# RPM: the Response Planning and Monitoring tool

## HPC.TOOLS: A TRANSFORMATIONAL CHANGE FOR EFFECTIVE FIELD COORDINATION

➤ **HPC.tools** are the information services provided by OCHA which enable the humanitarian community to manage the structured information around the humanitarian programme cycle (HPC): needs indicators, strategic and cluster plan frameworks, response indicators, activities and projects, 3W, and financial data. They support the cycle at all stages: identification of needs; strategic, cluster-level and project planning; periodic monitoring; presence mapping and financial tracking.

➤ The HPC.tools project is overhauling existing services such as the Financial Tracking Service (FTS) and the Online Project System (OPS), and introducing new tools wherever necessary, to create a modern, fit-for-purpose suite of interconnected services – modular and adaptable to all contexts and capacities – which don't just facilitate the management and sharing of data, but 'join the dots' through a common data architecture. These explicit connections from needs to plans to results, from activities to projects to funding, will enable better-informed strategic and operational decision-making for all partners. Through them, OCHA can provide accurate, reliable, up-to-date information to global stakeholders including donors, agencies, implementing partners as well as the affected people. They will improve the way the entire community works together to deliver coordinated humanitarian action.

## RPM OVERVIEW

The **strategic framework** is at the heart of any humanitarian response plan. It provides the logical framework that guides implementation both at a strategic level – with inter-sectoral strategic objectives and key outcome indicators – and at a more operational level, with cluster- and sector objectives, activities and output indicators.

The Response Planning and Monitoring tool manages the **creation** and subsequent **monitoring** of the strategic framework at the inter-cluster and cluster levels, supporting first the HRP **planning** process, and then the **periodic monitoring** processes which happen several times a year.

In doing so, it provides OCHA field offices with an essential service to support **existing workflows** which they already implement. Instead of managing strategic frameworks through Excel and Word templates which are emailed around and then manually assembled, RPM brings this process online, through simple, easy-to-use interfaces which enable OCHA and cluster coordinators to manage their parts of the strategic framework without IMO support.
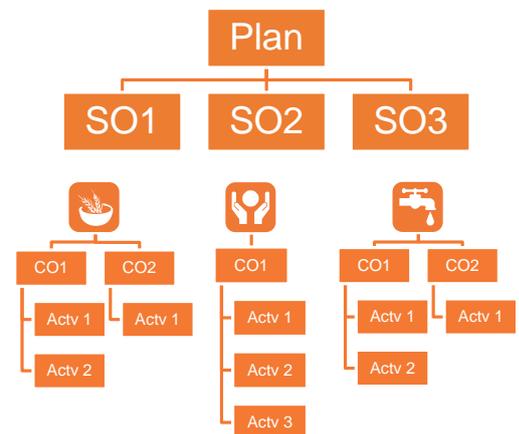
## WHY YOU NEED TO MAKE THE LEAP

### REDUCE YOUR WORKLOADS

Making the HPC process lighter is a priority. While cluster coordinators still need to manage framework elements and enter monitoring data, a simpler interface makes this faster and easier. Also:

➤ **Working smart**: spend less time working on templates, making calls, cleaning and validating your data
➤ **Information sharing**: digitising the process ensures access to information, freeing the IMOs' time to focus on analysis and evaluation rather than servicing ad hoc requests.
➤ **Making sense of HPC data**: The HPC viewer will enable you to interact with the data and join the dots (needs, planning, funding and monitoring) and allows your HPC data to tell a more compelling story to enable good decisions.
➤ **One-stop reporting is coming**: RPM will connect to existing and emerging cluster systems (e.g. ActivityInfo or eTools), which reduces reporting duplication and allows partners to report on a single platform, with the data flowing seamlessly between them

### DO MORE WITH YOUR DATA

Data in Excel and Word is locked away and very difficult to reuse. Having the same data online transforms what we can do with it:

➤ An interactive, constantly updated online version of the plan shifts focus away from a static document which is quickly out of date
➤ Cluster tools and pooled fund grant management systems can automatically access a definitive copy of the plan framework
➤ A centralised store of data collected over time improves transparency, supports gap analysis and enables an analysis of trends
➤ Dashboard templates can be created which automatically update as new data is provided.

### SUPPORT STANDARDISATION TO SAVE TIME AND COLLECT QUALITY DATA

Currently, each response uses its own formats and tools to support planning and monitoring. A standard tool used everywhere, which links to other standard tools such as the Common Operational Datasets (CODs) and indicator registries, ensures that data is consistently accessible and increasingly comparable, empowering regional and global decision making; it makes workflows predictable and easily understood; and it allows important skills to be transferred, especially to sudden-onset responses.

