

***The ACAPS Consortium and the IASC Needs Assessment Task Force
launch the Assessment Capacities (ACAPS) project on 1 December 2009***

What is ACAPS?

The Assessment Capacities project (ACAPS) is a two-year project to strengthen global, regional and in-country needs assessment capacities, under the auspices of the IASC Needs Assessment Task Force. It is a joint initiative of the Needs Assessment Task Force (NATF) (represented by OCHA) and a consortium of NGOs (HelpAge International, Merlin and Norwegian Refugee Council). Key partners will include the Overseas Development Institute, Tufts University, the Karolinska Institute, Columbia University and, relating specifically to building in-country capacities, the Emergency Capacity Building Project (ECB).

ACAPS is about providing **accessible expertise, timely data and rigorous analysis** to inform decision making by national governments and IASC humanitarian country teams in times of crisis. Its strategy is to support in-country capacities both to prepare for and to respond to crises through better coordinated multi-sectoral needs assessments. A common approach for assessments will be developed by the NATF while acknowledging contextual variations and the need to build on existing strengths of IASC humanitarian teams.

Who is involved in ACAPS?

- ✓ The IASC Needs Assessment Task Force
- ✓ ACAPS Consortium (HelpAge, NRC, Merlin)
- ✓ Advisory partners include UN agencies, Cluster representatives, international NGOs, regional bodies and academic institutions

What will ACAPS actually do?

ACAPS will provide needs assessment data in the early phase of sudden onset disasters. This will be done by setting up and *training* a global roster of experienced needs assessment specialists. From this roster, ACAPS will then deploy teams to support up to 14 assessment preparedness or needs assessment missions during 2010-2011. Their task will be to support IASC Humanitarian Teams in the collection and analysis of data across all sectors and vulnerable groups in a given disaster. All tools and approaches used by the teams will be endorsed by the NATF and tailored to the specific context and capacities in each country. Assessment findings and lessons learned from ACAPS will be shared through the NATF networks and the NATF website upon its launch in 2010.

ACAPS is made possible through the generous support of donors such as CIDA, DFID, SIDA and Irish Aid.

Who can access ACAPS support? RC/HCs can request ACAPS support to assessment preparedness or coordinated needs assessment activities through ACAPS Geneva (see details below). IASC Humanitarian Teams can channel a request for support through the in-country RC/HC or Head of OCHA.

For further information on ACAPS, including where and how to access assessment-related technical expertise, contact the ACAPS Project Management Team, Geneva, Switzerland at Project.director@acaps.org

The interim director is Yves-Kim Creac'h Lars Peter Nissen will be joining as director in January 2010