



VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

50-H-3

Job Title: Maternal and Neonatal Health (MNH) Research Officer
Band / Level / 8B
Grade:
Department: Health
Location: Malualkon, Aweil East – South Sudan
Overtime Eligible: Exempt
(per local law)



The International Rescue Committee, one of the world's largest humanitarian agencies, provides relief, rehabilitation, and post-conflict support to victims of oppression and violent conflict in 42 countries. IRC is committed to bold leadership, innovation, and creative partnerships. South Sudan, an independent nation since 9 July 2011, is emerging from decades of brutal civil war rooted in disputes over religion, ethnicity, resources, governance, and self-determination. The security situation remains unpredictable, and the operational context is challenging. IRC has operated in South Sudan for over 30 years now delivering humanitarian relief, post-conflict assistance, and development programs in both refugees, internally displaced and host community settings. IRC operates in 10 field offices including in Juba with field program portfolio covering health, nutrition, child protection, Economic Recovery and Development (Livelihoods), women's protection and empowerment and general protection. IRC continues to provide life-saving assistance and humanitarian aid to vulnerable South Sudanese and continues to work with the affected to rebuild their lives and restore peace.

Job Description

The Maternal and Neonatal Health (MNH) Research Officer will report to the SRMNH Research Manager and play a pivotal role in conducting research aimed at strengthening health systems and improving maternal and newborn health outcomes in South Sudan. This position entails the utilization of diverse research methodologies, including Human-Centered Design (HCD), Knowledge, Attitudes, and Practices (KAP) surveys, and mixed-methods research. The officer will collaborate with a multidisciplinary team to explore current MNH indicators, maternal mortality, pregnancy and delivery experiences, and the perspectives and perceptions of various stakeholders on the Community-Based Maternal and Newborn Care (CBMNC) program. Through engagement with community members, leaders, the Ministry of Health (MoH), and other stakeholders, the officer will implement impactful research projects that generate evidence to address existing knowledge gaps in Sexual, Reproductive, Maternal, and Neonatal Health (SRMNH).

Duties and responsibilities

Research Design and Implementation

- Identify and recruit participants for qualitative and quantitative data collection to ensure readiness for research activities.
- Assist in conducting formative research to develop and refine public health intervention strategies using innovative methods such as Human-Centered Design (HCD).
- Facilitate in-depth interviews and focus group discussions to gather insights on health systems financing and client and Boma Health Worker experiences related to pregnancy, delivery, and mortality reporting within the CBMNC program.
- Accurately document client experiences, feedback, and inquiries in accordance with ethical research standards.
- Support data validation and quality assurance efforts in collaboration with the CBMNC program and MEAL teams through regular data review meetings.

February 2022



- Contribute to the co-design and application of MNH data collection tools with Boma Health Workers and Safe Motherhood Promoters to ensure accurate data capture.
- Collaborate with the research manager, coordinator, and principal investigator to enhance research methodologies that reflect community values and cultural norms.
- Perform basic descriptive data analysis on monthly raw data from the CBMNC project to inform decision-making and improve intervention delivery.
- Engage local leaders to secure community consent and participation, maintaining ethical standards throughout the research process.
- Conduct key informant interviews with stakeholders to gather comprehensive information on CBMNC program implementation, its acceptance among diverse stakeholders, and perceived benefits.
- Transcribe audio files from research interviews and translate materials as needed.
- Assist in conducting endline surveys to assess changes in coverage and behavioral uptake of the essential maternal and newborn health services/behaviors at the population level.
- Translate data collection tools into Dinka for submission to the Institutional Review Board (IRB).
- Support data collection for the KAP survey to evaluate the uptake of essential maternal and newborn health services.
- Ensure that data collection logistics, such as audio recorders, electronic data collection devices, and informed consent forms, are available during data collection activities.

Communication

- Provide timely updates on process evaluation data collection, acceptability study, and KAP survey, including challenges and solutions to ensure adherence to study protocols.
- Notify the Research Manager of any deviations from study protocols and data discrepancies for prompt resolution.
- Maintain effective communication with CBMNC program staff and BHWs to facilitate study protocol implementation.
- Conduct daily debriefs with the research team to discuss their experiences during data collection activities, allowing for timely course corrections.
- Attend scheduled EQUAL/research team meetings to contribute to different activities of the larger team
- Document success stories to highlight project impacts to various stakeholders, including donors.

Research Uptake

- Schedule, conduct, and participate in research uptake activities with relevant stakeholders throughout the CBMNC program implementation and dissemination phases.
- Represent EQUAL in meetings with state-level stakeholders as required.
- Contribute to policy briefs and engage stakeholders to support research uptake based on their contextual experience and understanding.

