

Afghanistan Research and Evaluation Unit

RESEARCHER/SENIOR RESEARCH MANAGER (POLITICAL ECONOMY) Job Description



The Afghanistan Research and Evaluation Unit (AREU) is an independent, Afghanistan-based research institute. Its purpose is to inform and influence policy and practice through conducting high-quality research, to actively disseminate the results, and to promote a culture of research and learning. To achieve its mission AREU engages with policy makers, civil society, researchers and students to promote their use of AREU's research and its library, to strengthen their research capacity, and to create opportunities for analysis, reflection and debate. For additional information please see www.areu.org.af.

POSITION DESCRIPTION

The Researcher/Senior Research Manager is responsible for developing and implementing an AREU research programme in political economy. In line with AREU's research strategy, the programme should contribute to understanding issues of governance and legitimacy in relation to the functioning of the institutions of the state, market and community. Possible subject areas on which the programme might focus include economic governance (e.g. of extractive industries or other sectors); the political economy of aid flows; war economies, market dynamics and power structures; equitable growth; privatisation processes and outcomes; transparency in relation to public finances and financial literacy among local government officials. The candidate should be able to conduct socio-economic analysis accessible to a mixed audience of economists and non-economists, using qualitative and quantitative methods. The position involves liaising with key policy-makers and practitioners to build networks and communicate research findings, and as part of AREU's institutional development strategy, research staff are expected to contribute significantly to research capacity building activities.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Specific duties will include, but not be restricted to the following.

Developing a political economy research programme

- In consultation with other staff and key external stakeholders, defining the programme's scope and direction.
- Developing the conceptual and methodological frameworks and detailed implementation plans for proposed studies.
- Developing concept papers, proposals, and budgets for funding, as required.

Research implementation

- Managing research teams, including significant mentoring and training of more junior colleagues, both Afghan and international.
- Conducting and/or supervising data collection in a number of locations.
- Analyzing data and writing-up results for publication in the AREU series of publications, in collaboration with research team members.
- Performing job appraisals of supervised staff.
- Developing, managing, and monitoring activity budgets, as needed.
- Ensuring compliance with AREU and donor contractual requirements.

- Ensuring logistical support for research activities with Administration and Finance department.
- Liaising with other researchers at AREU to ensure institutional learning and communication across research projects.
- Ensuring with administrative staff that research staff and consultants take appropriate security precautions.

Research representation and policy engagement

- Staying current on policy and programming environment related to the research area.
- Developing communications strategies for research studies, with the communications and advocacy team;
- Communicating relevant research findings at meetings with external actors (government, UN, donors, NGOs, academia, media).
- Ensuring research findings and write-ups are relevant to the concerns of AREU's target audiences, particularly policy-makers and development practitioners.

Research capacity building

- Identifying staff capacity building needs, facilitating access to capacity building opportunities, and providing training and mentoring.
- Commenting and providing input on draft papers produced from research and on internal concept notes.

Strategic and institutional support

- Providing input into annual and strategic plans and budgets.
- Developing partnerships with NGOs, UN, government and donors, where appropriate.

LOCATION

The position is based in Kabul, but may include travel in other areas of Afghanistan as needed, security permitting.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

Essential

Essential qualifications (both senior research manager and researcher)

- Knowledge of political economy issues;
- Strong oral communications skills in English;
- Ability to write well in English for an audience of policy-makers and practitioners;
- Good mentoring skills;
- Strong interpersonal skills; and
- Experience of working in an Islamic and/or conflict/post-conflict and/or South Asian or Central Asian context.

Essential qualifications (For senior research manager)

- A Ph.D. in Economics with a focus on development studies or a related field;
- At least four years of field research/research management experience in developing country contexts, using qualitative and quantitative methodologies, in terms of both design and implementation;
- At least four years of project, people and budget management experience;
- A publication record in both academic and policy oriented outlets;

- Experience of representing an organisation, and of making presentations; and
- Proposal and narrative report writing experience.

Essential qualifications (For researcher)

- A Ph.D. in Economics with a focus on development studies or a related field;
- At least one year of field research experience in developing country contexts, using qualitative and quantitative methodologies, in terms of both design and implementation;
- At least one year of project, people and budget management experience; and
- Experience of making presentations to a wide range of audiences.

Desirable

- Knowledge and experience of Afghanistan;
- Knowledge of Dari or Pashto.

SALARY AND BENEFITS

Salary and benefits are commensurate with qualifications and experience, within AREU's overall salary and benefits structure.

CLOSING DATE AND APPLICATION PROCESS

Please apply by sending a CV and a cover letter to applications@areu.org.af. The cover letter should outline both how your experience relates to the skills and experience outlined in the Person Specification above and your broad ideas for developing a research programme in political economy. The position will be open until filled and only shortlisted candidates will be contacted.