HPC.Tools is a suite of applications, referred to as modules, designed by OCHA to enable the humanitarian community to manage the structured information around the humanitarian program 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 Projects Module, an emerging member of the HPC.tools family. It is the intended replacement for the older On-line Project System (OPS), replacing it with a more flexible, customizable, multi-purpose project planning tool. While providing seamless integration with the other HPC tools through common information structures, data sharing and vocabulary, the Projects Module allows the creation of projects whether or not they are associated with plans or funding cycles within the connected system. In so doing it not only provides a suitable platform for integrating projects into a strategic planning process, but can be utilized in those situations lacking significant pre-planning. In late 2017 a pilot version of the application was released to the field in Libya and Chad as the first step to obtaining community feedback for the next iteration of development planning.

HPC.TOOLS AND THE PROJECTS MODULE

WHY ARE WE REPLACING “OPS”?

OPS has been facilitating project planning, approval and publication since 2009, and over its years of service it has become dated. The feedback from users made it increasingly clear that it was time for a more modern platform updated for today’s field realities and user needs.

An important consideration in the design of an OPS replacement was to ensure that valuable features and functionality were identified and included. The new Projects Module is designed to start where OPS left off and add to its value with increased levels of flexibility, ease of use, and integration with other tools in the field.

NEW PROJECTS MODULE OVERVIEW

The Projects Module manages the creation and maintenance of a Humanitarian Project. The user is guided to complete a highly customizable Project Form which is saved and tracked going forward through an equally customizable and transparent approval workflow process. The underlying data-driven control structures which make this flexibility possible, allow a wide range of Project Types and integration with other strategic planning data.

Once created, Projects can be located on a zoomable map and revisited for editing, workflow management, and/or reporting purposes. Extensive filtering features allow groups of Projects to be assembled and exported for collective analysis as desired.
PROJECTS MODULE

KEY FEATURES

The first iteration of the development process has yielded a pilot version of the new Projects Module with the following desirable enhancements to the prior projects support application:

- **Flexible Plan- and Cluster-related input.** The project input fields are configurable to meet specific plan requirements.

- **Indicator, disaggregation and caseload imports.** Allows importing of key data from the planning module (RPM) to simplify connecting projects to strategic plans.

- **Workflow management.** A flexible workflow feature allows tracking of project state from inception to funding.

- **Cluster indicators, caseloads and budgets.** Bringing a high level of detailed planning about project activities and costs.

- **Interactive map** for locating projects geographically.

THE CONSULTATION PROCESS AND NEW FEATURE PLANNING

Integral to the design of the new Projects Module is an effort to meet the requirements of the diverse members of the humanitarian community. With this in mind, the development planning includes an intensive consultation phase.

In this phase, global clusters are invited to test-run a demo of the pilot version as a starting point for discussion. A questionnaire is included in the discussion invitation, which the cluster can send out to the field colleagues to consolidate feedback after which the coordinator, IMO and a few field focal points can join a conference call to share their perspectives and feedback. This opportunity will be extended to other types organizations as well to obtain the broadest problem scope.

The consultations are not the only opportunity to provide feedback or comments, the iterative development of the Program Module allows us to accept and incorporate feedback at any point if needed.

Field responses to the Libya and Chad pilot have already inspired a preliminary list of enhancements for next release consideration.

EARLY PROPOSED FEATURE ENHANCEMENTS

- **Multi-year project support** for projects that span more than one calendar year.

- **Multi-plan projects** for projects that are associated with more than one plan.

- **Enhanced budget breakdowns** allowing detailed project budget support for complex project configurations

- **Improved data output**, including more flexible project summary reporting.

- **User experience and system performance enhancements** based on feedback from our users.

TIMELINE FOR THE NEW PROJECTS MODULE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phase 1: 2017</th>
<th>Phase 2: 2018</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Replacement of old OPS → field pilots in Libya and Chad</strong></td>
<td><strong>Iterative development of new features → global rollout</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➢ New user interface</td>
<td>➢ Feedback on pilots</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➢ Greater flexibility and customisation</td>
<td>➢ Additional consultations in field and HQ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➢ Link projects to plan framework</td>
<td>➢ Prioritisation of new features</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➢ Pilots support 2018 plans</td>
<td>➢ Global rollout for 2019 plans</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

Nick Imboden | Product Manager | imboden@un.org | +41 22 917 3940.
Monitoring Platforms and Tools Section | Assessment Planning and Monitoring Branch | OCHA Geneva