



UNITED NATIONS

Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
occupied Palestinian territory

HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE FUND GUIDELINES

OCCUPIED PALESTINIAN TERRITORY

I. PURPOSE AND PRIORITIES

1. The objective of the HRF is to provide members of the Humanitarian Country team in the oPt with a rapid response mechanism to meet short-term emergency needs of vulnerable communities. The HRF provides initial funding that will enable implementing partners to respond to an emergency in a timely manner.
2. The priorities of the HRF are twofold:
 - To support rapid response needed at the onset of emergencies before mainstream responses come on line. Normally these responses would seek to provide life saving interventions and/or prevent further erosion of livelihood assets and coping mechanisms of the affected communities;
 - To strategically fill gaps in funding or within a cluster response plan. This can include supporting projects for which funding is delayed or filling gaps between two funding cycles to prevent major impact on peoples' lives such as, maintaining crucial provision of basic humanitarian delivery or initiating responses to prevent further deterioration in their livelihoods. The use of HRF resources under this priority should not impact on the ability to deliver on priority 2(a).

II. GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE

1. The HRF is managed by OCHA on behalf of the Humanitarian Coordinator with the support of OCHA and the Review Board. In addition, an Advisory Board will provide general policy and strategy guidance on the overall HRF process and priorities.
2. The UN Humanitarian Coordinator has overall decision-making responsibility for the oversight and management of the fund, with the day-to-day tasks associated with managing the fund being undertaken by OCHA oPt on behalf of the Humanitarian Coordinator. The Humanitarian Coordinator has the final decision on approval of funding for a proposed project.
3. The HRF Review Board is responsible for assisting the Humanitarian Coordinator in reviewing proposed projects for HRF funding. The HRF Review Board consists of representatives from the UN agencies, representatives from the NGO community (both national and international) and the cluster lead relevant to the project proposal under review.
4. The Cluster Lead position on the Review Board is a revolving position which will change depending on the project proposal under review. For example, if there is a health project proposal before the Review Board for review, the health cluster lead shall be included on the Review Board for the review of that particular project proposal. The Cluster Lead's participation should allow the Review Board to deal with and clarify technical issues relating to the project under review and issues relating to how the project is coordinated within the overall cluster response and how it relates to the standards and priorities of the cluster.
5. Should the situation arise where the Cluster Lead's own agency submits a project proposal which is before the Review Board for review, the Cluster Lead shall recuse himself/herself from the Review Board and shall be replaced by either a co-Cluster Lead or a representative from another leading agency in the cluster.
6. The Humanitarian Coordinator shall take into consideration the feedback and recommendations of the Review Board when making the final decision on whether or not to approve funding for a proposed project.