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## KEY FEATURES

### CURRENT

The RPM tool manages data at the inter-cluster and cluster level, NOT at the level of individual partners. Partner-level planning and tracking is currently supported through OPS and 3W (to be replaced next year)

- **Flexible framework structure**. The tool is fully configurable to support context-specific planning and monitoring: customising the framework elements, the clusters (or other coordination structures), the number and type of indicators, monitoring periods, level of detail expected etc.
- **Controlled user access**. Each cluster coordinator can *view* what other clusters are entering, and *edit* their own information. OCHA country offices have full access to the entire plan.
- **Indicator management**. Indicators can be chosen from the global indicator registry or fully customised.
- **Disaggregation of targets and results**. The tool can support any (or no) disaggregation by e.g. gender, age, population type, geography etc.
- **Cluster caseloads** and **cluster- and activity costs**, enabling activity-based costing and caseload monitoring.
- **Basic plan viewer**. Once published, the strategic framework and associated monitoring data can be viewed online, as well as exported to Excel.
- **APIs**. Data can be fed directly into IM products such as dashboards and documents.
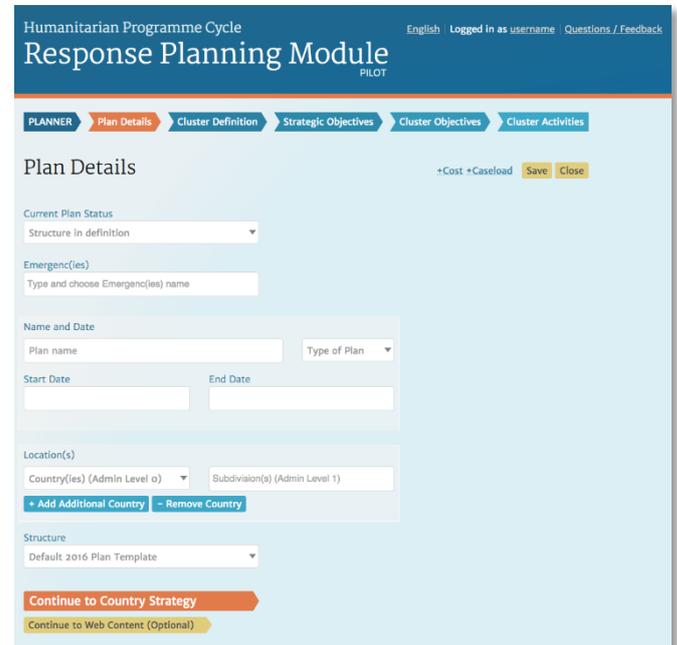
### UPCOMING

- **Improved data outputs and products**, including interactive plan navigator and micro-site
- **User experience improvements**, based on feedback from our users

## ROLLOUT PLANS AND ADOPTION SUPPORT
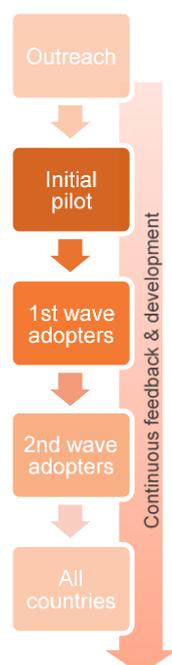
**Outreach and consultations** have been conducted with field IMOs and HPC focal points at workshops throughout 2016. The tool leverages what many field offices are already spending time and money on doing unilaterally, such as the ORS tool being used in the Sahel.

The **initial pilot** version of the RPM tool has been tested in **oPt during 2015 and 2016** to support both response planning and periodic monitoring. Feedback from this field pilot is being incorporated to improve the tool and ensure it responds to user needs. This feedback loop will continue in other countries throughout the rollout process.

The **1st wave of adopters** will begin to use the tool for periodic monitoring **from Q1 2017**. To ensure that the COs/ROs are not overwhelmed by the change, adoption can either immediately proceed to full use of the tool; or alternatively have a first monitoring period managed entirely by OCHA (where data is collected with existing tools and imported into RPM by OCHA without cluster involvement), with clusters seeing the system benefits and getting further training before they begin to work directly in RPM for the next monitoring cycles.

The **2nd wave of adopters** will begin go to use the tool for periodic monitoring in the **mid 2017**. As with the 1st wave, OCHA HQ will provide end-user support and training for the initial roll out by each participating country, which includes both continuous remote support as well as in-country support for critical periods.

**All countries** adopt the tool in support of the 2018 planning process in **late 2017**. Further development of the tool continues throughout 2017 to add new features and improvements in response to feedback from the early adopters, and ongoing user support is provided by a helpdesk at OCHA HQ and through trainings at country and regional levels.

**Rollout flow (with Continuous feedback & development):**
Outreach → Initial pilot → 1st wave adopters → 2nd wave adopters → All countries

## FOR FURTHER INFORMATION:

**Anwar Mahfoudh** | RPM Project Manager | mahfoudh@un.org | +41 22 917 2289
HPC Information Services Unit, Programme Support Branch, OCHA Geneva