

# HUMANITARIAN EMERGENCY RESPONSE FUND

## Guidelines

occupied Palestinian territory  
July 2007

### 1 Aim

The aim of the Humanitarian Emergency Response Fund (“HERF”) in the oPt is to both facilitate flexible emergency responses and support immediate responses to emergencies by UN agencies and NGOs local and International.

- The primary purpose is to meet acute, immediate, and short-term emergency needs.
- As the emergency response begins its implementation, the fund could fill strategic gaps within an overall response plan.
- The Fund aims to mainly target Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) who would be able to implement directly or through local partners.
- An advisory board, consisting of two donors (Spain & Sweden), UN agency representatives and NGOs will be established to quickly approve proposed projects.

### Targets

- **Provide rapid emergency response** e.g. rapid onset, help displaced, provide drugs during disease outbreak;
- **Cover immediate funding gaps** in the emergency response e.g. drug distribution, water and sanitation, environmental clean up;
- **Support projects** that must be implemented within a specific timeframe, e.g., emergency response to lost crops from sudden frost;
- **Support any other emergency project that the Humanitarian Coordinator (“HC”) deems critical and consistent with the aim and targets of the HERF**

### 2 Access to the Fund, Roles and Responsibilities

#### 2.1 The Board

The HERF will be chaired by the HC and administered by OCHA with the approval of the Advisory Board which consists of:

- Donors Spain & Sweden)
- Invited UN agencies (by the HC) involved in the emergency response
- Two NGOs selected by AIDA and are knowledgeable regarding the emergency response.

## **2.2 Submission and review of projects**

- A. Projects would be submitted to OCHA for preliminary project proposal screening. OCHA, in consultation with the HC, will present an initial recommendation to the Advisory Board.
- B. Members of the Advisory Board must notify OCHA of its acceptance or rejection of the recommendation via email within 24 hours.
- C. The Advisory Board will meet for purpose of project review only if there is disagreement between board members over approving the recommendation. The meeting must take place at the earliest convenient time. If the board members cannot reach consensus at the meeting, then the HC will make a final decision on funding for the project.
- D. The HC and OCHA will have overall responsibility to ensure that the fund is used in a complementary and coordinated manner with other initiatives in the sector or geographic area.

## **2.3 Implementing Partners**

- A. Submit applications to OCHA for project funding.
- B. Sign a written agreement with OCHA specifying the terms and conditions applicable to the approved project.
- C. Facilitate the monitoring of the projects in collaboration with OCHA.
- D. Submit narrative and financial reports to OCHA.
- E. The implementing partner shall facilitate a financial project audit by an internationally recognised auditing firm approved by OCHA, which shall produce an audit report. The timeframe for producing the audit should not go beyond the current fiscal year if possible.

## **2.4 OCHA's Role\***

- A. Screens and reviews initial project proposals.
- B. Seeks technical input, if required, and advises the appealing organisation.
- C. Upon receipt of technical comments and finalised proposals, presents these with recommendations for approval/disapproval to the Advisory Board.
- D. Serves as the Secretariat for the Board and communicates its decisions (in writing) to the applicants with a written letter of commitment to fund the project.
- E. Upon approval of a project an agreement will be drafted by OCHA.
- F. After the agreement is signed by both the applicant and the Humanitarian Coordinator, requests a transfer of funds from OCHA Geneva to an accredited bank.. OCHA Geneva will be responsible for making all transfers to successful fund applicants after receiving signed authorization from the HC oPT.
- G. Ensures that projects are monitored through two reports (interim and final) produced by the implementing partner and evaluation missions by the OCHA

- project officer and field visits by members of the Advisory board.
- H. Prepares a final narrative/financial report on the use of the funds at the end of the implementation period, to be sent to OCHA Geneva for submission to the donor.
  - I. Assures that no duplications take place.

***\*An OCHA project officer will be designated as focal point for the HERF to ensure follow up on the above***

### **3 Guidelines for project proposals and final reports**

A framework for the presentation of project proposals and budgets is presented in Annex I and Annex II.

