

STUDY OF ACAPS ANALYTICAL PRODUCTS

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Acronyms and Abbreviations

GEO	Global Emergency Overview
SNAP	Syrian Needs Assessment Project
ACAPS	Assessment Capacities Project
DNA	Disaster Needs Analysis
CAR	Central African Republic
ECB	Emergency Capacity Building Project
RAS	Regional Analysis of the Syria Conflict
ToR	Terms of Reference

Executive summary

In recent years, ACAPS has expanded its range of services to include the production and release of a range of different analytical products. The key products developed by ACAPS are the Global Emergency Overview (GEO), the Disaster Needs Analysis (DNA) and a number of different outputs of the Syria Needs Assessment Project (SNAP). This study of ACAPS products aimed to assist ACAPS in understanding who the different product users are and how they use ACAPS products.

The study has been undertaken by two independent consultants who reviewed relevant key documentation and undertook semi-structured interviews with 40 ACAPS users and three ACAPS staff.

The primary limitation for the study was the difficulty in accessing representatives of all user groups, particularly field-based users. As a result, the majority of interviewees were working at the global level in either a coordination or support role. In addition, the study was limited in its ability to estimate the influence of ACAPS products on decision-making due the multiple potential influences on this process.

Key Findings

User profiles

Key Finding 1	The six existing user profiles were found to have some similarities but also diversity in how they used the ACAPS analytical products.
Key Finding 2	The current user profiles adopted by ACAPS are relevant but do not capture all those who access and use ACAPS products.

The study can confirm that the six user profiles already identified by ACAPS and split between field level and global/regional level do exist and have some similarities but also diversity in their use of ACAPS products. However, these categories – Field Donor; Field Operator; Field Supporter; Global Donor; Global Operator; and Global Supporter – do not manage to capture all ACAPS users with deploying surge support staff, local authorities, independent consultants, academics and those with a non-decision making global political role not fitting easily into any of the existing groups.

Product characteristics

Key Finding 3	Due to the consistency of layout and the use of graphics, the visual appeal of all products was valued by users.
Key Finding 4	Navigation issues within products and on the ACAPS website were hindering easy access.
Key Finding 5	Whilst ACAPS products were generally considered to be timely, there were some examples where a more rapid release, combined with a knowledge of upcoming product release would be beneficial.
Key Finding 6	ACAPS transparency with regard to original data sources was valued by its users.
Key Finding 7	The quality of ACAPS products was considered by users to be high, particularly compared to the analysis products of other organisations.
Key Finding 8	Feedback on the different characteristics of the ACAPS products was generally positive with features identified per product that were particularly appreciated. There do remain a number of unmet needs that current users would like to see included in future products in order to increase their utility.

Users interviewed were asked to rate the ACAPS products according to the key quality criteria of:

- Visual appeal
- Usefulness
- Timeliness
- Credibility
- Quality

In general the ratings were positive with interviewees valuing the visual appeal of the products particularly the similarity in their formatting and the use of maps and graphs. All user groups raised the issue that accessibility once on the ACAPS website required improving and users also sought a table of contents and summary as well as hyperlinks to other products. In terms of usefulness this was dependent upon the user's role and responsibility with a number of agencies with a thematic focus finding some of the analysis lacking for their specific sector.

Most products were considered to be published in a timely manner. SNAP users felt that ACAPS was able to anticipate their information needs in a timely manner although for the DNA the feedback was less positive with the DNA for the Philippines and the Central African Republic considered to be a little late to be as useful as they could have been. At the same time, users would appreciate an advance calendar of publications in order to better use the products in their work.

All user groups felt that the ACAPS products were credible and the transparency around data sources much appreciated. In terms of quality ACAPS products were considered to be more credible than comparable products.

Frequency of use

Key Finding 9	The GEO was mainly used by global level donors and operators, was not known by all users and has yet to become a “must read” for users.
Key Finding 10	DNAs were used at both the global and field levels but use was highly dependent upon the context covered – those who used all DNAs were in global roles.
Key Finding 11	The SNAP products were frequently and highly used by field and global users working in or on the Syria context.

The usage and frequency of use of the different analytical products varied amongst the different user profiles. Of the 40 persons interviewed, only three had never used any of the three ACAPS products. The GEO was also not known to all persons interviewed and the large majority of persons consulted the GEO through the weekly email with not all persons aware of the GEO webpage and its features. Usage of the DNA was highly dependent upon the context it covered and therefore was only consulted “occasionally”. Users spoke of their high use of SNAP given the absence of analytical information on this context from the humanitarian sectors and the cluster system.

Type of use

Key Finding 12	The GEO was used to provide a rapid overview of changing priorities and needs by global actors and then to cross-check their own priorities and follow up with other sources.
Key Finding 13	With its cross-sectorial analysis and identification of needs, the DNA was integrated into users’ own understanding, analysis, advocacy, reporting and priority-setting.
Key Finding 14	SNAP products updated users on changing needs and scenarios across sectors and locations, complementing users’ own analyses and supporting decision-making on priorities and programming.
Key Finding 15	A positive consequence of the ACAPS products was that NGOs now dedicated less time to analysis and more time to programming.

The ACAPS products were one of the information sources that humanitarian actors utilised in their daily work to understand, analyse and eventually take decisions, with the three ACAPS products having some shared and distinct uses. The significance of use varied on the basis of the users’ interest, the given context and availability of other analytical information. A number of NGOs interviewed highlighted that a positive consequence of the ACAPS products was that they no longer needed to dedicate so much time to analysis and synthesis of needs as the ACAPS products were doing this for them.

Influence of ACAPS products

Key Finding 16	The ACAPS products were considered by decision-makers to contain appropriate, relevant and credible cross-sectorial data to be included in decision-making processes but were rarely used as a sole basis for decision-making.
Key Finding 17	The SNAP products were the most influential on decision-making followed by the DNA and the GEO.
Key Finding 18	Users provided examples where ACAPS products played a major role in decision-making in the areas of advocacy, funding, setting priorities and programming.

Users were generally of the opinion that the ACAPS products contained the right broad and cross-sectorial data to take a significant role in their analysis and consequent decision-making. ACAPS products were rarely used as a sole basis for decision-making, with other information required in order to sufficiently triangulate data upon which decisions can be made.

Based on users’ feedback, the SNAP products were the most influential on decision-making due to their quality and depth but also to the lack of other analytical information on this context. The DNA would be the next most influential but it was dependent upon the context, timeliness and the availability of other analytical information. The GEO was the least influential on decision-making but contributed to users’ general awareness of changing needs and priorities at the global level that could eventually influence decision-making. Examples were given by users in the areas of advocacy, funding, setting priorities and programming which illustrated where ACAPS products had played a major role in the decision-making.

Future needs

Key Finding 19	The country-specific focus of ACAPS products was valued but could be complemented with cross-country sectorial comparative analysis products.
Key Finding 20	Users asked how ACAPS could strengthen the current weakness of secondary data collection and analysis at the cluster field level.

Key Finding 21	Users sought more content that offered predictive, prioritisation and general trend elements but differed as to if this was going too far away from analysis and into advocacy.
Key Finding 22	Users expressed further needs in sectorial information, pre-disaster DNAs, guidance on scheduling of ACAPS products, providing an opinion on the credibility of the data used and more active marketing.

Users spoken to during this study highlighted a number of future needs that they would like to see addressed in ACAPS' products. Specifically, users would like to see the inclusion of cross-country thematic comparative analysis by ACAPS. Another future need is for an increase of information on specific sectorial areas of interest whilst recognising ACAPS dependency on existing data sources. ACAPS products are considered to fill the information gaps that are often seen at cluster level in the field and some question whether ACAPS could go further and investigate ways in which it could be more involved in filling the gaps left by the clusters. Users highly valued content that offered predictive trends and prioritisation and would like to see a continuation and increase in this, even if some users were hesitant about ACAPS taking too much of an advocacy role.

Conclusions

Based on the feedback gained through this study, the different analytical products produced by ACAPS were highly valued and appreciated by their users. Although the products rarely formed the sole basis for decision-making, they have played an important contributory role in decision-making, often dependent upon context and availability of other analytical information.

