

REACH was born in 2010 as a joint initiative of two INGOs (**[IMPACT Initiatives](http://www.impact-initiatives.org/" \t "_blank)** and **[ACTED](http://www.acted.org/" \t "_blank)**) and the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) Operational Satellite Applications Programme (**[UNOSAT](http://www.unitar.org/unosat/" \t "_blank)**). 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 is an innovative tool that combines the usefulness of modern information technology, such as web and GIS based mapping, with rapid and well-developed assessment methodologies.

Based in Geneva and hosted by IMPACT Initiatives, REACH includes a dedicated team of assessment, database, GIS and remote sensing experts. These skilled and experienced practitioners include full time staff working on the development and maintenance of REACH’s platform, as well as contributing to a stand-by roster for rapid field deployments.

In 2011, the Global Shelter Cluster (GSC) and REACH formalized a partnership to strengthen global and country level coordination and planning capacities. Within this framework, [REACH](http://www.reach-initiative.org/)works closely with shelter cluster members and co-lead agencies ([IFRC](http://www.ifrc.org/)and [UNHCR](http://www.unhcr.org/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/home)) to develop information management methodologies and tools as well as, upon request, to deploy assessment teams.

[REACH](http://www.reach-initiative.org/)supports country level shelter clusters:

1. To facilitate coordination and implementation of shelter cluster assessments at the onset of an emergency by (a) providing, upon request, dedicated human resources and equipment, (b) facilitating data collection (c) ensuring data analysis and timely dissemination of assessment results
2. To strengthen shelter cluster information management resources by (a) providing, upon request, dedicated IM and GIS human resources, (b) support 3W update and mapping, database set-up/update and mapping of other assessment findings and (c) the establishment of interactive web-maps
3. To promote relevant use of satellite and remote sensor data by providing direct linkages between the country-level shelter cluster and [UNOSAT](http://www.unitar.org/unosat/)analysis and satellite imageries resources.

[REACH](http://www.reach-initiative.org/)support to the Shelter Cluster at global level includes:

1. Co-chairing the Accountability Working Group
2. Contributing to the development of Global Shelter Cluster tools and guidance (e.g: Shelter Cluster Coordination training and tool kit, shelter response evaluation methodology, etc.)
3. Facilitating the development of Shelter IM methodologies and tools: notably GSC Assessments Guidelines, GSC Indicators Guidelines and Shelter Information Portal.

To date, REACH has provided data collection, analysis, information management and mapping support to the shelter cluster in [Kyrgyzstan](http://www.reach-initiative.org/countries/kyrgyzstan_), [Libya](http://www.reach-initiative.org/countries/libya_), the [Philippines](http://www.reach-initiative.org/countries/philippines) (5 deployments), the [Central African Republic](http://www.reach-initiative.org/countries/central-african-republic), [Somalia](http://www.reach-initiative.org/countries/somalia) (twice plus in country support), Bangladesh and Mali (twice).

All GSC/REACH products are available at [www.sheltercluster.org](http://www.sheltercluster.org) or [www.reach-initiative.org](http://www.reach-initiative.org)