

Evidence and Impact Advisor

Location	Global – any location where CA has a presence	Department	International
Reports to (Job Title)	Research and Learning Lead	Salary Band	C low
Matrix manager (if applicable)		<u>Competency level</u>	3

Role definition

Role purpose

To develop and lead a portfolio of studies to capture learning and assess impact in Christian Aid's programme and policy work, and to embed a culture of high quality research, evidence, research uptake and learning across Christian Aid's programme and policy work, in order to maximise our impact for poor and marginalised women and men.

Key outcomes

- A strategic portfolio of studies to assess impact and support learning is developed and led/coordinated. The portfolio will include:
 - A combination of meta-studies, multi-country studies, thematic studies, and studies exploring linkages across Christian Aid's programmes & policy work (from local to global), which enable Christian Aid to better understand how and where it achieves impact
 - A combination of directly delivered evaluative research, commissioned studies, and initiatives undertaken in collaboration with academia
 - A set of organisational learning reviews on key areas, developed in collaboration with staff across the organisation, to ensure that we are reflecting on and strengthening our practice (for example on partnership approaches, new operational models, strategic organisational initiatives and innovations)
- That colleagues across Christian Aid are supported across the research and evaluation cycle (scoping, designing, delivering and communicating) to develop high quality impact assessments which contribute to our ability to evidence and learn from our Global Strategy 'Standing Together', and which promote methodological innovation.
- Christian Aid's guidance on good research practice is widely understood, through effective induction, technical support (advice and/or accompaniment), and communications
- That through engagement by our Research, Evidence and Learning hub, staff working in programme, policy, M&E, fundraising and communications are better able to:
 - have a more critical understanding of how different forms of evidence are generated and what makes evidence valid, robust and useful

- scope, commission and/or conduct research, making appropriate methodological choices and promoting uptake of findings and learning
- assess the quality of evidence they engage with, the ways in which it can be used, and the claims it can support
- understand how operational research can inform policy/ advocacy strategies as well as programming
- navigate ethical issues in research processes in a practice context
- engage in partnerships with research organisations and academia
- The internal network of allies who are affiliated to (and championing) REL is expanded
- Lessons and reflections from research practice (including research partnerships) are captured and shared c/o Christian Aid online platforms and events
- Research findings, and reflections on research practice, are shared externally via blogs, publications and learning events, to inform/influence international development policy and practice

Role agility

Expected national travel per annum Occasional travel **On call/unsocial hours** No

Expected international travel per annum Up to 40 days

Surge capacity for emergency responses

No

In order to respond to ever changing demands within the environment, Christian Aid operates within an agile framework (both in workforce and operational) that requires from all employees, a high level of responsiveness and adaptiveness to processes and structures making flexibility and a project based working approach the norm. To sustain this system, managers may/will agree further details of specific tasks and duties as part of the performance agreement. Any reasonable duty may be assigned that is consistent with the nature of the job and its level of responsibility, and employees may be required to change the focus of their role from time to time.

Role context

The role provides sits in the Research, Evidence and Learning (REL) hub, in the Programme Policy, Research and Learning team (PPRL), one of three teams that make up Christian Aid's Policy, Public Affairs and Campaign Department (PPC). PPRL exists to generate and provide thought leadership to the organisation; offer research and sector-based expertise to support practice across our global programmes, and to enhance the links between national programme delivery and learning; and global policy analysis and understanding. Although located in the Policy, Public Affairs and Campaigns Department, this team has a cross organisational remit, with strong links to our country programmes, organisational learning and strategy, as well as PPC. It works to provide a bridge between our country level programme delivery and our global and UK policy, advocacy and campaigning functions.

REL exists to strengthen Christian Aid's capabilities on research and evidence literacy, to support learning from practice, to develop a body of evidence for Christian Aid, and to engage with wider sector thinking around evidence and research for international development. The hub also conducts strategic organisational reviews, works in collaboration with country teams to develop and deliver programme research and learning; and engages externally to influence the development research sector advocating for research led by practitioners, designed for impact, and inclusive of diverse, marginalised perspectives.

This is one of four roles in the highly collaborative REL hub – where each person provides advisory services and thought leadership in their own area of work. All four roles both 'do' and 'advise' – ie part of the role is strategic and involves delivery an agreed agenda; and the other part is responsive and involves technical support to others across the organisation.

All REL advisors provide specialist technical advice (or accompaniment) on research and evidence to colleagues in programmes/policy/fundraising/communications teams who generate and/or utilise evidence in their day-to-day work.