Humanitarian Coordinator

HRF Review Board

Advisory Board

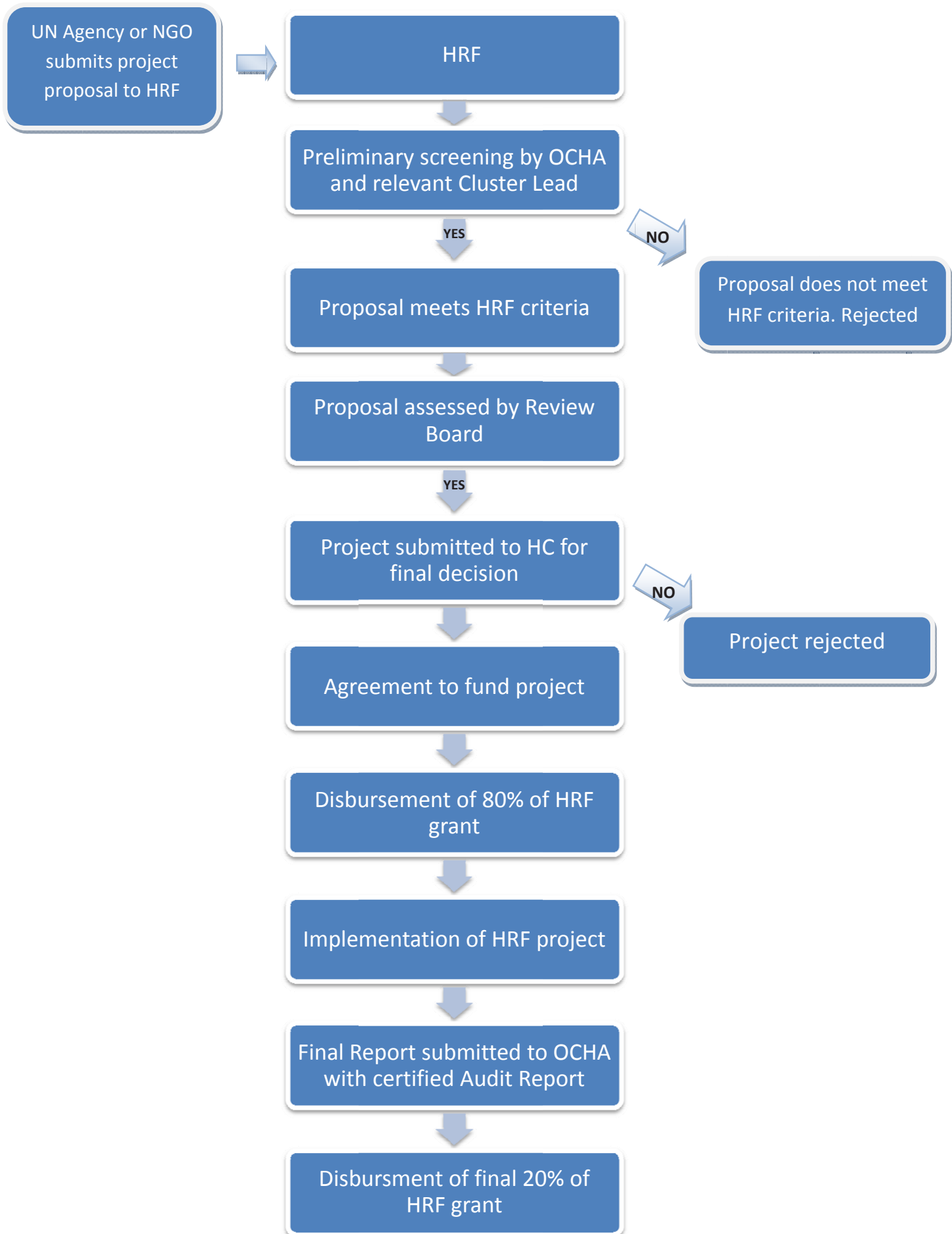
7. The Advisory Board meets on a quarterly basis to discuss progress, review policy issues and evaluate the effectiveness of the fund. The Advisory Board's primary objectives are to provide overall guidance for the HRF, including setting priorities, to the Humanitarian Coordinator and the Review Board. The Board consists of the Humanitarian Coordinator, along with representatives from donors contributing to the HRF, representatives of UN agencies and representatives of the NGO community (both National and International). Advisory Board meetings are chaired by the Humanitarian Coordinator.

OCHA oPt

8. OCHA oPt administers the HRF, undertaking the day-to-day management tasks associated with the fund. These tasks include: preliminary screening of funding applications; coordinating the technical review; submitting project proposals to the HRF Review Board for review; and, monitoring and evaluating the HRF. OCHA oPt also serves as a secretariat to the Advisory Board and the HRF Review Board.

