

This paper presents the strategy for the 2017 first Reserve Allocation National NGO Window for the Iraq Humanitarian Pooled Fund (IHPF). The elements of the paper are based on consultations with the IHPF Advisory Board, Humanitarian Country Team and the Inter-cluster Coordination Group.

Overview / Background

1. The strategy paper issued by the Humanitarian Coordinator (HC) on 1 March 2016 setting out priorities for the IHPF 2016 first standard allocation, also established a specialized reserve allocation of US\$2 million for national NGOs, supporting their vital contribution to the humanitarian response.
2. Over 3 million Iraqis are currently displaced, living in 3,700 locations across the country. In 2017, depending on the intensity and length of fighting in locations including Hawiga, Mosul, and Tal Afar, as many as 1.2 million additional civilians may be forced from their homes. Iraqi civilians in conflict areas are in extreme danger. Families in Hawiga, Mosul, and Tal Afar, and other districts under the control of the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), face some of the gravest threats in the Middle East.
3. Although a number of international organizations have scaled-up activities in hard-to-reach areas in Anbar, Kirkuk, Ninewa and Salah al-Din, the bulk of front-line services in sensitive areas continue to be provided by national NGOs and community-based organizations. Recognizing their key role, efforts to channel funding to national front-line partners have intensified; 18 Iraqi organizations have to date received direct funding through the Fund, and this reserve allocation seeks to further build on this strong foundation.
4. This reserve allocation will support national NGO front-line partners in line with priorities identified in the 2017 Iraq Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP). The countrywide plan will be launched in February 2017 to target Iraqis displaced or affected by armed conflict. The HRP is tentatively requesting US\$930 million to provide life-saving and life-sustaining services over the coming year. To this end the HRP encompasses the following four overall strategic objectives:
 - Reach as many people as possible across Iraq;
 - Facilitate and advocate for voluntary, safe and dignified returns;
 - Help people brutalized by violence cope and recover from trauma; and
 - Give options to families to live in Iraq in dignity.

Aim and Priorities

5. This reserve allocation will:
 - support the life-saving work of front-line national NGOs in priority and difficult to access locations or with limited or no international presence (including **but not limited to** Hawiga, Mosul, Tal Afar, Western Anbar);
 - address critical gaps in the humanitarian response by supporting the work of emerging national NGO cluster partners;
 - further strengthen the role national NGOs play in the response, diversifying the response partner base, and promote and strengthen their involvement in the coordination system;
 - contribute to the capacity development of national NGO actors in humanitarian work;
 - support the global-level Grand Bargain commitment to channel 25 per cent of financing to national and local responders as directly as possible by 2020.

Prioritization of projects

6. Clusters are asked to take the following criteria into consideration during discussions with national NGO partners wishing to apply for funding from this allocation, and to give preference to projects that:
 - have clear linkage to HRP 2017 strategic and cluster objectives,
 - implementation for a duration of up to a maximum of six months;
 - meet the IHPF allocation strategic priorities;
 - include a gender-mainstreaming component;
 - demonstrate better cost-effectiveness where: a) for comparable activities and outputs, the total cost is less; b) the cost per beneficiary ratio is reasonable; c) support costs are

reasonable and in line with accepted levels for a given type of activity; and d) the proposed period of implementation represents the best use of resources at that time.

Eligibility

7. This specialized window for national NGOs is open to:
- Emerging cluster members from all clusters who are a) eligible¹ IHPF partners and b) who have not received IHPF funding to date²;
 - National NGOs who are recommended by a relevant cluster. Non- or newly-joined cluster members must agree to become an active cluster member;
 - National NGOs who have an established presence and experience in the proposed area of intervention and demonstrated implementation capacities, or those willing to quickly provide such capacity;
 - National NGOs with the ability to demonstrate neutral, ethno-social sensitive and community-accepted programming given contextual complexities and sensitivities.