#### ***3.1 Criteria for project selection***

##### **General**

- The project must meet a demonstrated emergency need.
- The appealing NGO has the demonstrated capacity to accomplish the project in a timely manner.
- OCHA will assure that projects should not duplicate other organizations' activities.
- Projects should support humanitarian operations **between 2-5 months. Exceptions to this time period may be made by the HC in writing following a request by the implementing partner and approval of the Board.**
- Projects should not respond to chronic social problems or long-term development needs.
- No new proposal will be considered from Partners who have three on-going projects under the support of the HRF, until they have been completed fully, including all financial, audit and narrative reporting requirements as established in the Agreement.

### **4 Financial and administrative aspects**

#### ***4.1 Funding Limit***

- Funding will cover a range between \$50,000 and \$200,000 in value. Ideally, 80% of the funding should be dedicated to direct project inputs. The HC may make an exception to this funding amount, with the approval of the Board.
- Funding is disbursed in two stages - 80% (upfront) and 20% with the latter being disbursed after fulfilment of all reporting requirements, including audited accounts report. UN agencies receive 100% of the project costs upfront.
- Funding will cover project activities for no longer than a six-month period. In case of necessity, the implementing partner may request a no-cost extension by submitting a written request, in which the reasons are indicated. This must be submitted to OCHA at least two weeks prior to the planned end date of the project and will then be

forwarded to the Advisory Board for approval. A written response will be given. The time limitations of donors will be a consideration for extension of projects.

- All MOUs, have to end 31 December of the current year (budgetary and reporting reasons). However they could be extended (amendment of the original document) or new ones put in place, starting 1 January of next year.
- Funding should ideally not cover the entire project costs; the implementing partner is encouraged to contribute to the project with its own resources or other donor funding.

#### **4.2 Eligible Expenditure**

- Funding is not to be used for the purchase of capital assets (vehicles, communications equipment, office equipment and office furniture).
- International travel expenses will be considered on a case by case basis.
- Funding of staff/personnel and rental of equipment costs should be limited to the additional resources required by the agency to implement the project.
- Administration/operation support costs (office rent, stationery, communication costs) may not exceed 7% of the budget and must be specified.
- Administrative overhead costs by the head office of the applying agency are not to be covered by the HERF.
- Evaluation/monitoring costs including auditors' fees should be charged to the HERF (see Annex II, Framework for the Budget); UN auditors may conduct operational and financial audits of the project. For auditing purposes, project accounting records shall be retained for five years following the project termination.
- The cost of import or customs duties (or any similar fee) imposed by overseas governments on goods imported or services provided cannot be covered by the HERF.
- Personnel costs cannot exceed the amount approved in the budget.
- A budget line for contingency expenses cannot exceed five percent (5%) of the total project costs. The agency implementing partner must address a letter with full and detailed justification to OCHA requesting authorisation for using the contingency fund.

#### **4.3 Unspent funds:**

**OCHA will conduct a 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter review regarding unspent funds. It will then make recommendations to the HC and the Board regarding disposition of these funds. The HC will meet with the donors to discuss these recommendations and decide accordingly.**

#### **5 Reporting**

- The primary language of business for all grants will be English, and in case of any translation related disputes, the English version of any document will take precedence
- A brief progress report on project activities and financial status (2-3 pages) should be

submitted in the middle of the project. Any constraints (financial, logistical, security) affecting the project should be included in the report or reported directly to OCHA. This interim report will be shared with the Advisory Board.

- Prior to the disbursement of the final installment of funds, a certified audit report must be submitted.
- Within one month of the completion of the project, a final report must be submitted. Should the project require an extension, an interim report must be submitted two weeks prior to the planned end date to facilitate an extension.
- Original receipts for all financial transactions will be forwarded by the partner to OCHA at the end of the project period, while the Agency will be required to keep copies thereof.
- The report must be presented in the format laid out in Annex III.
- To attain measurable results from funded projects that will meet the reporting requirements of donors the final report must describe the project activities, background, planned objectives and activities set against actual accomplishments.
- The report should include “lessons learnt” and an explanation of any variance between planned and actual outcomes.
- The final report must include a final account of project spending for the entire project period, accompanied by supporting documentation. The financial report must be presented according to the budget proposal format (Annex II) and variation between planned and actual expenditure explained.
- In the case that the project extends beyond five months, the Agency shall submit to OCHA [quarterly] interim substantive reports detailing achievements, constraints and impact with regard to the utilization of the Fund for the Project. When the Fund provided by OCHA is mixed with funds from other sources, the interim substantive reports shall describe how and to what extent the Fund was used in the context of the overall contributions to the Project.
- OCHA will consolidate an interim projects summary report and brief the advisory board.
- At the end of the implementation period OCHA will consolidate a final projects summary report and brief the advisory board on outcomes and lessons learned.