III. APPLICATION PROCESS FOR HRF FUNDING

- Applicants submit project proposals to OCHA oPt HRF team for preliminary screening in relation to the guidelines and the prescribed proposal format. A technical review of the project is undertaken by the relevant cluster and OCHA's relevant field office with appropriate feedback and recommendations relayed to the applicant.
- Project proposals which pass the preliminary screening and technical review are forwarded by OCHA to the HRF Review Board. Members of the Review Board will undertake a further review of the proposal, taking account of the appropriateness of the proposal in relation to the overall impact on population, its feasibility, the expected impact and other technical considerations.
- The Review Board will provide feedback and recommendations within 72 hours. In acute emergencies, OCHA may request that the project be processed within 24 hours. The absence of any feedback from a Board member within the review period is considered as a non-objection by the member. In cases where there is a disagreement amongst the Review Board over recommending a project for funding, an ad hoc meeting may be arranged, at the earliest convenient time, to further discuss the matter. If a consensus still cannot be reached, then the proposed project will go forward to the Humanitarian Coordinator who will make the final decision on funding for the project.
- Following the review by the HRF Review Board and consideration of their feedback and recommendations, the Humanitarian Coordinator will make the final decision on approval and endorsement of proposed projects.
- Criteria to be taken into consideration when reviewing a proposal should include:
 - The project must fit within one of the two priorities for the HRF.
 - The appealing NGO must demonstrate the capacity to accomplish the project in a timely manner.
 - The Cluster Lead and OCHA must be assured that the project is well coordinated within the cluster and does not duplicate or interfere with other organizations' activities.



- The project 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 HRF Review Board.
- The project should not be a response to chronic social problems or long-term development needs.

Duties of implementing partners

- Submit proposals for project funding to OCHA.
- Modify proposals if necessary.
- On approval of the project by the Humanitarian Coordinator, sign a Memoranda of Understanding (MoU) with the Humanitarian Coordinator specifying the terms and conditions applicable to the approved project.
- Facilitate the monitoring of the projects in collaboration with OCHA.
- Submit narrative and financial reports to OCHA.
- Undertake a financial audit of the project 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.

Duties of OCHA

- Screen and review initial project proposals in coordination with the relevant Cluster

Lead, who will undertake a technical review.

- Present the finalised proposals along with the technical review to the HRF Review Board.
- Serve as the Secretariat for the Review Board and communicating its decisions to the applicants with a written letter of commitment to fund the project.
- Upon approval of a project by the Humanitarian Coordinator a Memorandum of Understanding will be drafted by OCHA.
- After the agreement is signed by both the applicant and the Humanitarian Coordinator, a request to transfer funds from OCHA Geneva to an accredited bank account of the implementing partner, is sent to OCHA Geneva.
- 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 Review Board.
- 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 donors.
- The Humanitarian Coordinator and OCHA will have overall responsibility to ensure that the fund is used in a complementary and coordinated manner with other initiatives in the cluster or geographic area.

IV. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

- HRF implementing partners have a responsibility to undertake monitoring and evaluation of the project and the standard final report format includes a section on monitoring and evaluation which must be completed.
- OCHA shall monitor and evaluate the HRF as a whole and the development of a logical framework shall assist in this purpose. In addition OCHA HRF team, together with the relevant OCHA field office

and in consultation with the Cluster Lead shall undertake independent monitoring and evaluation of HRF projects being implemented in the field. OCHA shall feedback the results from this work, together with the partner's reports and the lessons learned exercises to the Advisory Board. This information shall also be consolidated in the Quarterly report and the annual report to the donors.

V. ADMINISTRATIVE AND FINANCIAL ISSUES

1. A framework for the presentation of project proposals and budgets is presented in Annex I and Annex II.
2. The maximum amount of funding which can be allocated to a project is \$250,000. Ideally, at least 80% of the funding should be dedicated to direct project inputs. The Humanitarian Coordinator may make an exception to this funding amount, with the approval of the Advisory Board.
3. The disbursement of funds for NGO partners will be in two instalments. The first instalment of 80% of the funding is disbursed at the beginning of the project period. The second and final instalment of 20% is disbursed following the completion of all of the partner agency's reporting obligations, including the audited accounts report. UN agencies receive 100% of the funding upfront.
4. Funding will cover project activities for no longer than a five-month period. In case of necessity, the implementing partner may request a no-cost extension by submitting a written request detailing the reasons for the request. 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 HRF Review Board for approval. A written response will be provided by OCHA to the implementing partner. The time limitations of donors will be a consideration for extension of projects.
5. All Memorandums of Understanding, have to end on 31 December of the UN biennium year for budgetary and reporting reasons. Extensions, however, may be provided through an amendment of the original document or, alternatively, a new Memorandum of Understanding may be put in place, beginning on 1 January of next year.
6. 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.