Shared information: What the products have achieved was to ensure that some of the key actors involved in humanitarian response – donors and humanitarian agencies at field and headquarters level – have access to a shared pool of information which can then contribute to their own situation analysis using data from the same or other sources.

Strategic promotion: The study indicated that the products were used more at the global level than at the field level. However, a targeted product such as SNAP was used at the field level and had more potential in this regard. A more strategic promotion strategy would serve both to better promote the products with field/country level staff and potentially allow for ACAPS to access an increased pool of primary data.

Expansion of products: ACAPS expanded its services to include this unique analysis of secondary data on key humanitarian crises. This expansion was considered to be vital by those spoken to for a variety of reasons including that no other organisation was currently doing this and that the information provided by ACAPS – for example a DNA; consolidated in one product, prioritised needs and with visible and transparent data sources – was not available elsewhere free of political “spin” or without any sectorial or response bias.

Triggering of products: The decision-making process around their production and what triggered an ACAPS product was unclear to users. It had also been seen that the process of putting together the same product, i.e. a DNA varied from context to context. While the independence of ACAPS in setting its own agenda and way of working was recognised, a more transparent planning, scheduling and process of products could be considered.

The SNAP model: Given the success and usefulness of the SNAP products, a query of several users was would there be a SNAP-style approach for other complex crises in the future? Although the Syria context was cited as being a “special case” in terms of information needs to this study team it was found not to be dissimilar in information gaps faced in past major crises. This implies that ACAPS may have to consider the SNAP model for future complex crises.

Added value: Ultimately the aim of ACAPS products is to have a better quality of analysis available that will facilitate efficient humanitarian action. This study showed that greatest utility and consequent influence of ACAPS products was when it was responding to clear gaps in analysis of information such as in Syria, Bangladesh and with the Start Network. ACAPS could consider this focus as its added value with such products and capitalise on this for the future.

The study provided the following recommendations:

Recommendation 1: User profiles

Relevant key findings: 1 & 2

In order to ensure that ACAPS products continue to meet user needs a better understanding of the different user profiles is required. The starting point should be the current user profiles that ACAPS follows with clarifications for some of the categories. Based on this study a potential starting point for clarified user profiles is provided. This would require further development as ACAPS gathers more information on its current and new users.

Recommendation 2: “Micro” level changes to products

Relevant key finding 4, 8

There are specific “micro” areas requiring improvements highlighted by users for the ACAPS website, GEO, DNA and SNAP that would facilitate their usage and could be implemented quickly (detailed on page 18).

Recommendation 3: “Macro” level changes to products

Relevant key findings 8, 19, 21 & 22

Changes are also recommended at the “macro” level users for the GEO, DNA and SNAP that would require further reflection and consideration from ACAPS (detailed on page 19).

Recommendation 4: Promotional strategy for ACAPS products

Relevant key findings 9, 22

ACAPS needs to develop a more strategic promotion strategy which may serve both to better disseminate its products with global and field staff and potentially allow for ACAPS to access an increased pool of primary data (suggestions detailed on page 19).

Recommendation 5: Producing influential products

Relevant key findings 15, 16, 17, 18, 20

Building on the findings of this study that ACAPS products are influential when they fill clear gaps in analytical information, ACAPS could consider further targeted products and cooperation such as SNAP, the Start Network in addition to a systematic mapping of current global analytical gaps, which might be at the country level or lower (e.g. cluster).

Recommendation 6: Scheduling and triggering products

Relevant key finding 5, 22

ACAPS should consider to what extent it is able to better communicate the planning and scheduling of its products; at the minimum, this could be a simple message on the home page and in the e-newsletter of forthcoming products (with an approximate release date). Further thought should be given to how ACAPS products fit into donor and NGO planning schedules, in addition to explaining to users how and why products are “triggered” and if the process of producing them could be more streamlined.

Recommendation 7: Monitoring of product use

Reference: aim of study

ACAPS needs to further develop its ability to monitor the usefulness and use of its products. The use of such a framework would involve a conscious effort by ACAPS to collect and analyse such data and would be recommended to appoint a staff member to be responsible for this task (suggested framework on page 20).

1. Introduction

In the last four years ACAPS has created a range of different analytical products in addition to its work focusing on training, deployments and assessment methodology. These products include the Global Emergency Overview (GEO), the Disaster Needs Analysis (DNA) and the different outputs of the Syria Needs Assessment Project (SNAP).

During this time, some 70 weekly GEO updates have been published; 30 different reports on the impact of the Syria crisis have been issued through the SNAP Project; and more than 30 different DNAs have been produced by ACAPS.

ACAPS has monitored information on the number of its users and the volume of downloads from its website with 3,000 subscribers to the ACAPS mailing list and the website receiving an average of approximately 6,000 visits each month. ACAPS has more than 800 Twitter followers and some 3,000 people have downloaded the GEO App. However, what has been lacking to date is an understanding of the use of ACAPS analysis products and who the different users are.

Therefore, ACAPS has commissioned this study of its analytical products with the following aims:

- a. Map the different types of users of the ACAPS analysis products and construct user profiles.
- b. Analyse how use of ACAPS analysis products varies across different user profiles.
- c. Make recommendations on how to improve the usefulness and reach of ACAPS products.
- d. Make recommendations on options for a “light” system that can be used by ACAPS to monitor use of products and improve them through feedback.

2. Description of study approach, scope and limitations

The study was undertaken by two independent consultants primarily through in-depth interviews with 40 users of ACAPS analytical products and three ACAPS staff and supported by a review of all relevant documentation. The Terms of Reference (ToR) set out six main user profiles which served as a basis for selecting users to be interviewed, with the aim of interviewing 5-6 users per group. The following table displays the number of users actually interviewed per group:

Table 1: User groups reached through the study

User group	No. reached through this study	User group	No. reached through this study
Field donor	3	Global/regional donor	6
Field operator	5	Global operator	4
Field coordinator/supporter	5	Global coordinator/supporter	13
Other (consultants & academics)	4	Total:	40

Whilst the majority of interviewees were selected from a list of approximately 70 subscribers provided by ACAPS, other interviewees proactively contacted the study team asking to be involved following an email notification by ACAPS. In addition, the study team used its own network of contacts to reach some interviewees. In addition, three ACAPS staff were interviewed to complement the information received from users.

The key limitation, which was anticipated during the inception phase of the study, was in being able to access and interview all user groups, primarily field based users. As a consequence, the persons interviewed were weighted towards those working at the global level in a coordination or support role as can be seen in Table 1 above. The study was also limited in its ability to estimate the influence of ACAPS products on decision-making given the multiple possible influences on this process. These limitations should be taken into account when considering the findings of this study.

In terms of scope, the user study focused primarily on the GEO, DNA and SNAP reports but was not limited to these products and also considered other ACAPS products highlighted by users.

The full list of persons interviewed is found at Annex 1. The interview guide used during the interviews is found at Annex 2.

3. Key findings

3.1. User profiles

Key Finding 1: The six existing user profiles were found to have some similarities but also diversity in how they used the ACAPS analytical products.

Key Finding 2: The current user profiles adopted by ACAPS are relevant but do not capture all those who access and use ACAPS products.