- Collaborate with the CBMNC program team to conduct engagement meetings with community support groups to communicate the value of research and the CBMNC program to ensure uptake.

Capacity Building

- Identify training needs for Boma Health Workers (BHWs), develop training materials, and conduct training sessions to enhance data quality.
- Provide ongoing technical support and refresher training to BHWs and Safe Motherhood Promoters to ensure accurate data capture.
- Conduct supportive supervision in collaboration with the CBMNC program team to provide on-the-job training on data collection tools such as registers, pregnancy cards, etc
- Perform any other duties as assigned by the supervisor.

Key Working Relationships:

- **Position Reports to:** SRMNH Research Manager
- **Positions directly Supervises:** N/A
- **Other Internal and/or external contacts:** CBMNC project lead, Maternal and Child Health Coordinator, M/E officers, Health Manager, Senior M/E Manager, Principal Investigators, and survey data collection agency staff.

Working Environment: it is 100% based in Aweil East

Minimum Requirements

- University degree in Public Health, Quantitative Economics, Monitoring & Evaluation, Biostatistics, Statistics or Applied Demography.
- At least three years of experience in community engagement activities, data collection for both quantitative and qualitative methods, social & health research, and process evaluation embedded in program implementation
- Knowledge of local context is essential
- Experience in supporting data collection using the KAP survey model focusing on MNH data
- Experience building successful, trusted relationships with various stakeholders, especially community health workers, community leaders, and MoH.
- Must respect deadlines, communicate openly with colleagues, have a problem-solving mentality, and be willing to try new innovations
- Fluent in both written and spoken English and Dinka
- Knowledge of basic computer packages such as Word Processor, Access & advanced Spreadsheet, and Outlook
- Basic data analysis skills using SPSS, STATA or R is essential
- Strong communication skills with the ability to draft reports
- Past experience in working with the Ministry of Health, preferably in Northern Bahr El Ghazal State, is an added advantage

The IRC Core Values and Commitments:

February 2022



Standards of Professional Conduct: The IRC and IRC workers must adhere to the values and principles outlined in IRC Way Standards for Professional Conduct. These are Integrity, Service, Accountability and Equality. In accordance with these values, the IRC operates and enforces policies on Beneficiary Protection from Exploitation and Abuse, Child Safeguarding, Anti Workplace Harassment, Fiscal Integrity, and Anti-Retaliation the IRC operates and enforces policies on Beneficiary Protection from Exploitation and Abuse, Child Safeguarding, Anti Workplace Harassment, Fiscal Integrity, and Anti-Retaliation.

Safeguarding and PSEA policy: The IRC has a zero-tolerance policy for safeguarding/PSEA violations by staff, incentive workers, visitors, sub-grantees, suppliers/sub-contractors, and implementing partners. Safeguarding/PSEA at the IRC is an integral to the organizational values and ethics, and staff and associates are expected to take all reasonable steps to prevent the sexual exploitation, abuse, and harassment of any person linked to the program by both its employees and any downstream partner. The successful candidate will be subject to a thorough background check and satisfactory references.

Promote and actively participate in initiatives and efforts to build team engagement, inclusion and cohesion in IRC. Foster ongoing learning, honest dialogue and reflection to strengthen safeguarding and to promote IRC values and adherence to IRC policies. IRC strives to build a diverse and inclusive team at all levels who as individuals, and as a group, embody our culture statement creating a working environment characterized by critical reflection, power sharing, debate, and objectivity for us to achieve our aspirations as a team and deliver the best possible services to our clients

Narrowing the Gender Gap: The International Rescue Committee is committed to narrowing the gender gap in leadership positions. We offer benefits that provide an enabling environment for women to participate in our workforce including a flexible hour (when possible), maternity leave, transportation support, and gender-sensitive security protocols.

Equal Opportunity Employer: IRC is an Equal Opportunity Employer. IRC considers all applicants because of merit without regard to race, sex, color, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, age, marital status, veteran status, disability, or any other characteristic protected by applicable laws.

How to apply:

Interested applicants should submit a **CV with 3 references** and a copy of their **national ID** to Human Resources Maluakon/Panthou IRC Field Offices or you can e-mail applications to SS-HR@Rescue.org not later than **24th December 2024 @ 5:00pm**.

NOTE: Only shortlisted candidates will be contacted and attach photocopies only while original will be asked at the interview panel and all the photocopies will remain the property of IRC.

CLEARLY LABEL YOUR APPLICATION Maternal and Neonatal Health Research Officer
- Maluakon, SOUTH SUDAN

"WOMEN, MINORTITIES AND PEOPLE LIVINING WITH DISABILITIES ARE ENCOURAGED TO APPLY".

Approved by Labour office, NRGs



February 2022

NR: Labour Card is required for applicants