

Manager – HQ Research Systems Unit

(Reference: 25|HQ|RM01|)

BACKGROUND ON IMPACT AND REACH

IMPACT Initiatives is a humanitarian think-and-do tank based in Geneva, Switzerland. The organization aims to support evidence-based decision-making for humanitarian and development programming through data collection, analysis, and dissemination. IMPACT is the implementing partner of REACH, a multi-agency initiative created in 2010 that supports humanitarian actors to improve planning and decision-making through in-depth, reliable information and analysis.

All of IMPACT's programs are implemented in support of humanitarian coordination structures. IMPACT's team comprises specialists in data collection, management, and analysis, as well as experts in humanitarian response, GIS, and remote sensing.

We are currently looking for a Research Manager to support our team in Geneva.

Position: Manager - HQ

Contract duration: 12 months

Starting Date: ASAP

Location: Geneva

POSITION PROFILE

The Research Systems Unit (RSU) Manager will lead a team responsible for designing and guiding the delivery of interoperable primary research with the aim of meeting the information needs of the humanitarian system as well as providing the necessary information for the delivery of IMPACT's core analytical products. The RSU ensures that the research systems, and associated research cycles, are designed to inform decision-making on effective planning, prioritization, design and delivery of assistance.

The Manager will supervise workstream leads and collaborate closely with country teams and HQ functions to ensure primary research is designed and implemented according to methodological standards, implemented consistently across contexts, and to feed the information needs of the humanitarian system. The role requires a strong blend of strategic leadership, technical expertise, management skills and stakeholder engagement.

The data produced through the primary research are intended to inform response prioritization, program design, and strategic decision-making within the Humanitarian Programme Cycle (HPC) and beyond.

Additionally, the RSU Manager will lead the cross-unit Emergency Taskforce, to ensure rapid response in case of sudden-onset emergencies.

RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Strategic Leadership and Workstream Coordination

- Contribute to the development of our organisational strategic vision for the design and delivery of research systems and cycles
- Based on this strategy, develop and oversee a coherent research systems architecture for an interoperable system of core primary research cycles [e.g. MSNAs, HSM, ABAs etc]. *Note the strategy process should support in determining which primary research cycles should be considered “core”.*
- Supervise workstream leads and ensure alignment with overall organisational strategic direction and provide strategic oversight to ensure coherence and complementarity across the design and delivery core primary research cycles [e.g. MSNAs, HSM, ABAs etc].
- Ensure core primary research products contribute to our organisational strategic objectives, ensuring that each product is impactful, user-driven, context-relevant, and aligned with broader sectoral and inter-agency developments as well as IMPACT’s core analytical products.
- Monitor trends in humanitarian sector to anticipate new information needs and steer strategic adaptation of the Unit’s and, where relevant, wider organisational direction.

2. Development of Research System Frameworks and Research Cycles Guidance

- In support of overall organisation strategy and direction:
 - Oversee the development of conceptual, and context-specific frameworks guiding the design and implementation of the research systems (and associated core research cycles) ensuring clarity around interdependencies and strategic outcomes they’re intending to inform
 - Supervise the production of methodological guidance packages for core research cycles [e.g. MSNAs, HSM, ABAs etc] and systems, minimum standards, training materials, analytical approaches, and templates to support country implementation.
 - Ensure materials are technically rigorous, scalable, and suitable for varied data environments.

3. Country Support and Capacity Strengthening

- In support of organisation and country strategy and direction:
 - Coordinate structured strategic and technical support to country teams for the implementation of core primary research cycles [e.g. MSNAs, HSM, ABAs etc]
 - Oversee the design and delivery of capacity-building initiatives (e.g., onboarding, trainings, technical workshops) for country-based staff.

4. Stakeholder Engagement and Advocacy

- In line with organisational advocacy approaches and priorities:
 - Lead engagement with key external stakeholders (e.g., donors, UN, clusters) to promote the relevance and uptake of primary research outputs.
 - Represent the Research System Unit in global fora and inter-agency processes to advocate for evidence-based prioritization and planning.

- Drive dissemination and briefing efforts for internal and external audiences.

6. Internal Coordination and Integration

- Ensure close coordination with other HQ teams including Thematic and Sectoral, Analysis, Data and GIS, Quality Assurance, and MEL to align approaches and leverage synergies.
- Promote collaborative development and piloting of adjustments to core research cycles and systems in partnership with country teams.
- Establish effective internal communication and feedback loops to strengthen institutional ownership and adaptability.

7. Learning, Innovation, and Institutionalization

- Lead lessons-learned reviews and strategic reflections on the design and evolution of research workstreams.
- Contribute to organizational learning on data collection in funding-constrained and access-constrained settings and drive innovation in methodological approaches.
- Feed learnings back into organisational and country level strategic reflections

8. Emergency Taskforce leadership

- Lead the Departmental cross-cutting Emergency Taskforce, with the objective of monitoring and responding in a timely manner to emergencies
- Supervise the different workstreams within the taskforce, in line with the organisational strategic objective of becoming a key emergency actor
- Establish effective cross-unit and cross-departmental coordination mechanisms and processes, for effective emergency responses
- Coordinate structured strategic and technical support to country teams for emergency responses, leading on the response – through deployment – if/when necessary

REQUIREMENTS

REQUIRED QUALIFICATIONS

Work experience: Minimum 6 years of relevant experience in humanitarian analysis, needs assessment, research, or related fields, including team management.

Academic qualifications: Master's degree or equivalent in a relevant discipline (e.g., humanitarian affairs, development studies, social sciences, statistics, political science, etc.).

TECHNICAL SKILLS:

Strong research skills with experience developing and operationalising primary research.

Proven ability to visualise big picture systems whilst maintaining the capacity to zoom-in on particular details

Excellent writing and communication skills, including experience producing briefs and presenting to high-level

stakeholders.

Proficiency in Excel; knowledge of statistical or data visualization tools (e.g., PowerBI, R, Python, STATA) is an asset.

Understanding of humanitarian coordination systems and inter-agency needs analysis processes.

COMMUNICATION AND ORGANIZATIONAL SKILLS

Demonstrated ability to lead multi-disciplinary teams and manage complex workflows.

Experience in external engagement and advocacy with donors, UN, and other humanitarian stakeholders.

Fluency in English required; additional languages (e.g., French, Arabic) an asset.

Capacity to work in a cross-cultural, fast-paced environment with tight deadlines.

COMPENSATION AND BENEFITS

For this position, gross salary between 5'800 CHF and 5'957 CHF monthly (before income tax). NB - IMPACT salaries are strictly determined by our salary grid depending on the grade of the position and the level of education and experience of staff. A contribution to medical insurance of 489 CHF per month is already included in the salary figure. Insurance covering professional and non-professional accidents throughout the period of employment with IMPACT Health insurance, life insurance and repatriation assistance in case of field visits/temporary deployments Enrolment in IMPACT Initiatives Research Foundational Learning Programme within the first 3 months from the start of contract.

Applicants must hold a valid work permit for Switzerland or be EU/EFTA citizens

Up to 40% of remote work on a weekly basis