The following table provides a snapshot of usage by the six current user profiles. Usage and potential influence of ACAPS products is further expanded upon in this report under Sections 3.4 and 3.5:

Table 2: ACAPS user groups¹ and usage

	Field (country level)	Global or Regional Level
Donor	<p><i>Field donor – based in the field directly involved in making funding decisions for one specific context.</i></p> <p><i>Main use of ACAPS products:</i> Complements own information, in-depth information informs priorities, informs HQ of developments.</p> <p><i>Level of use:</i> GEO: Low DNA: Moderate SNAP: High (if Syria-focused) <i>Small no. interviewed by this study</i></p>	<p><i>Global donor – based either in a regional hub or at global level. He/she is typically responsible for covering several contexts/ regions, but may in some cases (often very large operations) be working fully on one context.</i></p> <p><i>Main use of ACAPS products:</i> Complements own information, informs priorities and strategies.</p> <p><i>Level of use:</i> GEO: High DNA: High SNAP: High (if Syria-focused)</p>
Operational	<p><i>Field operator – works directly with humanitarian action in the field. This could be a programme coordinator, protection officer, logistician etc. of a humanitarian actor.</i></p> <p><i>Main use of ACAPS products:</i> Informs own response, complements own analysis, adjusts programmes.</p> <p><i>Level of use:</i> GEO: Low DNA: Low SNAP: Moderate (if Syria-focused) <i>Small no. interviewed by this study</i></p>	<p><i>Global operator – works with operational issues either in a regional hub or at the global level. He/she could be a desk officer, humanitarian director etc. for a humanitarian actor. The global operator is generally not responsible for more than one operation.</i></p> <p><i>Main use of ACAPS products:</i> Cross-checks and informs priorities and strategies, enhances understanding of contexts, supports decision-making on access and priorities.</p> <p><i>Level of use:</i> GEO: High DNA: High SNAP: High (if Syria-focused)</p>
Coordinating/Support	<p><i>Field supporter – works in the field in a coordinating or support function. It could be a Humanitarian Affairs Officer/Information Management Officer or other for OCHA, a cluster coordinator, a staff member from a service provider (such as Mapaction, iMMAP, CaLP)</i></p> <p><i>Main use of ACAPS products:</i> Complements other sources and own analysis, feeds into funding proposals and advocacy, informs priorities, informs HQ.</p> <p><i>Level of use:</i> GEO: Moderate DNA: High SNAP: High (if Syria-focused)</p>	<p><i>Global supporter – works with a regional or global focus for example in OCHA HQ, with clusters at the global level or in a technical support function at HQ. He/she will normally have responsibility for a region or work globally as opposed to being engaged in a single context.</i></p> <p><i>Main use of ACAPS products:</i> Cross-checks and informs priorities and strategies, supports advocacy on own interests, enhances understanding of other sectors.</p> <p><i>Level of use:</i> GEO: Moderate DNA: High SNAP: High (if Syria-focused)</p>

Although the study confirmed that the current user groups as categorised by ACAPS exist and use ACAPS products in different ways as can be seen above, the current categorisation does not manage to capture all the groups that access and use ACAPS products. For example, groups such as independent consultants who are frequently deployed to undertake assessments (including for ACAPS) do not obviously feature. Similarly, surge support staff deploying to specific contexts are not included. Other individuals are harder to place within the current categorisation such as those who have a “global political” focus and academics.

1 This table uses the definitions used by ACAPS as outlined in the study Terms of Reference.

In addition, some of the current definitions of the different user groups require further clarification in order to more easily fit individuals within them. For example, the “global operator” defines desk officers and humanitarian directors as positions which would not be responsible for more than one operation, which is rarely the case in reality. Further, the field/global split was also increasingly blurred given the emergence of local humanitarian actors and the role played by host governments. Suggestions on improving the user profiles are found at Section 4 of this report.

3.2. Product characteristics

Key Finding 3: Due to the consistency of layout and the use of graphics, the visual appeal of all products was valued by users.

Key Finding 4: Navigation issues within products and on the ACAPS website were hindering easy access.

Key Finding 5: Whilst ACAPS products were generally considered to be timely, there were some examples where a more rapid release, combined with a knowledge of upcoming product release would be beneficial.

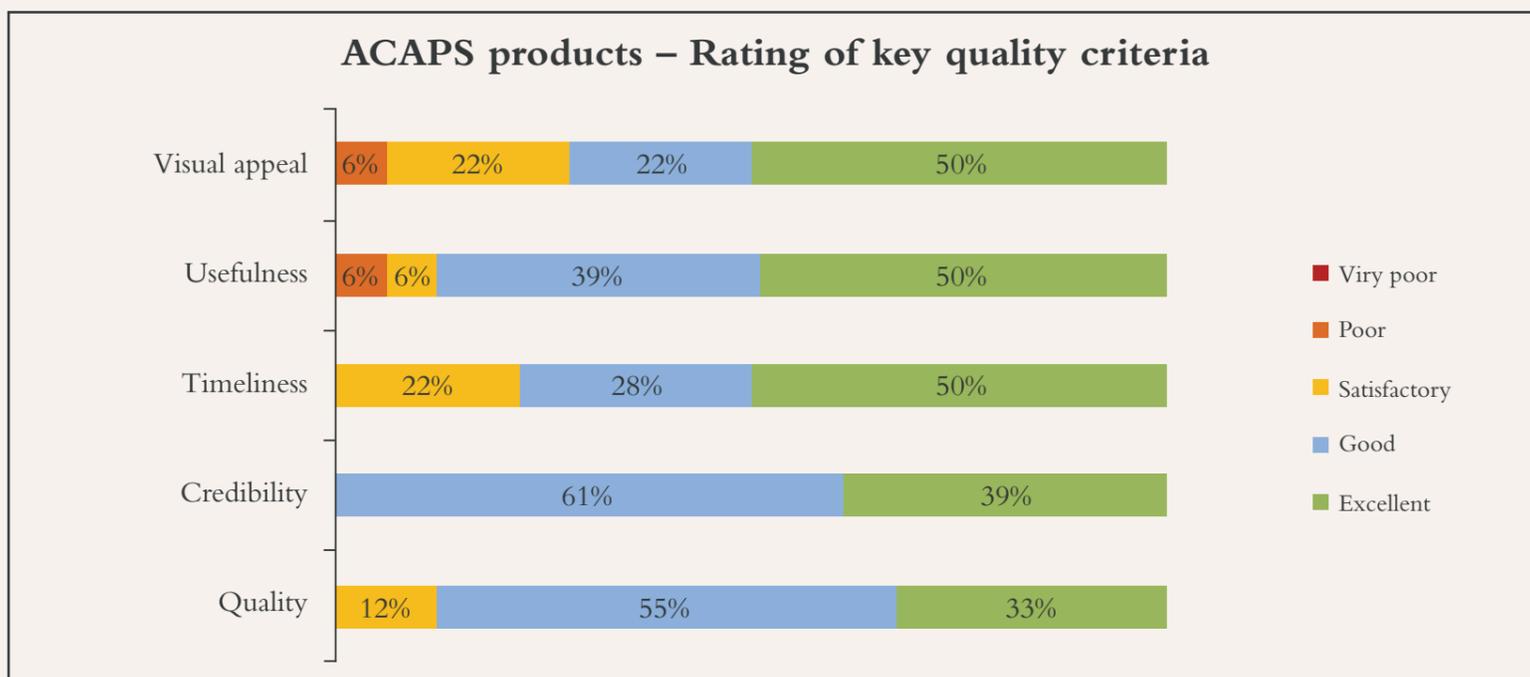
Key Finding 6: ACAPS transparency with regard to original data sources was valued by its users.

Key Finding 7: The quality of ACAPS products was considered by users to be high, particularly compared to the analysis products of other organisations.

Key Finding 8: Feedback on the different characteristics of the ACAPS products was generally positive with features identified per product that were particularly appreciated. There do remain a number of unmet needs that current users would like to see included in future products in order to increase their utility.

Users interviewed were asked to rate the ACAPS products on key quality criteria as found in the chart below.² Brief feedback is provided here on each criteria for all products followed by specific points per product.

Figure 1: ACAPS products – Rating of key quality criteria



Visual appeal: Overall the look and feel of the ACAPS products were rated and commented on positively by users. Most thought that ACAPS had paid particular attention to the layout and readability of the products, also considering that they were analytical documents that tended to contain significant amounts of information. Users were positive in that products were formatted in the same way making it easier for regular users to find what they were looking for. The extensive use of maps and graphs (with more desired by some users) was highly valued. Some issues relating to ease of navigation were raised as follows:

Website navigation: From **all user groups** feedback was received that products could be more easily accessible on the ACAPS website, as currently it is necessary to go through a number of clicks to reach the required product. The **GEO web layout** was not optimal according to users, as there were no obvious links between the “snapshot” to the “narrative” texts and then to the relevant DNAs and other ACAPS products. Further, the emails sent to ACAPS subscribers did not feature any elements of the priority map and its ranking, with some users unaware that these features existed.

² Given the small sample size of this study (40) and that more global than field based users are represented, caution should be taken when interpreting the charts featured in this report.

