

FORMER ACAPS TRAINEES

INTERVIEWS



Emma van Rij, 25 years old, The Netherlands
ACAPS Traineeship December 2014 – November 2015

How did you hear about ACAPS traineeship opportunity?

I had a training course on needs assessment during my master programme, which was provided by ACAPS. The organisation caught my interest and I found the opportunity on the website.

Why did you apply to it?

I was enthused by ACAPS' stance on the importance of information in emergencies, and wanted to increase my knowledge of how to collect and analyse the necessary data to improve the humanitarian response.

In your opinion, what are the qualities necessary for a successful career at ACAPS?

You need to be very motivated, flexible, an efficient worker, enjoy working in a small team, critical and willing to share your opinion, and interested in concrete needs analysis as well as more methodology-related questions.

What did you learn from this experience?

My knowledge of the humanitarian field increased rapidly, as well as my sector-specific knowledge. I also learned a lot about my own ways of approaching work, how I work in a team, and what I find important in my work. In terms of analytical methods, I particularly enjoyed being involved in development of new methodologies, for example related to scenario building.

Which skills did you learn at ACAPS that will help you in other professional experiences?

My analytical skills improved and being in charge of short-term projects with a small team of analysts helped me develop important project management and communication skills.

Would you recommend the ACAPS traineeship?

Definitely! I had an amazing year, with a very steep learning curve. The traineeship leaves a lot of room for flexibility and own initiative so that you can invest in developing certain skills or interests that you find important. The working environment is also great. It is very stimulating to be surrounded by motivated people who want to learn from each other.



Maria Luisa Olavarria, 29 years old, Italy and Venezuela
ACAPS Traineeship May 2014-May 2015

How did you hear about ACAPS traineeship opportunity?

Facebook!

Why did you apply to it?

I applied because I thought it would be an enriching professional experience. As a young professional who had recently graduated from my Masters, I felt I had the skills to enter the professional world but I lacked the years of experience needed to qualify for my "dream job", and I believed that a traineeship position was a good opportunity to acquire new skills and gain the experience I needed.

In your opinion, what are the qualities necessary for a successful career at ACAPS?

Some of the qualities that will allow you to succeed being ACAPS trainees include: being organized, proactive, and have a positive disposition towards learning. Being a fast learner and enjoying to work under pressure is also important. On a technical side, it's important to have a solid base of computer literacy (particularly with Excel), and some knowledge of humanitarian emergencies, response and the cluster approach.

What did you learn from this experience?

I gained some deep knowledge on humanitarian emergencies and efforts around the world, humanitarian response, the cluster approach, and humanitarian coordination mechanisms. Being a trainee analyst exposes you to a lot of data, and throughout my year as a trainee allowed me to understand how analysis should be done, and how to effectively write reports aimed at humanitarian workers on the ground. Additionally, I learned important mechanisms in creating constructive criticism and finding the right way and time to flag opportunities.

Which skills did you learn at ACAPS that will help you in other professional experiences?

Some of the most important skills that I learned throughout my year at ACAPS are: Humanitarian Data on Preparedness and Needs Assessments, Information management, event monitoring analysis and reporting, database design and management.

Would you recommend the ACAPS traineeship?

I would recommend it without a doubt! Having been a trainee at ACAPS was one of the best, if not the best, professional experience I had had. Being an ACAPS trainee showed me that the skills I had when I arrived were valued by team members, but I was also exposed to a plethora of skills that I wished to acquire, and did, throughout my traineeship.



Pauline Pascal, 26 years old, France
ACAPS Traineeship 2013-2014

How did you hear about ACAPS traineeship opportunity?

I met Patrice Chataigner, the head of methodology, when I was writing a paper on needs assessments in emergencies, and he told me about the traineeship.

Why did you apply to it?

I was interested in assessment methodologies and analysis, and ACAPS seemed like the right place to start.

In your opinion, what are the qualities necessary for a successful career at ACAPS?

Curiosity, autonomy, intellectual rigour, sense of humor!

What did you learn from this experience?

I became familiar with the broad spectrum of methodologies related to assessments in a humanitarian setting. I was also trained on the basics of analysis and got the opportunity to conduct research on a variety of contexts.

Which skills did you learn at ACAPS that will help you in other professional experiences?

Ability to conduct fast and structured research, ability to deal with heavy workload, basic knowledge of many different contexts, solid training in assessment and analysis methodologies.

Would you recommend the ACAPS traineeship?

Yes, it is a good opportunity to be introduced to analysis applied to the humanitarian sector, and get more insight on the current challenges related to assessments and situation awareness in emergencies.