

Terms of Reference

REACH ASSESSMENT OFFICER IN AFGHANISTAN (HUMANITARIAN SITUATION MONITORING FOCAL POINT) REF: 22|AFG|AO02

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.

We are currently looking for an Assessment Officer to support our Humanitarian Situation Monitoring Project in Afghanistan.

Department: REACH

Position: Assessment Officer

Duration: 6 months (extendable)

Location: Kabul, Afghanistan

Starting Date: 15 April

COUNTRY PROFILE

Forty years of war, recurrent natural disasters, chronic poverty, drought and the COVID-19 pandemic have devastated the people of Afghanistan. At the same time, the recent economic upheaval and ruptures in basic services, financial systems and civil service are transpiring and exacerbating an already dire humanitarian situation. Even prior to the events of 15 August, the humanitarian situation in Afghanistan was one of the worst in the world. By the mid-year mark, nearly half of the population – some 18.4 million people – were already in need of humanitarian and protection assistance in 2021; more than 22 million are projected to be in need in 2022.

While the full impact of recent events will take more time to manifest, aid organisations have already witnessed a dangerous deepening of humanitarian need amongst a greater number of people. In addition to the collapsing capacity of basic services, sharp drops in income, surging food and other commodity prices, growing unemployment, and severed remittances are expected to contribute to the deterioration of food security among other sectoral and cross-sectoral needs. This is increasingly concerning as food basket costs are steadily rising; while markets continue to function, prices for key commodities remain well above pre-pandemic levels and the purchasing power of casual labourers and pastoralists remains significantly reduced. It is anticipated that current political uncertainty, devaluation of the Afghan currency, import challenges and cash availability may lead to further inflationary impacts.

In light of the political turmoil and economic crisis facing Afghanistan after the events of 2021, the humanitarian response is implementing an unprecedented scale-up in implementation to meet such critical and rapidly worsening need across the country. As such, the needs for evidenced-based humanitarian aid and information on populations in both accessible and inaccessible areas is paramount to an effective, accountable, and 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. The mission is structured around three units, each with key objectives to support different aspects of the response. This includes (1) supporting strategic planning and prioritization through the Inter-Sectoral Research Unit (ISRU), (2) emphasizing localization agendas through area-based early recovery and development through the Resilience and Recovery Unit (RRRU), and (3) providing programmatic and operational support to key actors and partners in the aid response to ensure effective, appropriate, transparent, and accountable delivery of assistance to the people of Afghanistan through the Programming and Accountability Research Unit (PARU).

This third unit includes already established research focusing on: information management support for cash implementing actors through the Emergency Response Mechanism; price tracking and market functionality assessment through the Joint Market Monitoring Initiative (JMMI); dedicated information management and response evaluation for the ESNFI Cluster. REACH Afghanistan is looking for a Senior Assessment Officer to lead the Cash and Markets programmes under the PARU, overseeing both the ERM and JMMI research cycles and supporting the RM in shaping its new strategic direction, as of January 2022.

POSITION PROFILE

REACH Initiative Afghanistan is currently seeking a young professional with experience in research as Assessment Officer (AO) to lead the implementation of a humanitarian situation monitoring (HSM) programme.

Whilst the overall availability and quality of data is high, there is a need to strengthen the overall analytical capacity of the humanitarian community in Afghanistan. The aim of the HSM programme is to support the humanitarian community to monitor humanitarian needs and displacement of populations across Afghanistan, in coordination with the newly established Assessments and Analysis Working Group (AAWG). This will entail conducting integrated analysis to coordinate and triangulate findings of sectoral and inter-sectoral information sources, on a regular basis, and implement rapid ad hoc assessments where needed. This requires consistent external engagement with key humanitarian, coordination, and technical stakeholders, to identify information gaps and provide support for needs-based prioritization across the response.