Document navigation: For the **DNA** and to a lesser extent the **SNAP** products, the main comment was that the documents often lacked any obvious table of contents (hyperlinked), an executive summary and other signposts throughout the documents. Most users thought the landscape horizontal two column format was suitable and facilitated readability.

Usefulness: Overall, users reported that the ACAPS products were useful for their work as detailed below in Section 3.4. Usefulness was dependent upon the user's current role and responsibility. For example, a **global operator** requiring a broad view of all contexts and priorities found the GEO very useful – a **field operator** immersed in his/her work in a given context found it less useful. Some agencies with a specific thematic focus found the usefulness limited, due to gaps in the analysis for their particular focus, for example specific needs of vulnerable groups such as the elderly and disabled.

Timeliness: According to users interviewed the ACAPS products were mostly published in a timely manner, with the **SNAP** products particularly highlighted and ACAPS being credited for being able to anticipate well users' information needs. There was **less satisfaction with the DNA products**, with some noted as being a little late to be fully useful (the Philippines Typhoon Haiyan/Yolanda and Central African Republic (CAR) conflict DNAs were mentioned in this regard by several users). Users also spoke about the absence of any publicly available schedule of ACAPS DNAs or thematic SNAP reports that would allow them to plan to integrate these products in their work. The link to the calendaring of the broader humanitarian system (appeals process and declaration/escalation of disasters) was also commented by some to be limited.

Credibility: The analytical products were considered by the **range of user groups** to be credible, with the caveat that the information was primarily coming from secondary sources which were not always reliable (this was mentioned particularly for SNAP products given the difficulties in finding reliable information from/on this context). However, this was acknowledged as a sector-wide issue and ACAPS was seen as being transparent in any limitations seen in data used. Providing the sources and links to them directly in the documents was also seen as very positive in this regard. The products were also seen as credible as they referenced previous versions/reports and generally used a consistent and rigorous methodology, notably in comparison with other analytical products.

Quality: In comparison to the analysis products of other organisations, ACAPS products were considered to be of a high quality. A small number of users mentioned that the quality of the DNA products was inconsistent although it was felt that this was improving and often related to issues outside of ACAPS' control (such as availability of data and cooperation of actors). Users with specific sectorial focus thought that ACAPS would need to work further on understanding their specificities, for example, knowing how to interpret and report school enrolments for the education sector. The process of how ACAPS puts together its products was seen as a positive contribution to its quality, with the collaborative process for **SNAP** and the approach adopted in **Bangladesh** highlighted. Users mentioned that processes used varied considerably from context to context and although a standard model was difficult to envisage, some more consistency would be appreciated.

Table 3: Summary of user feedback on characteristics per product

Product	Feedback	Unmet needs
GEO	Users particularly appreciated the brevity of the snapshot texts, the brief analysis provided (i.e. Key Concerns), the priority map and the severity index used, even if the latter two were not known by many interviewed. No other regularly updated global tool or centralisation of sitreps per context such as the GEO exists according to users.	More detailed severity index and integration within email updates; better links to other ACAPS products; citing of key sources in narrative texts.
DNA	Users indicated the sections "Crisis overview", "Key concerns", "Displacement Profiles" (where relevant) and country-level maps of particular use to them. Those with a sectorial focus were more interested in their sector information but also used other sectorial information, any priority setting and the general information. For some users, the DNA did not contain "new" information for them (given its secondary nature). However, even for these users, having one document centralising all information was of value.	More "Pre-disaster" DNAs; more sectorial details (requested by sectorial staff); more "predictive" and prioritisation elements; more details on methodology; navigation issues to be resolved as mentioned above.
SNAP	Within the monthly/quarterly Regional Analysis of the Syrian Conflict (RAS) product, users indicated the "Possible Developments", "Operational Constraints", "Displacement Profile" and "Conflict Development Map" as of particular use. Sectorial information, but more so its prioritisation ("Priority Sectors") was also highlighted by users with a global focus. Sectorial and operational users were more interested in the information related to their specific interests whether they were geographical and/or sectorial. The interest in the thematic reports depended upon users' focus or location. Similar to DNAs, users appreciated information that had any predictive or prioritisation element, such as scenarios and prioritisation of needs.	More geographic thematic reports (more on Damascus region mentioned); "predictive" and prioritisation elements; navigation issues to be resolved as mentioned above.

3.3. Frequency of use

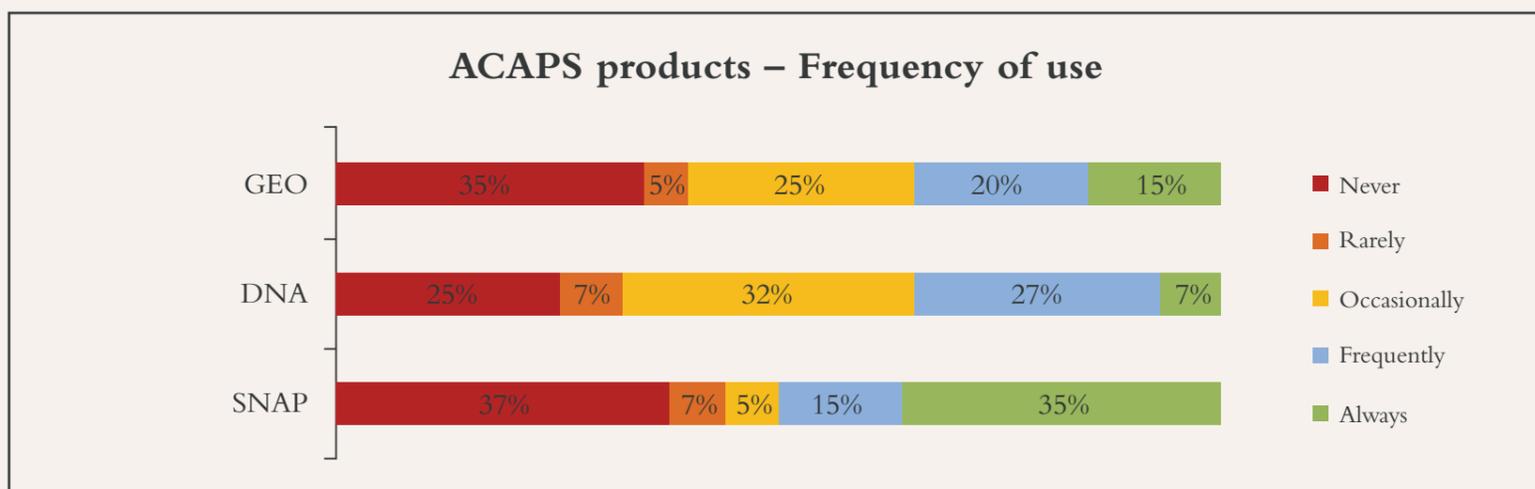
Key Finding 9: The GEO was mainly used by global level donors and operators, was not known by all users and has yet to become a “must read” for users.

Key Finding 10: DNAs were used at both the global and field levels but use was highly dependent upon the context covered – those who used all DNAs were in global roles.

Key Finding 11: The SNAP products were frequently and highly used by field and global users working in or on the Syria context.

The usage and frequency of use of the different analytical products varied amongst the different user profiles. Of the 40 persons interviewed, only three had never used any of the three ACAPS products (a field-based donor and two field operators). The following chart displays the frequency of use by product of the persons interviewed.

Figure 2: ACAPS products – Frequency of use³



The **GEO** was mainly used by **global-level actors**, particularly amongst donors and operational staff. Field-based staff interviewed that used the GEO were mainly doing so to stay in touch with developments in contexts where they were not based. The GEO was also not known to all persons interviewed considering the low “never” rating. The large majority of persons consulted the GEO through the weekly email update with three persons reported using the smart phone app. Launched less than two years ago, the GEO has yet to become a product that is a “must read” for every edition given the low “always” rating; more so people tend to consult it as needed. Not all persons were aware of the GEO webpage with snapshots, narratives, priority map, severity index but more so thought the email was the product.

