response, we anticipate strengthening staff capacity to deliver results for children with disabilities and creating opportunities to apply for regular positions within UNICEF and other UN agencies. This includes potential roles at headquarters, as well as in regional and country offices.

Previous JPOs with the Disability Team have found opportunities both within UNICEF as well as with international organizations like the World Bank.

III. Strategic Office Context and purpose for the job

The fundamental mission of UNICEF is to promote the rights of every child, everywhere, in everything the organization does — in programs, in advocacy, and operations. The equity strategy, emphasizing the most disadvantaged and excluded children and families, translates this commitment to children's rights into action. For UNICEF, equity means that all children have an opportunity to survive, develop, and reach their full potential, without discrimination, bias, or favoritism. To the degree that any child has an unequal chance in life — in its social, political, economic, civic, and cultural dimensions — her or his rights are violated. There is growing evidence that investing in the health, education, and protection of a society's most disadvantaged citizens — addressing inequity — not only will give all children the opportunity to fulfill their potential but also will lead to sustained growth and stability of countries. This is why the focus on equity is so vital. It accelerates progress towards realizing the human rights of all children, which is the universal mandate of UNICEF, as outlined by the Convention on the Rights of the Child, while also supporting the equitable development of nations.

The Global Programme Division (GPD) plays a central role in driving programme excellence across UNICEF. It provides global strategic leadership and policy direction, develops and monitors frameworks and standards, and ensures coherence and alignment across sectors, regions and partners. GPD generates high-impact, evidence-based solutions and serves as a hub of specialized expertise, offering technical guidance on policy reform and scalable programming.

GPD leads UNICEF's policies, standards and negotiations for programme, ensuring the organization's assets and priorities are aligned with and contribute to child development goals. In addition, GPD strengthens country-level implementation through integrated technical support, linking global policy with on-the-ground action to deliver results for children at scale.

As part of this structure, UNICEF has established Centres of Excellence (CoEs) to provide high-quality, demand-driven technical assistance to Country and Regional Offices, and their governments and partners. Located strategically in Nairobi, Panama, Amman and Bangkok, the CoEs bring together cross-cutting expertise across time zones. Global Programme Practices in CoEs function as a single point of entry for support, delivering tailored assistance in priority areas such as policy reform in matters that advance the wellbeing of children, at-scale programme design, public finance, workforce development and institutional strengthening, and timely humanitarian response while promoting resilient development. In so doing, the CoEs also contribute to global policy standards ensuring that UNICEF's support is grounded in practical knowledge.

Strategic Context

UNICEF's mission is to uphold the rights of every child, everywhere, with equity at the heart of its work. This means prioritising the most disadvantaged and excluded children, including children with disabilities, to ensure they can survive, develop, and thrive free from discrimination and systemic barriers.

The global Disability Team within the Global Programme Division (GPD) leads strategy-making, policy direction, and vision-setting to advance disability inclusion across UNICEF. It provides thought leadership and drives programme excellence, ensuring that children with

disabilities are systematically prioritised across all sectors. The team engages with international treaty bodies such as the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), as well as United Nations mechanisms and key partners including the International Disability Alliance (IDA), the UN Global Disability Fund (UNGDF), the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA), the Global Action on Disability (GLAD) Network, and ATscale.

The Disability Team works closely with UNICEF's Centres of Excellence, Divisions, Regional and Country Offices, and the broader disability network to promote systematic, inclusive programming. This work is anchored in UNICEF's Strategic Plan 2026-2029, the UNICEF Disability Inclusion Policy and Strategy (DIPAS), and the United Nations Disability Inclusion Strategy (UNDIS). The team monitors global progress against Strategic Plan results and UNDIS indicators, while supporting integration of disability inclusion into policy, systems strengthening, inclusive humanitarian action, and access to assistive technology.

By facilitating cross-sectoral technical assistance and fostering knowledge exchange, the team accelerates sustainable, rights-based inclusion—ensuring that no child is left behind.

Worldwide, there are an estimated 240 million children with disabilities. They are disproportionately excluded from early learning and schools, and face higher risks of poverty, violence, abandonment, and institutionalisation. Children with disabilities are a diverse group, with needs that fall along a continuum — from mild, treatable impairments requiring simple support (e.g., spectacles, hearing aids, psychosocial care) to high and complex support needs requiring therapies, assistive devices, or personal assistance. In humanitarian contexts, many children acquire impairments from conflict or disaster yet remain invisible in recovery and service delivery.

Families — particularly women and girls — bear the heaviest burden of this exclusion, often forced to leave school or work to provide unpaid care, reinforcing cycles of poverty and marginalization. While many countries have adopted disability-inclusive policies, the current geopolitical and financing context — marked by cuts in official development assistance (ODA) and competing global priorities — threatens to reverse progress.

The Global Disability Summit (GDS) 2025 Amman-Berlin Declaration sets a 15% ODA target for programmes with disability inclusion objectives, representing a unique opportunity for accountability and financing leverage. UNICEF, as part of the Joint Help Desk (JHD) coordinated by GIZ and mandated by BMZ and the GDS Secretariat, supports governments in implementing this Declaration.

In 2024, UNICEF reached 5.2 million children with disabilities through partnerships and humanitarian action, but over 200 million remain unreached. Guided by its Disability Inclusion Policy and Strategy (2022-2030) and Strategic Plan (2026-2029), UNICEF is committed to system-level approaches that ensure children with disabilities are included across health, education, child protection, social protection, and humanitarian action.