Strategic Review of Projects

8. To ensure full due diligence, project proposals will undergo both a 'strategic' and a 'technical' review process. For the strategic review, clusters will conduct a cluster SRT followed by an inter-cluster strategic review composed of Cluster Coordinators from those clusters with applying partners. The inter-cluster review will be conducted with the support of the HFU and the Inter-cluster Coordination Unit (ICCU). Each proposal considered at cluster SRTs will be scored on a scale from 0 to 100 points, distributed among five key categories. The rating system is:

Strategic relevance	35
Assess the alignment of the proposed project with the HRP and the allocation strategy	
Programmatic relevance	25
Assess if the proposed activities are adequate to meet the proposed objective	
Cost effectiveness	15
Assess if the cost of the proposed projects is commensurate to the intended outputs and outcomes	
Management and monitoring	15
Assess the effectiveness of arrangements in terms of management and monitoring	
Engagement with coordination	10
Assess if partners engage on humanitarian coordination in country	

9. **Based on the outcomes of the Strategic Review, the Strategic Inter-cluster Review team, with support of HFU, will present the funding portfolio to the Advisory Board.** The names of applying organizations will be withheld to help ensure unbiased decision-making. The Advisory Board will recommend allocations to the HC. The HC will confirm the allocations and notify the Clusters and HFU of the outcome.

Technical Review of Projects

10. **In addition to the strategic review, all projects will also undergo a technical review.** This technical review will be conducted by technical experts from each relevant cluster and HFU staff and will assess the technical soundness of project proposals submitted after passing the Strategic Review. TRT feedback will be consolidated and presented to the applying organization through the GMS.
11. **Timeline and procedures:**

¹ Eligible partners are those who have completed the IHPF Capacity Assessment and Due Diligence processes.

² This refers to direct funding received as an IHPF partner. National NGOs who have received funding as an implementing partner of a UN agency or an international NGO are still considered eligible.

Phase		Step	What	Who	Key dates
PREPARATION	1	Approve allocation paper	AB meeting/allocation paper	HC, AB	24 January
	2	Call for proposals and release allocation paper	Allocation paper/call for proposals	HC, OCHA	31 January
	3	Submit proposals in GMS	Proposal submission	IP, OCHA HFU	31 January -26 February
	4	Conduct Strategic Review	Strategic Review (use scorecard)	SRTs, OCHA HFU	26 February - 5 March
	5	Conduct Inter-cluster Review	Strategic Review	Review Panel, OCHA HFU, ICC	5 March
	6	Resubmit revised cluster portfolios	Revised portfolios	CCs	5 March - 10 March
REVIEW	7	Share portfolio with HC/AB	Portfolio reviewed, amended and agreed upon by HC/AB	HC, AB, CCs, HFU	10 March
	8	Notify Cluster Coordinators of outcomes on GMS	Pre-recommendation for Technical Review	HC	15 March
	9	Provide feedback to partners	Cluster briefings	CCs, IPs	15 March
	10	Technical Review	Technical & Budget Review	CCs, IPs, OCHA	15 March - 22 March
	11	Prepare grant agreement (GA)	Grant Agreement	OCHA	From 23 March
DISBURSEMENT	12	Sign grant agreement	Grant Agreement	HC	25 March
	13	Counter-sign grant agreement	Grant Agreement	IPs	26 March
	14	Sign grant agreement OCHA EO	Grant Agreement	OCHA	27 March
	15	Disburse	Payment request	OCHA	Within ten days from signature

Contacts and Feedback Mechanism

12. **All correspondence regarding the Iraq Humanitarian Pooled Fund should be sent to ihpf@un.org.** Complaints from stakeholders regarding the IHPF allocation process should be sent to feedback-ihpf@un.org. The OCHA Head of Office will receive, address and refer any critical issues to the HC for decision-making.
13. All information about the fund's management can be found in the IHPF Operational Manual: http://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/ihpf_operational_manual_final_july_2015_2.pdf

List of acronyms

Acronyms	
CC	Cluster Coordinator
GMS	Grants Management System
HC	Humanitarian Coordinator
HFU	Humanitarian Financing Unit
HPF	Humanitarian Pooled Fund
HRP	Humanitarian Response Plan
IHPF	Iraq Humanitarian Pooled Fund
IP	Implementing Partner
ISIS	Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant
INGO	International Non-Governmental Organization
NNGO	National Non-Governmental Organization
OCHA	Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
SRT	Strategic Review Team
TRT	Technical Review Team
UN	United Nations