Usage of the **DNA** was uniform amongst all groups with slightly less use seen amongst field operators. The usage of the DNA was highly dependent upon the context it covered. For example, a field-based donor spoken to had not used any DNA as no contexts of interest or relevance to them had been covered. This also explains why there was a low “always” rating and the highest “occasionally” rating as seen in Figure 2 above. Those who used all DNAs were in global coordinating or operational roles where they required a broad view of all contexts.

The **SNAP** products were evidently highly used by **field and global** users working in or on the Syria context and naturally not at all by users not working on this context, thus the high “never” rating. Of the 40 persons interviewed, six were fully focused on Syria and 19 had global roles incorporating this context strongly, thus the high “always” rating. Users spoke of their high use of SNAP given the absence of analytical information on this context from the humanitarian sectors and the cluster system. Their interests and focuses influenced how and with what frequency they used the SNAP products. For example:

A HQ-based donor focused on Syria read thoroughly all the SNAP products;

A field operator only read the thematic reports relevant to their location, e.g. Lebanon;

A field supporter with a coordination role browsed all SNAP products but focused on those sectors of interest and the priority concerns highlighted.

Figure 3 displays simplified (yes/no) usage of products by profile and location of the persons interviewed, i.e. a coloured square indicates that they have used this product; a blank square indicates that they have not.

³ For the SNAP products the “never” rating appears high but this is due to the fact that a number of interviewees for this study were not responsible for/working on the Syria regional response and therefore there would be no expectation for them to be accessing these products.

Figure 3: Profile of persons interviewed and products used⁴

Profile	GEO	DNA	SNAP
Field coordinator/supporter - Africa	█	█	
Field coordinator/supporter - Africa			
Field coordinator/supporter - Asia	█	█	
Field coordinator/supporter - Syria	█	█	█
Field coordinator/supporter - Syria			
Field Donor - Syria	█		█
Field Donor - Africa			
Field Donor - Africa		█	
Field operator - Asia			
Field operator - Syria			█
Field operator - Syria			█
Field operator - Syria			
Field operator - Asia			
Global coordinator/supporter		█	
Global coordinator/supporter	█		█
Global coordinator/supporter			
Global coordinator/supporter		█	█
Global coordinator/supporter	█		
Global coordinator/supporter		█	█
Global coordinator/supporter			
Global coordinator/supporter		█	█
Global coordinator/supporter			
Global coordinator/supporter	█		█
Global coordinator/supporter		█	
Global coordinator/supporter			
Global operator			
Global operator			█
Global operator		█	
Global operator			
Global/regional donor			█
Global/regional donor			
Global/regional donor			█
Global/regional donor			
Global/regional donor			█
Global/regional donor			
Humanitarian Consultant			
Humanitarian Consultant			█
Humanitarian Consultant			
Academic			

⁴ All global roles, consultants and academia spoken to were based in Europe or North America

3.4. Type of use

Key Finding 12: The GEO was used to provide a rapid overview of changing priorities and needs by global actors and then to cross-check their own priorities and follow up with other sources.

Key Finding 13: With its cross-sectorial analysis and identification of needs, the DNA was integrated into users' own understanding, analysis, advocacy, reporting and priority-setting.

Key Finding 14: SNAP products updated users on changing needs and scenarios across sectors and locations, complementing users' own analyses and supporting decision-making on priorities and programming.

Key Finding 15: A positive consequence of the ACAPS products was that NGOs now dedicated less time to analysis and more time to programming.

ACAPS products were used for a variety of purposes in the daily work of those within the humanitarian sector, with the following examples taken from interviewees illustrating the diversity of use:

- A field based **UN** agency country or regional level information manager scans the GEO to double-check that their own reporting is not missing any major developments;
- An **NGO** staff member takes the needs identified in a **SNAP** thematic report and incorporates it into a funding proposal;
- A **field-based donor** shares the **SNAP** conflict development map with HQ to facilitate their understanding of the context;
- A **global cluster manager** uses the sectorial details of a **DNA** to launch a new discussion at the global level on sectorial priorities;
- A **donor analyst** scans the **DNA** and identifies sources of interest, reviews them and references them if relevant in a ministerial-level briefing paper.

These examples illustrate that the ACAPS products were one of the information sources that humanitarian actors utilised in their daily work to understand, analyse and eventually take decisions. Evidently, the significance of use varied on the basis of the users' interest, the given context and availability of other analytical information. A number of **NGOs** interviewed highlighted that a positive consequence of the ACAPS products was that they no longer needed to dedicate so much time to analysis and synthesis of needs as the ACAPS products were doing this for them. For example, with the **SNAP products**, it allowed NGOs to focus on programming rather than assessment. For those NGOs with networking or partnering structures, by setting priorities and providing key data on the displaced, the **SNAP products** avoided different interpretations by partners/members of the same context and allowed a common baseline to be used.

Use is further defined by the individual products in the table on the next page with the estimated level of use highlighted for each product per user group. The analysis of the SNAP products is only concerned with users working in/on the Syrian context. The link between use and influence on decision-making is discussed in section 3.5.

Table 4: Product usage by user group

	Global supporters	Global operators	Global Donors	Field Donors	Field supporters	Field operators
GEO	Moderate GEO provided these users with a rapid overview of global priorities; ensured what should be on their radar.	High Cross-checked GEO with own priorities; allowed them to compare their own data with that of GEO and thus helpful for decision-making. Possible follow up with other ACAPS products (e.g. DNA).	High Donors used the GEO to inform their own analytical products for decision-makers, often following sources quoted. Also used to source information on under-reported crises.	Low Field donors that used GEO did so to check that they hadn't "missed" anything on their contexts; low interest in other contexts reported in GEO.	Moderate Only used when relevant to the context(s) of interest; cross-check with own information.	Low Field operators that knew GEO used it mainly to stay in touch with other contexts (often where they were previously deployed).
DNA	High Used to cross-check against their priorities, other sources and adjust accordingly. Help to understand priorities and needs without any sectorial bias.	High Used to support broader understanding of a given context (when working on multiple contexts); used to cross-check against other sources and own priorities.	High Important in providing cross-sectorial analysis and identification of needs. Information used in compiling own analytical products. Utility was dependent on timeliness.	Moderate Used when relevant to the context(s); cross-sectorial analysis supports taking decisions and advising HQ; in-depth details supplements other sources.	High If relevant, key to providing background information; integrate into own analysis, advocacy and reporting. These users were often involved in DNA data-collection (sense of ownership seen).	Low DNA was only known and used by one field operator interviewed. Other field operators interviewed (4) unaware of this product or in Syria context so referred to SNAP.
SNAP	High Used to compare needs across sectors and locations and adjust priorities and planning; advocacy towards donors and within humanitarian system.	High Used to keep updated on changing needs and scenarios; cross-check against other sources; supporting decision-making on access and priorities. Preparedness also.	High Given absence of other reliable data, donors relied on SNAP products to inform strategies and identify needs, complementing other sources if available.	High Field donors used SNAP to go more in-depth on subjects and assess own priorities; inform HQs and partners of current situation.	High Used to identify locations/sectors where there were outstanding needs, fed into funding proposals, advocacy with donors, adapting own priorities.	Moderate Not all field operators aware of SNAP. Those that knew SNAP used it to complement own analysis and adjust their programmes accordingly.

Other products:

In addition to the three main analytical products considered in this study, some organisations also look to ACAPS for specifically-tailored analysis products. A recent example of this is the agreement with the Start network⁵ whereby ACAPS provides the network with a briefing note within the first 24 hours of a disaster (based on a request from Start). If funding is activated, ACAPS provides a second briefing paper updating the first one. These briefings are also publicly available on the ACAPS website. The operational and rapid nature of the **briefing notes** (of which there has been only one at the time of writing, for South Sudan,) were extremely useful for decision-making according to users interviewed, particularly for those who were not familiar with the context.

At times ACAPS has also responded to specific requests to undertake a DNA in order to assist agencies/networks to evaluate whether or not further assessments were required. This was seen with Niger in 2011 when the **Emergency Capacity Building Project** (ECB) asked ACAPS to undertake a DNA covering the food security crisis. The resultant DNA informed ECB's decision to undertake its own joint needs assessment due to the availability of only macro level data. This example provides an illustration of how some users may be able to utilise DNA information for more than background data and solely for decision-making purposes.