**Annex I: Example of Proposal Attached in Separate Document**

## **ANNEX II: BUDGET FORMAT**

### **BUDGET FORMAT**

1. **Personnel (should be listed by functions, e.g. Field Manager)**
  - International staff
  - Local staff
2. **Project Inputs (for beneficiaries; should be listed by item)**
  - Type of Items (expendable / non-expendable, food / non-food etc.)
3. **Applicant Administration/Operation Support Costs (should be listed by item)**
  - Stationary and office materials
  - Rental
  - Communications
  - Utilities
  - External financial audit fees
4. **Transport and storage costs**
  - Rental of vehicles or running costs of applicant-owned vehicles
  - Freight and other transportation costs
  - Storage costs

Sub-total

5. **Contingency (a maximum of 5% of the sub-total)**

Grand Total

**Example of Budget Summary Sheet (USD)**

**Name of organisation:**

**Project Title:**

**Project implementation period:**

	<b>No. of Units</b>	<b>Unit Cost</b>	<b>No. Months</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Applicant organisation contribution</b>	<b>Fund contribution</b>
<b>Personnel (should be direct programme staff listed by functions, e.g. Field Manager)</b>						
International Staff						
Local Staff						
<b>Project Inputs (for beneficiaries; should be listed by item)</b>						
Type of Items						
(expendable / non-expendable, food / non-food etc.)						
<b>Applicant's Administration/Operation Support Costs (should be listed by item)</b>						
Stationary and office materials						
Rental						
Communications						
Utilities						
External financial audit fees						
<b>Transport and storage costs</b>						
Rental of vehicles or running costs of applicant-owned vehicles						
Freight and other transportation costs						
Storage costs						
<b>Sub-total</b>						
<b>Contingency (a maximum of 5% of the sub-total)</b>						
<b>Grand Total (USD)</b>						

## **ANNEX III EXAMPLE OF FRAMEWORK FOR FINAL PROJECT REPORT**

### **Cover Page**

- Name of the Agency/contact person/address, phone and fax numbers/e-mail address
- Name of the project/location (province, district)
- Actual starting date and duration of the project (against planned starting date and planned duration)
- Actual total project expenditure (against the amount requested from HERF oPt (US\$))

### **1 Context**

- 1.1 Target beneficiaries
- 1.2 Problem Analysis (with a clear indication of the source of information)
- 1.3 Other interventions/related projects in the proposed project area since the inception of the project

### **2 Intervention**

- 2.1 Objectives
- 2.2 Project strategy (and any changes in this since project commencement)
- 2.3 Important assumptions used during project formulation
- 2.4 Specific project location
- 2.5 Implementing project partners
- 2.5 Details of funding from other sources during the project duration that were not included in the initial proposal

### **3 Implementation of the project**

- 3.1 Human and material resources involved
- 3.2 Calendar and action plan
- 3.3 Total cost of the project set against the amount requested from HERF in the project proposal. Explain any variation
- 3.4 Linkages or complementarily with other related activities in the area
- 3.5 Description of coordination/cooperation with other actors providing assistance in the area
- 3.6 Actual starting date and duration of the project against planned starting date and planned duration. Explain any variation (including details of approved project extensions)
- 3.7 Constraints to project implementation

### **4 Monitoring/evaluation**

- 4.1 Comparison of indicators and planned outputs set against actual achievements
- 4.2 Explanation of variance between planned outputs and actual achievements
- 4.3 Overall evaluation of the project including “lessons learned”

### **5 Final project expenditure set against proposed budget (see Annex II)**

- 5.1 Explain any variation

### **6 Audit**