As UNICEF transforms technical programme support into global Centers of Excellence, disability inclusion remains a cross-cutting normative priority, and strengthening the technical assistance ecosystem and knowledge management is critical to advance inclusion of children with disabilities.

Purpose for the job:

Within this context, the JPO will be part of the Global Disability Team based either in UNICEF Headquarters, New York, or in one of the UNICEF Centers of Excellence (Nairobi or Amman), under the direct supervision of the Global Lead on Disability.

The JPO will contribute to strengthening UNICEF's global work on disability inclusion by supporting technical assistance, knowledge management, and communication functions. The post will play a key role in ensuring UNICEF effectively contributes to the Global Disability Summit follow-up (Amman-Berlin Declaration), supports country offices in disability-inclusive programming, and systematically documents, shares, and promotes good practices.

IV. Key function, accountabilities and related duties/tasks

Support UNICEF's role in the Joint Help Desk (JHD) for the Amman-Berlin Declaration (ABD)

- Maintain continuous communication with the JHD Secretariat and partners.
- Coordinate with UNICEF Country Offices and Regional Offices supporting governments in ABD implementation.
- Track progress on ODA disability inclusion targets and facilitate reporting.
- Contribute to guidance and technical materials related to ABD follow-up.

Lead Disability Knowledge Management

- Support the Global Disability Lead and Disability Policy and Program Specialists in identifying, documenting, and promoting good practices within UNICEF and partner agencies.
- Establish and maintain a repository of tools, case studies, and programmatic experiences in sync with global program division development of architecture supporting the Centers of Excellence
 - Contribute to the design and roll-out of a Knowledge Management Strategy for the Disability Section.
 - Support monitoring and analysis of disability inclusion trends across UNICEF's programme portfolio.

Strengthen Communication and Networking on Disability Inclusion

- Document and disseminate good practices through briefs, newsletters, and knowledge products.
 - Support engagement with UNICEF's internal Disability Network and communities of practice.
- Contribute to the development and roll-out of programmatic guidance and communication materials.
- Assist in organizing webinars, workshops, and knowledge exchange events.

Provide Programmatic and Technical Support

- Support cross-sectoral integration of disability inclusion into UNICEF strategies, guidance, and reporting.
- Assist with technical backstopping to country and regional offices on request.

- Contribute to global advocacy and resource mobilization efforts.

V. Impact of Results

The JPO will strengthen UNICEF's capacity to:

- Deliver on its commitments under the Global Disability Summit Amman-Berlin Declaration, particularly advancing financing for disability inclusion.
- Systematically document, organize, and disseminate evidence and good practices, enhancing global knowledge and peer learning.
- Ensure children with disabilities are included across UNICEF programmes, contributing to global targets for early childhood, education, social protection, and assistive technology.
- Increase visibility, accountability, and resource mobilization for disability inclusion, despite reduced internal staffing capacity.
- Ultimately, the JPO's contributions will help ensure more children with disabilities access inclusive services and support, reducing their risks of exclusion, poverty, and institutionalisation.

VI. Competencies and level of proficiency required

Core Values attributes

- Care
- Respect
- Integrity
- Trust
- Accountability

Functional Competencies

- Formulating strategies and concepts (1)
- Analyzing (2)
- Applying technical expertise (2)
- Learning and researching (2)
- Planning and organizing (2)

Core competencies skills

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

VII. Recruitment Qualifications

Education: Master's degree preferably in social policy, international development, disability and development, International Law, Human Rights Law, Political Science, International Relations or related subject.

Experience:

- At least 2 years of progressively responsible experience in programme management, policy, or research related to disability inclusion, social policy, education, child protection, or humanitarian action.
- Familiarity in working with disability inclusion frameworks including CRPD is desirable.
- Experience with documentation, knowledge management and related platforms, digital communication, and data analysis are an advantage.
- Experience in international cooperation, UN system, or development/humanitarian organisations desirable.

Language Requirements:

English is the working language of UNICEF. Knowledge of the other UN language is an asset.

VIII. Information and living condition of Duty station:

General Information:

New York City is an iconic US City. It is the Headquarters for UNICEF, UNDP, UNFPA and the United Nations. It is the largest city in the US, its financial capital and boasts world-class cultural attractions.

For the JPO, this allows for broad exposure to many facets of the organization, as well as direct access and frequent interaction with a wide range of experienced colleagues and counterparts, from both within UNICEF and among our partners.

Security:

The security threat level in New York is classified as Minimal (Level 1), the lowest level, by the UN Department of Safety and Security. Currently there are no significant security threats in general nor direct threats to UN personnel or assets within the country. Petty crime is only identified risk.

Housing:

The Greater New York City area offers a wide variety of long-term and short-term accommodation, furnished and unfurnished. Central accommodation is expensive by global standards. Units can be located through the use of brokers or a variety of online listing sites that can be found through an internet search of "new york city apartment rental".

Schools & Childcare:

Numerous public and private schooling options are available throughout the city, offering differing curricula and tuition in different languages. A private "UN" school, catering to UN personnel, has campuses across the city and teaches the International Baccalaureate curriculum.

Work for spouses & partners:

New York City offers a large and competitive job market. UN staff who are not US citizens or permanent residents are conferred a work visa status (G-4) that permits their spouses to work during the validity of their visa.

**Bitte senden Sie Ihre JPO-Bewerbung direkt an das Büro
Führungskräfte zu Internationalen Organisationen (BFIO) unter
Angabe der Chiffre Nr. 2026-1-19 auf dem Bewerbungsbogen**

Alle Informationen finden Sie unter www.bfio.de