5 A consortium of 19 NGOs funded by DfID.

ACAPS expertise and flexibility to respond to different needs was much appreciated by users. For example, with the **Horn of Africa crisis** a request came for ACAPS to undertake a needs assessment in Somalia. However, upon arrival in the field the ACAPS team felt that training was a more appropriate use of time and resources partly due to access issues and instead trained Somalis to undertake the assessments.

Users also mentioned the contribution of ACAPS to **broader needs assessments**, such as those done by the Syria Integrated Needs Assessment (SINA) and the work carried out in **Bangladesh**. In this regard, users also appreciated any **Pre-DNA** that were carried out, as it supported them with their own planning and possible activities.

3.5. Influence of ACAPS products

Key Finding 16: The ACAPS products were considered by decision-makers to contain appropriate, relevant and credible cross-sectorial data to be included in decision-making processes but were rarely used as a sole basis for decision-making.

Key Finding 17: The SNAP products were the most influential on decision-making followed by the DNA and the GEO.

Key Finding 18: Users provided examples where ACAPS products played a major role in decision-making in the areas of advocacy, funding, setting priorities and programming

Users were generally of the opinion that the ACAPS products contained the right broad and cross-sectorial data to take a significant role in their analysis and consequent decision-making. ACAPS products were rarely used as a sole basis for decision-making, with other information required in order to sufficiently triangulate data upon which decisions can be made.

The above examples of use illustrate the extent to which ACAPS products have played a role in informing humanitarian actors and contributing to the decision-making process, often dependent upon the context and the existing information available.

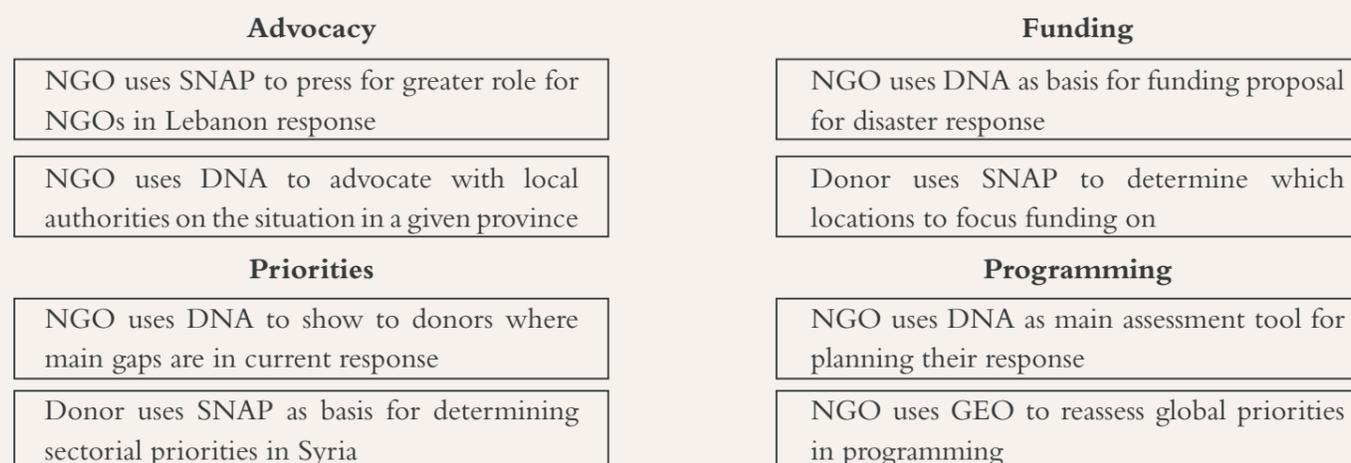
Based on users' feedback, the **SNAP products were the most influential** on decision-making due to their quality and depth but also to the lack of other analytical information on this context. For example, several NGOs and donors mentioned using the recent **SNAP Al Hasakeh Governorate profile** (February 2014) as a key contribution to their analysis and consequent decisions taken considering the lack of other information available on this governorate.

The **DNA would be the next most influential** product but it was dependent upon the context, timeliness and the availability of other analytical information. ACAPS pre-DNA products on **Bangladesh** were mentioned by users as being widely used by NGOs and donors, considering their quality, coverage and the collaborative process that went into their development. The **Philippines DNA** (January 2014) although found to be better than other analytical products probably played less of a role in users' analyses given the availability of other information sources, according to persons interviewed.

The **GEO was the least influential** on decision-making but contributed to users' general awareness of changing needs and priorities at the global level that could eventually influence decision-making. As can be seen in Figure 3 and Table 3, the GEO was mainly used at the global level and not influential at the local level, which is not surprising given its global focus.

Examples were given by users which illustrated where ACAPS products played a major role in decision-making – or moving towards a decision. These examples were in the areas of advocacy, funding, setting priorities and programming, as illustrated in the following diagram:

Figure 4: Examples on influence on decisions by ACAPS products



3.6. Added value of ACAPS products

Those spoken with were able to highlight the added value of ACAPS as a provider of analytical information, summarised as follows:

- ACAPS saved money and time for the humanitarian sector by taking on a task that was currently not well done by any other actor.
- The combined secondary data was not available elsewhere and having it in one place/product was valuable.
- ACAPS provided a bridge between the different data sources taking away the need to read them all but still being able to consult them if needed.
- The products provided a mechanism for quick comparison of humanitarian crises which was difficult for users to do alone when they were focused on a distinct context.
- With a minimal field presence there was less risk for ACAPS in publishing sensitive information, for example information that was critical of regimes during a political crisis.
- ACAPS has no political agenda and was therefore able to present information in a neutral way compared to the UN and other bodies.
- The collaborative process that ACAPS increasingly used to collect its data.
- ACAPS was perceived as credible by a wide range of user groups.
- ACAPS was able to make editorial decisions to select what to highlight.
- ACAPS does not mix analysis with appeals for humanitarian response.
- ACAPS has no sectorial preference that could influence its analysis.
- ACAPS was perceived as independent, impartial, clear, authoritative and accessible.

3.7. Future needs

Key Finding 19: The country-specific focus of ACAPS products was valued but could be complemented with cross-country sectorial comparative analysis products.

Key Finding 20: Users asked how ACAPS could strengthen the current weakness of secondary data collection and analysis at the cluster field level.

Key Finding 21: Users sought more content that offered predictive, prioritisation and general trend elements but differed as to if this was going too far away from analysis and into advocacy.

Key Finding 22: Users expressed further needs in sectorial information, pre-disaster DNAs, guidance on scheduling of ACAPS products, providing an opinion on the credibility of the data used and more active marketing.

Whilst users appreciate the country-specific focus of ACAPS analytical products some would also like to be able to access products with a cross-country thematic focus, for example on besieged populations, such as a comparative analysis between CAR, Syria and South Sudan. Another example suggested would be a comparative analysis of cross-border assistance in contexts such as Syria, Liberia, Cote d'Ivoire and Mali.

Users representing some of the different sectors were looking for more detailed information on their specific areas of interest in the ACAPS products – for example, more data on the disabled and elderly and on information/communication needs. It was understood however, that ACAPS was primarily dependent upon other data sources and if this information was not available then it was simply not possible to include in their products. However, what remains important was potentially to try and highlight data gaps in the contexts where ACAPS was focusing on (as seen with DNAs). Several users commented that where secondary data collection and analysis was particularly weak was at the cluster field level. Evidently some SNAP products and DNAs were very useful given this weakness, however, it was questioned how ACAPS could go further and strengthen this aspect within clusters. Several users also requested more pre-disaster DNAs (similar to the Bangladesh products) based on a common vulnerability assessment, i.e. prepare them for the most disaster-vulnerable countries.

In considering users' preference for analytical content, users valued ACAPS content that offered predictive, prioritisation and general trend analysis of the data collection and requested additional content of this nature. At the same time, some users were reluctant for ACAPS to take on too much of an advocacy role, i.e. in recommending or implying a given response was needed. Of note, others did think such a role was appropriate for ACAPS.

