

## REACH SENIOR ASSESSMENT OFFICER IN AFGHANISTAN (CASH AND MARKETS FOCAL POINT)

(REFERENCE: 21/AFG/SAO02)

### BACKGROUND ON IMPACT AND REACH

IMPACT Initiatives is a humanitarian NGO, based in Geneva, Switzerland. The organisation manages several initiatives, including the REACH Initiative. The IMPACT team comprises specialists in data collection, management and analysis, GIS and remote-sensing. IMPACT was launched at the initiative of ACTED, an international NGO whose headquarter is based in Paris and is present in thirty countries. The two organizations have a strong complementarity formalized in a global partnership, which allows particularly IMPACT to benefit from ACTED's operational support on its fields of intervention.

REACH was born in 2010 as a joint initiative of the two International NGOs ([IMPACT Initiatives](#) and [ACTED](#)) and the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) Operational Satellite Applications Programme ([UNOSAT](#)). REACH's purpose is to promote and facilitate the development of information products that enhance the humanitarian community's decision making and planning capacity for emergency, reconstruction and development contexts, supporting and working within the framework of the humanitarian reform process. REACH facilitates information management for aid actors through three complementary services: (a) need and situation assessments facilitated by REACH teams; (b) situation analysis using satellite imagery; (c) provision of related database and (web)-mapping facilities and expertise.

### POSITION PROFILE

**We are currently looking for a Senior Assessment Officer to support our team in Afghanistan.**

**Department:** REACH

**Position:** Senior Assessment Officer

**Duration:** 12 months

**Location:** Kabul, Afghanistan

### COUNTRY PROFILE

After forty years of war, recurrent natural disasters, increasing poverty and COVID-19, Afghanistan remains one of the world's longest and most complex humanitarian crises. Conflict continues to drive extreme physical and psychological harm, and is forcibly displacing hundreds of thousands of people every year. Furthermore, COVID-19 has had catastrophic consequences for people's health, incomes and levels of debt. Hunger and malnutrition have spiked amid the ongoing conflict and economic downturn, with food insecurity now on par with the 2018-2019 drought, leaving Afghanistan with the second highest number of people in emergency food insecurity in the world – 5.5 million people. Out of a population of almost 40 million, 18.4 million are projected to be in humanitarian need in 2021, and a staggering 30.5 million in need of social assistance.

In 2020, for the first time in nearly 20 years, efforts were underway to negotiate a lasting peace between the Taliban and the Government of Afghanistan, potentially reducing suffering for millions of people. Despite this, civilian casualties are at an all-time high, with no sign of a lull in fighting, and the start of the peace talks in mid-September 2020 was also met with a sharp rise in hostilities in October and November 2020. Consequently, the situation in and beyond 2021 remains uncertain, but with a general expectation of the status

quo in conflict and violence, the ongoing impact of COVID-19, and constant risk of seasonal natural disasters, the levels of humanitarian need in Afghanistan are expected to remain as acute as ever.

As such, the needs for evidenced-based humanitarian aid and information on populations in both accessible and inaccessible areas is paramount to a coordinated response. IMPACT has been present in Afghanistan since 2016, providing a growing evidence base for humanitarian response planning through sectoral, multi-sectoral and area-based assessments as well as information management services across the entire country. With bases in all regions of Afghanistan, REACH is looking to build on its experience and established relations to further increase its support in 2021 and to provide the humanitarian community with relevant and reliable information to strengthen strategic programming and needs-based targeting.

REACH Initiative Afghanistan is currently seeking a young professional with experience in research to lead the Cash and Markets (C&M) Portfolio in Afghanistan as a Senior Assessment Officer (SAO).

In coordination with the ECHO-funded Emergency Response Mechanism (ERM), and the Cash and Voucher Working Group (CVWG) of Afghanistan, REACH conducts regular and ad hoc C&M-focused assessments, and provides information management support to the humanitarian cash response in Afghanistan. This includes daily processing of beneficiary vulnerability assessments, third party post-distribution monitoring, and facilitating the implementation of the CVWG-led Joint Market Monitoring Initiative (JMMI) to conduct market price and supply chain monitoring.