The PPRL team emphasises external collaboration with academics/researchers, sector experts, donors, policy makers and peers to encourage innovative programming, bring learning and insight from our practice to influence the wider sector and build the case for practitioner research and learning, it has a particular interest in strengthening links with critical thinkers from the global south who may offer challenge to dominant paradigms, and collaborate with Christian Aid to shift power in whose knowledge counts and how development is understood.

Role requirements

Relationships

External Peer INGOs, academics, donors, consultants to ensure that Christian Aid's approaches and learning on research, evidence and learning are informed by and influencing external thinking / debates.

Internal Close collaboration with REL colleagues, and with the wider members of PPRL. Advisory and collaborative relationships with staff at all levels, to maximise opportunities for embedding research thinking across the global programme, to strengthen research practice and support learning, without line management authority.

Decision making

Budgetary/savings responsibility no specific responsibility, may have delegated authority for specific projects

- Provides thought leadership around approaches to gathering evidence of impact in ways which are compatible with Christian Aid values, and with due consideration to understanding better what impact we create and *how* we achieve it
- Project manages and/or provides quality assurance on ad hoc research, evidence and learning initiatives, as agreed during proposal development and negotiation.
- Recruits and manages any consultants, interns or volunteers appointed to support specific initiatives related to research initiatives
- Proactively identifies discrete areas in which we would benefit from further research, and undertakes scoping to identify suitable funding opportunities.

- Develops ideas and strategies to contribute to the broader development of a research culture and practice in Christian Aid, and to build the case for practitioner research in the sector

Analytical skills

Significant analytical skills and high levels of judgement required, with the ability to undertake both broad strategic analysis and context-specific/operational analysis.

Ability to link short- and long-term trends and integrate different strands of work to identify key priorities and opportunities for organisational learning and improvement.

Ability to manage complex information and present complex issues clearly and accessibly, with responsibility for developing and articulating organisational policy and practice standards on research and quality of evidence.

Ability to understand/share with others rationale and process for methodological choices in research (including reference to the politics of evidence as well as more traditional choices about qualitative and quantitative methodologies)

Ability to manage research/data across multiple research sites, to ensure that data is ethically collected, well managed and stored, appropriately analysed, with findings clearly identified and communicated.

Developing self and others

Number of Direct reports 0

Overall people management responsibility 0

The role is highly self-directing and requires significant independence and personal responsibility. It is a specialist / advisory role, providing technical leadership, with a focus on supporting others to develop their thinking and practice. In addition to technical expertise, a high level of facilitation, coaching and mentoring is required. The role has responsibility for influencing a diverse group of programme & policy staff to promote high quality research.

Role related checks

Child protection clearance Basic **Counter terrorism screening** Required

Person specification

Applied skills/knowledge and expertise

Essential

- Postgraduate training in social research methods, complemented by practical experience in design and analysis using both quantitative and qualitative methods - with expertise in at least one of these areas, ideally both
- Experience of applying research skills and knowledge of the research and evaluation cycle (design, analysis, and uptake) in a practice setting, ideally in the international development sector
- Expertise in impact assessment and experience of working with development practitioners, who are not research or evaluation experts, to scope impact assessment initiatives
- Critical engagement with the politics of evidence, and an appreciation of the factors that need to be considered in pursuing a particular methodological approach
- Experience with a range of approaches to impact assessment, evaluation and learning
- Proven experience in organisational review and an understanding of issues in organisational (specifically INGO) development
- Familiarity with current thinking/ debates on research, evaluation, communication and uptake

- Excellent facilitation skills, ability to promote critical thinking and reflective practice and encourage learning
- Excellent interpersonal skills, with demonstrable ability to build effective working relationships across organisations, including at a distance
- Excellent writing skills, with outputs appropriately tailored to intended audience/s
- Proven ability to apply analysis of power / gender / exclusion to research and evaluation
- Track record of promoting culture change and organisational learning
- Experience of managing/coordinating projects
- Experience of working in a complex international organisation
- A commitment to promoting accountability to the people and communities with whom Christian Aid works
- Experience of engaging with digital technologies as a tool/ medium in research, evaluation and learning processes

Desirable

- Knowledge and experience of action research and other participatory approaches
- Knowledge and experience of statistics
- Experience of commissioning and managing consultants
- Familiarity with partnership working and the role of civil society / faith-based organisations in development
- Experience of developing grant-funded research
- Ability to communicate effectively in Spanish, French and/or Portuguese

Digital/IT competencies required

Word, Excel, PowerPoint	Intermediate	Web content design & development	N/A
Internet based collaboration tools and video calling	Intermediate	Social Media	Intermediate
Data Visualisation	Intermediate		

DATE CREATED

23/03/2020