The review found that there were some potential users of the different analytical products who were not aware of them, even when based in key operational contexts such as Lebanon and Jordan. A more proactive marketing/promotion strategy by ACAPS may help to increase the readership of its products. At the same time, the need for ACAPS to have a more continual understanding of

how people are using its products through a more regular process of feedback was identified. Further investment would be required in engaging in a two-way conversation with different user groups. Further, users commented that the current distribution approach of ACAPS was not particularly targeted, i.e. email registration does not allow users to select areas of interest. This means that users receive by email all reports and updates even if not of relevance to them.

Some users would like to see ACAPS providing an opinion on the credibility of the data that ACAPS is using although others feel that this approach would compromise the current highly valued neutral approach that ACAPS has adopted.

As mentioned above, users had no guidance as to the scheduling of ACAPS products (with the exception of the SNAP RAS), which didn't allow them to plan to include ACAPS products in their decision-making processes. Users did not also fully understand what the necessary conditions were to trigger the commissioning of a DNA (or other product) and sought more clarity on this from ACAPS.

4. Conclusions and recommendations

Based on the feedback gained through this study, the different analytical products produced by ACAPS were highly valued and appreciated by their users. Although the products rarely formed the sole basis for decision-making, they have played an important contributory role to decision-making, often dependent upon context and availability of other analytical information.

Shared information: What the products have achieved was to ensure that some of the key actors involved in humanitarian response – donors and humanitarian agencies at field and headquarters level – have access to a shared pool of information which can then contribute to their own situation analysis using data from the same or other sources. For those clients who have requested specific tailored analysis, such as the Start network, the data produced has been central to initial decision-making processes on humanitarian response.

Strategic promotion: The study indicated that the products were used more at the global level rather than at the field level. However, a targeted product such as SNAP was used at the field level and had more potential in this regard. A more strategic promotion strategy would serve both to better promote the products with field staff and potentially allow for ACAPS to access an increased pool of primary data. For example, a DNA produced for the first time on a given context should be accompanied by a promotional plan to reach out to the main actors specific to this context (in addition to those consulted during the research). The products themselves could be made easier to access via the ACAPS website and an improved navigation used once the products have been accessed.

Expansion of products: ACAPS expanded its services to include this unique analysis of secondary data on key humanitarian crises. This expansion was considered to be vital by those spoken to for a variety of reasons including that no other organisation was currently doing this and that the information provided by ACAPS – for example a DNA, consolidated in one product, prioritised needs and with visible and transparent data sources – was not available elsewhere free of political “spin” or without any sectorial or response bias. For smaller operational NGOs with limited resources, the ACAPS analyses were considered essential to allow them to decide whether and where to invest resources. For other actors, such as donors and agency HQ staff, the information provided important analytical information which was frequently used to triangulate data which would then feed into decision-making processes or used for internal information sharing purposes.

Triggering of products: The decision-making process around production and triggering for an ACAPS product was unclear to users. It had also been seen that the process of putting together the same product, i.e. a DNA varied from context to context. While the independence of ACAPS in setting its own agenda and way of working was recognised, a more transparent planning, scheduling and process of products would be helpful for users.

The SNAP model: Given the success and usefulness of the SNAP products, a query of several users was would there be a SNAP-style approach for other complex crises in the future? Although the Syria context was cited as being a “special case” in terms of information needs (i.e. multiple countries and actors; lack of information from within the country; wilful attempts to spread disinformation, etc.) to this study team it was found not to be dissimilar in information gaps faced in past major crises such as the Balkans and the Great Lakes in the 1990s. This implies that ACAPS may have to consider the SNAP model for future complex crises.

Added value: Ultimately the aim of ACAPS products is to have a better quality of analysis available that will facilitate efficient humanitarian action. This study showed that greatest utility and consequent influence of ACAPS products was when it was responding to clear gaps in analysis of information such as in Syria, Bangladesh and with the Start Network. ACAPS could consider this focus as its added value with such products and capitalise on this for the future.

Recommendations

Based on the key findings of the study a number of recommendations for future action are proposed in order to address current needs, improve usage and to assist in the development of an improved monitoring framework for ACAPS analytical products.

Recommendation 1: User profiles

Relevant key findings: 1 & 2

In order to ensure that ACAPS products continue to meet user needs, a better understanding of the different user profiles is required. The starting point should be the current user profiles that ACAPS follows with clarifications for some of the categories. Based on this study a potential starting point for clarified user profiles is provided below⁶. This would require further development as ACAPS gathers more information on its current and new users.

	Field (country level)	Global or Regional Level
Donor	Field donor – based in the field directly involved in making funding decisions for one specific context.	Global donor – based either in a regional hub or at global level. He/she is typically responsible for covering several contexts/regions, but may in some cases (often very large operations) be working fully on one context or on cross-country thematic files.
Operational	Field operator – works directly with humanitarian action in the field. This could be a programme coordinator, protection officer, logistician etc. of a humanitarian actor – the focus of their work is on assessment, analysis, implementation and/or management of operations.	Global operator – works with operational issues either in a regional hub or at the global level. He/she could be a desk officer, humanitarian director etc. for a humanitarian actor. The global operator may be responsible for one or more operations.
Deploying	Field deployer – a staff member or consultant deployed to the field either on short or long term assignments to undertake assessments, project start-ups, implementation review or evaluation. Includes staff sent to support operational responses as part of a surge capacity.	
Coordinating/Support	Field supporter – works in the field in a coordinating or support function. It could be a Humanitarian Affairs Officer/Information Management Officer or other for OCHA, a cluster coordinator, a staff member from a service provider (such as Mapaction, iMAP, CaLP.)	Global supporter – works with a regional or global focus for example in OCHA HQ, with clusters at the global level or in a technical support function at HQ. He/she will normally have responsibility for a region or work globally as opposed to being engaged in a single context. Those with a political/advocacy focus based in HQ or in global/regional hubs.
Other	Host governments, local partners & civil society – national disaster management institutions and other relevant government bodies, local NGOs, civil society and affected populations.	Researcher – academic or consultant researchers with a need to maintain an updated overview of specific contexts and information emanating from them in order to feed into potential or ongoing research and analysis for different humanitarian actors.

In addition, clarification of the field/global split should be considered to take into account for example, the emergence of new actors who would not consider themselves to be in the field.

Recommendation 2: “Micro” level changes to products

Relevant key finding 4, 8

There are specific “micro” areas requiring improvements highlighted by users that would facilitate their usage and could be implemented quickly, as follows:

- ACAPS website: reduce number of clicks required to download products
- GEO:
 - Integrate elements of the map and severity index within the email updates
 - Provide links to other ACAPS products in snapshot and narrative texts
 - Cite key sources within the narrative texts
- DNA:
 - Introduce a hyperlinked visible table of contents in all DNA (consider a horizontal tab model in the PDF version)
 - Ensure that a brief executive summary is included in all DNA
- SNAP:
 - Introduce a hyperlinked visible table of contents in all SNAP products (consider a horizontal tab model in the PDF version)
 - Ensure that a brief executive summary is included in all SNAP products

⁶ Proposed additions to ACAPS’ current user profiles are added in blue text.

Recommendation 3: “Macro” level changes to products

Relevant key findings 8, 19, 21 & 22

The following recommend changes are at the “macro” level and would require further reflection and consideration from ACAPS, as follows:

- GEO:
 - Consider a more advanced severity index and map (e.g. showing historical trends and patterns)
- DNA:
 - Consider producing more pre-disaster DNAs
 - Consider producing cross-context/country analysis
 - Consider more in-depth sectorial content
 - Consider more content providing prioritisation, trends and scenarios
 - Consider more content explaining methodology and “rating” of sources
- SNAP:
 - Provide more geographic thematic reports (Damascus mentioned)
 - Consider more content providing prioritisation, trends and scenarios

Recommendation 4: Promotional strategy for ACAPS products

Relevant key findings 9, 22

ACAPS needs to develop a more strategic promotion strategy which may serve both to better disseminate its products with global and field staff and potentially allow for ACAPS to access an increased pool of primary data. Suggestions include:

- For any enhancements to the GEO (such as improved map), launch a mini-social media campaign and consider holding a physical launch (or webinar) of the product;
- Accompany DNAs on new contexts with a promotional plan to reach out to the main actors specific to this context; consider an event in-country to present the product
- Consider holding a webinar or in-country/context event for the launch of major SNAP reports.
- Introduce a more targeted email sign-up form on the ACAPS website where users can indicate their preference for receiving updates .e.g. geographical interest, receive GEO only, etc.