This position sits within REACH's Inter-sectoral Research Unit (ISRU), which coordinates the Whole of Afghanistan (WOA) and Hard-to-Reach (HTR) research (both facilitated by the Inter-Cluster Coordination Team), as well as the information management of the Emergency Response Mechanism (ERM) and Joint Market Monitoring Initiative (JMMI). In partnership with all Clusters and other stakeholders, these programmes are integral to Afghanistan's humanitarian needs analysis and response planning process. The C&M SAO will be responsible for overseeing all research streams within the project portfolio. This includes meeting contractual deliverables, including coordination of trainings with partners, and production of datasets, tabulated analysis, factsheets, situation overviews, and narrative reports.

The ideal candidate will be eager to work in a dynamic organization with opportunities to build upon existing data analysis and external coordination skills. Technical backstopping and support is provided by the Research Manager for the REACH Afghanistan Inter-Sectoral Research Unit (ISRU) and REACH Afghanistan Data Specialist, and the IMPACT Geneva HQ team. Past experience in the aforementioned areas is not essential although highly desirable. At minimum, experience with the subject matter, familiarity with the development and/or humanitarian sector, quantitative analysis skills, and effective communication skills are required.

## FUNCTIONS

Under the functional supervision of the ISRU Research Manager in Afghanistan and IMPACT HQ in Geneva, the REACH SAO is responsible for the coordination and implementation of all research activities falling under the C&M portfolio, including:

- **Research design:** indicator drafting and review, assessment methodology and sampling strategy review, data collection tool development
- Planning and coordination of **data collection** activities, in close collaboration with the in-country operations team
- Oversight of **data processing**, including development of data cleaning and analysis plans, and conducting **analysis**, in close collaboration with the in-country data team
- **Output production** and development, and presentation of findings

- Close **coordination with all relevant external stakeholders** within the humanitarian coordination structure, throughout the research cycle, and supporting the incorporation of findings into strategic planning documents
- Functioning as **technical advisor and sitting member of the ECHO-funded Emergency Response Mechanism (ERM) Consortium Management Unit (CMU)**
- Regular **communication and collaboration with IMPACT HQ** Data and Reporting Units to ensure implementation of global standards, guidelines, and best practices, for C&M and of REACH and IMPACT more generally
- Functioning as focal point for the CVWG – supporting the group and its partners with data analysis, ad-hoc presentation, and revision of draft SOPs upon request
- Functioning as focal point for FSAC, particularly in relation to the IPC workshop on a biannual basis (March and September)
- **Staff management** of assessment, project, and database officers, who will support on projects within the portfolio

S/he is also responsible for related logistics, partner coordination, and reporting and finance requirements and will be required to provide input to the strategic development of REACH in country.

In his/her mission, the REACH SAO will be hosted by ACTED and will fall under the responsibility of ACTED's Country Director and his/her delegates. S/he and will fully abide to ACTED's Security, HR, Administration and Logistics rules and regulations.

## **Responsibilities**

The REACH Senior Assessment Officer is responsible for two regular research cycles:

### *Joint Market Monitoring Initiative (JMMI)*

The Afghanistan Joint Market Monitoring Initiative (JMMI) was launched by the Afghanistan Cash and Voucher Working Group (CVWG) and partners, in collaboration with REACH Initiative (REACH), and funded by the European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO). It is implemented through partners' data collection, as a joint effort to align, harmonize, and streamline existing partner data collection for analysis. The SAO's role entails overall coordination and support to 19 international and national partner NGOs, as well as the management of the overall assessment cycle (including updating research design regularly, updating the tool when needed through coordination with partners and LL workshops, managing data, producing monthly factsheets, and disseminating products to the CVWG's partners and external stakeholders upon request).