This position will sit within REACH's Inter-Sectoral Research Unit (ISRU), which also coordinates the Whole of Afghanistan (WOA) (on behalf of the OCHA-led Inter-Cluster Coordination Team). In partnership with all Clusters and other key stakeholders, these programmes are integral to Afghanistan's humanitarian needs analysis and response planning process. The HSM AO will be responsible for working with data from across this and other research cycles, as well as external data sources, to coordinate and produce a joint analysis and monitoring framework and regular situation overviews. In addition, this role will require continuous engagement with the dedicated HSM programme unit in HQ in Geneva, coordinating on global projects involving Afghanistan, and feeding into and implementing best practices of developed global frameworks.

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.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Under the supervision of the (Deputy) Country Coordinator in Afghanistan, direct line-management of the ISRU Research Manager, and with direct coordination with IMPACT HQ as well as the donors and partners involved in the research cycle, the REACH Assessment Officer is responsible for the coordination and implementation of all research activities falling under the HSM portfolio, including:

1. Research Cycle Implementation and Management

- Oversight and implementation of all stages of the research cycle, including:
 - Research design: TOR, tool, and 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, whilst providing quality control to ensure data is clean and of acceptable standard.
 - Output production and development, and presentation of findings
 - Conducting lessons learned workshops and compiling best practices for future assessments
- Development of an HSM monitoring framework, including identification, mapping, and regular analysis of relevant data sources (both from within REACH and externally)

- 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.
- Conducting and overseeing the writing of timely and accurate assessment reports and other outputs, which comply with HQ guidelines and meet global REACH standards.
- Regular communication and collaboration with IMPACT HQ Data and Reporting Units to ensure implementation of global standards, guidelines, and best practices, for HSM and of REACH and IMPACT more generally
- Collaboration with HQ HSM Programme team on identified dedicated projects and objectives involving Afghanistan work streams.

2. Team, Project, and Grants Management

- Possible management of junior staff dedicated to the portfolio across assessment, data, and project/operations teams.
- Ensuring project oversight through regular and coordinated workplanning with the support of the Research Manager and relevant data, GIS, and operations focal points
- Supporting the RM and Senior Management Team (SMT) with grants management, including input to donor reporting, proposal drafting, and project monitoring and evaluation

3. External Engagement

- 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, programmatic, and operational documents as relevant
- Functioning as focal point for key clusters and working groups– supporting the group and its partners with data analysis, ad-hoc presentations, and to inform strategic humanitarian planning where relevant i.e. cluster strategies.

4. Support to the Research Manager and SMT on Strategy Development and Implementation

- Under the guidance of the (Deputy) Country Coordinator and Unit RM, contribute to the development of the Unit's strategy, including highlighting possibilities for integration and alignment with Whole of Afghanistan (WoA) MSNA, and other research cycles;
- Support to the (Deputy) Country Coordinator and RM in the co-leadership of the Assessment and Analysis Working Group (AAWG) through which HSM is to be implemented, through production of tools and outputs, and other tasks as requested
- Support the RM to work with key clusters and partner organizations and working groups to understand the various relevant information gaps within Afghanistan and identify how the HSM portfolio can help to fill these gaps.

Other tasks falling within his/her functions as requested by supervisors

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.

In his/her mission, the REACH AO 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.

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 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 the Humanitarian Programme Cycle (HPC) and humanitarian coordination structures
- Strong coordination and organizational skills
- Good experience with quantitative and qualitative research and tool design, data collection, and data analysis required;
- Excellent analytical skills;
- Experience managing staff in a small team desirable, including remote management
- Strong coordination and organizational skills, including the ability to proactively problem solve;
- Demonstrated ability to write analytical research reports including critical analysis of data;
- Excellent communication and drafting skills for reporting and external coordination;
- Knowledge of statistical analysis software such as SPSS, STATA, and/or R highly desirable;
- Knowledge of qualitative assessments, methodologies, and analysis and related analytical software (e.g. NVivo) an asset;
- Excellent ability to operate Microsoft Word, Excel, and Adobe InDesign Software for output production
- 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;

CONDITIONS

- Salary defined by the IMPACT salary grid; educational level, expertise, hardship, security, and performance are considered for pay bonus
- Additional monthly living allowance
- Free lodging provided at the organisation's guesthouse or housing allowance (depending on contract length and country of assignment)
- Transportation costs covered, including additional return ticket + luggage allowance
- Provision of medical, life, and repatriation insurance + retirement package