Recommendation 5: Producing influential products

Relevant key findings 15, 16, 17, 18, 20

Building on the findings of this study that ACAPS products are influential when they fill clear gaps in analytical information, ACAPS could consider further targeted products and cooperation such as SNAP, the Start Network in addition to a systematic mapping of current global analytical gaps, which might be at the country level or lower (e.g. cluster).

Recommendation 6: Scheduling and triggering products

Relevant key finding 5, 22

ACAPS should consider to what extent it is able to better communicate the planning and scheduling of its products; at the minimum, this could be a simple message on the home page and in the e-newsletter of forthcoming products (with an approximate release date). Further thought should be given to how ACAPS products fit into donor and NGO planning schedules, in addition to explaining to users how and why products are “triggered” and if the process of producing them could be more streamlined.

Recommendation 7: Monitoring of product use

Reference: aim of study

ACAPS needs to further develop its ability to monitor the usefulness and use of its products. A monitoring framework should be developed in order to capture the relevant data. The use of such a framework would involve a conscious effort by ACAPS to collect and analyse such data and would be recommended to appoint a staff member to be responsible for this task. The framework should encapsulate reach, usefulness, quality and use of the products. Following is a suggested framework with indicators and collection methods:

Level	Indicators	Collection method
Reach	• Number of copies initially distributed to existing email list	Website/email statistics
	• Number of products emailed in response to specific/ additional requests	Request logged by ACAPS
	• No of file downloads in given time period	Website statistics
	• Number of instances that products are mentioned in documents • Number of postings of products by other Web sites or links to products from other Web sites	Systematic searching online <i>(would require a manual search per product released)</i> Website statistics
Usefulness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Percentage of those receiving a product that read or browsed it • Percentage of users who are satisfied with the product • Percentage of users who rate the format as visually appealing • Percentage of users who rate the content as useful • Number/percentage of users who report knowledge gained from a product 	Online survey <i>(recommended to have short survey sent following all major product releases)</i>
Quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number/percentage who rated the quality of the product positively 	Online survey
Use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number/percentage of users adapting/reusing a product • Instances of users using a product in decision-making as part of advocacy, funding, setting priorities or programming 	Debrief report with team <i>(following a major product release, a debrief meeting should be hold with the ACAPS team to collate all known uses of the product)</i>

Adapted from: USAID Guide to Monitoring and Evaluating Health Information Products and Services

Annex I: Persons interviewed

Name	Organisation	Position	Location	
External				
Sara	Almer	CaLP	Coordinator	UK
Boris	Aristin	Merlin	(former) Head of Emergencies - Lebanon	UK
Jock	Baker	N/A	Independent Consultant (expert member of the ACAPS Board)	Switzerland
Daniel	Barnhardt*	WFP	Operations Centre Officer	Italy
Jean-Martin	Bauer*	WFP	food security analyst	Italy
Luke	Caley	DfID	Humanitarian Affairs Officer	UK
William	Chemaly	DRC	Representative	Switzerland
Rezaul	Chowdhury*	Coast Bangladesh	Director	Bangladesh
Paul	Curriion	N/A	Independent Consultant	UK
Agnes	Dhur	ICRC	Head, Economic Security Unit	Switzerland
Lucy	Dickenson*	OCHA	Humanitarian Affairs Officer	Kenya
Frederic	Dumont	ICRC	EcoSec Delegate	Lebanon
Jan	Eijkenaar*	ECHO	Humanitarian Advisor	Senegal
Jacqueline	Frize	N/A	Independent Consultant	UK
Krista	House	CIDA	Senior Programme Officer	Canada
Zoie	Jones	WFP	Operational Information Management Unit	Italy
Damien	Joud	ACF	Head of department, FSL and DRR	Bangladesh
Amy	Keith	Lebanon Humanitarian Forum	Coordinator	Lebanon
Dennis	King	US Department of State	Senior Humanitarian Affairs Analyst	USA
Assanke	Koedam	ACAPS	Information Analyst	South Sudan
Natalia	Krynsky Baal	JIPS	Deputy Coordinator/Field Support Manager	Switzerland
Audrey	Laffitte	Christian Aid	Humanitarian Programme Officer	UK
Joyce	Luma	WFP	Chief, Food Security Analysis Service	Italy
Amira	Malik Miller	SIDA	Regional Programme Manager – Humanitarian Assistance, MENA Unit	Stockholm
John	Marinos	OCHA	Information management officer	Bangkok
Livio	Mercurio	ICRC	EcoSec Delegate	Lebanon
Emily	Montier	START fund	Crisis Anticipation Advisor	UK
Ako	Muto	Japan International Co-operation Agency	Acting Chief Representative, JICA Syria Office	Jordan
Gareth	Price Jones	Oxfam	Humanitarian Affairs Representative	Switzerland
Ashley	Proud	MercyCorps	Regional Program Advisor	Lebanon
Jacobo	Quintanilla	Internews	Director, Humanitarian Communication Programs	Switzerland
Emily	Rainey*	Ausaid	Second Secretary, Humanitarian and cross Program	Kenya
Marcus	Skinner	HelpAge International	Humanitarian Policy Manager	UK
James	Sparkes	Save the Children	Global Education Cluster Coordinator	UK
Vincent	Taillandier	ACF	Director of Operations	Lebanon
Maria	Thorin	SIDA	Humanitarian Desk Officer, Humanitarian Unit, Department for Conflict and Post Conflict Cooperation	Sweden
Johan	Von Schreeb	Karolinska Institute	Associate Professor, International Disaster Medicine, Health System and Policy research group	Sweden
Nigel	Woof	N/A	Independent Consultant	UK
Andy	Wyllie	OCHA	Head, Programme Support Branch	Switzerland
Nigel	Young	DfID	Humanitarian Operations Manager	UK
Internal				
Miro	Modrusan	ACAPS	Head of Operations	Switzerland
Lars Peter	Nissen	ACAPS	Project Director	Switzerland
Gabriel	Trujillo	ACAPS	Head of Development	Switzerland

*Feedback received by email.

Annex 2: Interview guide

Introduction

1. Please briefly describe to me your role in the organisation?

Type & frequency:

2. Which ACAPS products are you using? And how often?

GEO

Never Rarely Occasionally Frequently Always

DNA

Never Rarely Occasionally Frequently Always

SNAP

Never Rarely Occasionally Frequently Always

Other: _____

N/A Rarely Occasionally Frequently Always

Other: _____

N/A Rarely Occasionally Frequently Always

Key: Rarely (1 out of 10 issues); Occasionally (3 out of 10 issues); Frequently (7 out of 10 issues)
Always (every issue)

Product characteristics:

3. How would you rate the ACAPS products on the following quality criteria:

Rate 1 – 5

1 = very poor

2 = poor

3 = satisfactory

4 = good

5 = excellent

Timeliness

1 2 3 4 5

Quality

1 2 3 4 5

Credibility

1 2 3 4 5

Usefulness

1 2 3 4 5

Visual appeal

1 2 3 4 5

4. What are specific information do you look for in these products?

Use and influence:

5. How do these products help you in your daily work? How have you used them?

6. Do you usually read all of the publication/s or just specific parts?

7. How easy do you find the products to find specific information?

8. Do you have any examples of how they have had influence on decision-making?

9. Do they contain the right kind of information to inform decision-making?

10. Do you share these products internally/externally? With whom? How many?

11. What aspects of the three different products to you find the most useful?

12. Are there any elements which you feel are not useful?

Future needs:

13. What is missing in the current analytical products? What suggestions do you have for making the content of the products more useful and relevant to your work?

14. What type of analytical products would you need to better support your work?

Other products:

15. What other sources of humanitarian information do you use?

16. How do ACAPS information analysis products complement existing humanitarian information products? What is the value added of the ACAPS products?

17. Is having multiple sources of humanitarian information/analysis useful for your work?

Any final comments or feedback on ACAPS analytical products