### *Household Emergency Assessment Tool (HEAT) within the Emergency Response Mechanism (ERM)*

The HEAT is used to assess the eligibility of conflict and shock-affected households for one-time multi-purpose cash, WASH assistance, and – where needed – protection referrals. The tool is deployed by partner organisations within the ERM and used to conduct household interviews within conflict and shock-affected communities. The SAO is responsible for acting as external focal point with partners for all project activities, updating research design and tool when needed, closely managing caseload data, and producing monthly factsheets.

Within the ERM, the SAO also sits in the Consortium Management Unit (CMU) as IM focal point. S/He will also actively participate in discussions regarding grants, operations, M&E, and where the Chief or Party will see fit.

The SAO is also responsible for ad hoc research cycles and support of the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification process. Other responsibilities include:

- Developing and maintaining strong relationships and regular coordination with JMMI partners, and ECHO, as well as key humanitarian programme cycle (HPC) stakeholders in country, such as OCHA and the Food Security and Agriculture Cluster (FSAC).
- Ensuring that activities are planned and implemented in a structured and coherent manner, in line with project and program objectives, and assuring that deadlines are met.
- Ensuring regular reporting on assessment progress and participating in internal coordination meetings.
- Developing research TORs and tools, ensuring these are validated and approved by management and external partners, and making sure these are also understood and used by assessment staff and stakeholders, and updated as required.
- Managing and coordinating data collection and processing whilst providing quality control to ensure data is clean and of acceptable standard.
- Leading quantitative analyses with the support of the data unit, as well as providing technical input, guidance, and review of data analysis conducted by other team members.
- Conducting and overseeing the writing of timely and accurate assessment reports and other outputs, which comply with HQ guidelines and meet global REACH standards.
- Providing technical and information management support to humanitarian stakeholders to inform strategic humanitarian planning documents.
- Coordinating with IMPACT HQ, and the ERM CMU and CVWG on global and in country approaches to improving cash programming
- Managing junior staff dedicated to the portfolio across assessment, data, and project/operations teams.
- Participating in general project management including review of budgets, grants reporting, and project-related logistics.
- Supporting the Research Manager in the development or revision of overall unit research strategies, reports, or new proposals.
- Other tasks falling within his/her functions as requested by supervisors

## **Confidentiality**

The REACH Assessment Officer will maintain the strictest confidentiality on all data collected and related processes. He/she will actively take measures to prevent the unauthorized sharing of any information and data belonging to IMPACT and its partners, or collected during his/her assignment with IMPACT.

## **REQUIREMENTS**

- Excellent academic qualifications, including a Master's degree in relevant discipline (international studies, development, humanitarian response, political science, monitoring and evaluation, etc);
- At least 3 years of relevant working experience in humanitarian or development settings;
- Knowledge of cash and markets programming in humanitarian contexts;
- Strong coordination and organizational skills, including the ability to problem solve and manage sensitive internal discussions;
- Familiarity with quantitative assessments and methodologies;
- Previous experience in survey and tool design;
- Excellent analytical skills;
- Experience in analysing either quantitative and/or qualitative data for analysis;

- Proven knowledge of the Microsoft Office Suite, to include Word, Excel, and PowerPoint;
- Knowledge of statistical analysis software such as SPSS, STATA, and/or R;
- Demonstrated ability to write analytical research reports using analysis of data;
- Excellent communication and drafting skills for reporting and external coordination;
- Excellent ability to operate Microsoft Word, Excel, and Adobe InDesign Software for output production;
- Prior field experience required;
- Written and spoken fluency in English required;
- Ability to multitask with tight deadlines;
- Ability to work independently and manage people remotely;
- Ability to operate in a cross-cultural environment requiring flexibility;
- Ability to operate in a complex and challenging security environment.

## DESIRABLE

- Previous experience with remote coordination/ management;
- Advanced skills in SPSS and/or R, STATA or other statistical analysis software;
- Knowledge of qualitative assessments, methodologies, and analysis and related analytical software (e.g. NVivo);
- Experience with GIS software is an asset.