VI. ELIGIBLE EXPENDITURE

1. Funding is not to be used for the purchase of capital assets (vehicles, communications equipment, office equipment and office furniture).
2. International travel expenses will be considered on a case by case basis.
3. Funding of staff/personnel and rental of equipment costs should be limited to the additional resources required by the agency to implement the project.
4. Administration/operation support costs (office rent, stationery, communication costs) may not exceed 7% of the budget.
5. Evaluation/monitoring costs including auditors' fees should be charged to the HRF (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.
6. 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 HRF.
7. Personnel costs cannot exceed the amount approved in the budget.
8. 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.

VII. REPORTING

1. 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
2. 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 Review Board.
3. Prior to the disbursement of the final instalment of funds, a certified audit report must be submitted to the OCHA HRF team.
4. Within two months 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.
5. Upon expiration or termination of the Agreement, the Agency shall maintain the records including original receipts for all financial transactions for a period of minimum 5 years, unless otherwise agreed upon between the agency and OCHA.
6. The report must be presented in the format laid out in Annex III.
7. 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.
8. 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.
9. 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 HRF funding is mixed with funds from other sources, the interim substantive reports shall describe how and to what extent the HRF funding was used in the context of the overall contributions to the project.
10. 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.
11. OCHA will provide quarterly progress reports to the donors contributing to the fund as well as a yearly narrative and financial report.

BUDGET FORMAT

- 1. Personnel (should be listed by functions, e.g. Field Manager)**
 - International staff
 - Local staff
 - 2. Operational Project costs Support Costs (additional costs for setting up new project)**
 - Rental
 - Communications
 - Utilities
 - 3. Project Inputs (for beneficiaries; should be listed by item)**
 - Type of Items (expendable / non-expendable, food / non-food etc.)
 - 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. Audit Cost**

Total
 - 6. Administrative costs 7% of total**
 - 7. Contingency (a maximum of 5% of the total)**
- Grand Total

New template of budget:

Humanitarian Response Fund (HRF)						
PROJECT INITIAL BUDGET FORMAT						
<p>Funding is not to be used to purchase major capital assets (vehicles, communication and office equipment) or to cover international travel expenses. Recruitment of staff/personnel and rental of equipment should be limited to the additional resources required by the fund recipient to implement the project.</p> <p>Expenses within a budget category must not exceed the approved budget line by more than ten percent (10%) without the approval of the HRF Secretariat and must be matched by equivalent decreases in other lines.</p> <p>Personnel cost must not exceed the amount approved in the budget.</p> <p>Narrative text for each budget line must be included.</p> <p>Other Contribution should include in-kind contributions in USD value.</p> <p>Immediate Response Contingency can only be activated with HC/OCHA.</p>						
Description	Unit	Duration (month)	Cost/Unit USD	Other Contribution	OCHA Contribution	Total Project Budget
STAFF (including allowances and per diems/DSA)						
Expatriate Staff (list by positions)						
Local Staff (list by positions)						
Sub-Total						
OPERATIONAL PROJECT COST (additional costs for setting up new project)						
Communications						
Office rent						
Office supplies						
Others (specify)						
Sub-Total						
PROJECT INPUTS (for beneficiaries; should be listed by item)						
Type of items (for example food, NFI, medicines etc)						
Sub-Total						
TRANSPORT AND STORAGE COSTS						
Vehicle rental						
Maintenance						
Fuel						
Freight						
Storage						
Other (Specify)						
Sub-Total						
Audit costs						
TOTAL						
Administrative costs (max 7% of total)						
Contingency (max 5% of total)						
GRAND TOTAL						

ANNEX II 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
- 2.6 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 complementarity 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