

# Project Development in Emergencies

## Overview

The majority of IOM's budget comes from donor-funded projects. Projects are composed of a set of activities that aim to address a specific set of needs and deliver specific results. Projects are time-bound and include specific budgets to support the implementation of each activity. At the onset of a crisis, IOM may need to develop and submit several projects to different donors all within a very limited timeframe.

## Key Considerations

**Donor Guidance or Strategic Documents:** Some donors release guidance documents, such as calls for proposals or strategic documents (e.g. ECHO releases Humanitarian Implementation Plans (HIP) that define priorities for specific responses). Where available, these documents should be reviewed in detail when preparing project documents for these specific donors. If the donor has not informed the country office of the availability of these specific documents, the country office can contact the relevant IOM Offices (See the Programme Support Functions: Who Can Help you? entry for contact details) for additional information.

If you intend to submit a proposal to ECHO, it is important to contact [RO Brussels](#) in the early stages of project development. They can help you in identifying key priorities and considerations for the project. As part of the endorsement process, project documents must be reviewed by RO Brussels for EU compliance and also because they are centrally submitted.

**Developing Projects for Inter-Agency Strategic Response Plans:** In addition to ensuring a harmonized collective approach in responding to crises, Strategic Response Plans are very useful fundraising tools. In situations where the humanitarian community decides to develop and release a Strategic Response Plan, the country office should explore options on how best to contribute to these plans. Inter-agency strategic planning is part of the Humanitarian Programme Cycle (HPC).

The process for developing projects for inclusion in inter-agency response plans is country driven, led by the Humanitarian Country Team (HCT). Throughout the process of developing the plan, whether it is a Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP) or a Flash Appeal, it is essential that IOM is engaged at:

- The Chief of Mission level (through the HCT);
- At the cluster lead level (through the inter-cluster working group)-- if IOM is leading a cluster; and,
- As a cluster partner (through cluster meetings).

**Information platforms managed by OCHA: HPC Tools**

HPC tools are the information services provided by OCHA which enable the humanitarian community to manage the structured information around the humanitarian programme cycle: 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. More information about these tools can be found on the [humanitarian response website](#).

The **Projects Module** replaces the **Online Projects System (OPS)** and facilitates the appeal costing process, by allowing project owners to submit project proposals for vetting by clusters and inclusion in humanitarian response plans.

The **Financial Tracking Service (FTS)** presents a comprehensive picture of all international humanitarian funding flows. Since 1992, it has collected reports on humanitarian funding flows submitted by Government donors, UN-administered funds, UN agencies, NGOs and other humanitarian actors and partners, including the private sector

It is important to work in close coordination with the respective clusters in the development of these documents to ensure that the activities proposed by IOM are complementary to the overall objective of the relevant cluster and that IOM's planned interventions are part of the inter-agency appeal. Moreover, cluster leads are also responsible for approving these projects for inclusion in the overall response plan, coordinating with the cluster lead throughout the development of the document increases the probability of IOM's project being included in the overall appeal. In addition to sectoral reviews by the cluster leads, projects are also reviewed based on how well gender is mainstreamed into project design, through the gender and age marker.

**IASC Gender and Age Marker:** In 2018, the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) updated the Gender Marker with the Gender with Age Marker (GAM). The GAM is a tool that codes, on a 0-4 scale, whether a humanitarian project is designed well enough to ensure that women/girls and men/boys will benefit equally from it or that it will advance gender equality in another way. If the project has the potential to contribute to gender equality, the marker predicts whether the results are likely to be limited or significant. Codes are generated based on the responses to 12 key questions on gender equality measures, and the score can sometimes be used by Cluster leads or the HCT to prioritize projects. It is important to ensure that IOM's projects receive good scores in this process. A gender focal point within the Cluster or within OCHA is often responsible for rating OPS projects. For more information and to access the tool, please refer to the IASC GAM website.

A few donor-specific templates, including the ECHO proposal template, include a gender marker which allows the donor to assess proposals. This self-assessment tool can help to include a sufficient level of gender-age sensitive programming.

*See the Gender Mainstreaming and Protection Mainstreaming entries for additional guidance on mainstreaming these thematic areas into proposals.*

**Consistency between the narrative and budgets:** Do not forget to review the proposal narrative and the budget to ensure consistency between the two documents. Ensure that all proposed activities are reflected in the budget accordingly. Prior to submitting the proposal for endorsement, ensure that the proposal (budget and narrative) are cleared by the Chief of Mission or the Emergency Coordinator and the Resource Management Officer in the country office.

**Keeping track of projects under development, funded and closed:** Country offices responding to crises often have several projects being developed and implemented at the same time. The large number of proposals, and the high turnover of staff, particularly at the beginning of a response, can prove challenging when trying to stay on top of the endorsement process, reporting deadlines, visibility requirements etc. Developing a country-level project tracking system can help the country office ensure that deadlines and donor requirements are met in a timely manner.

A Sample Project Tracking Template is available in the Tools and Reference section. This tool can be used by the country office to consolidate key information about project documents and donor requirements. This template can be modified by the country office to suit its needs.

## Relevance to IOM's Emergency Operations

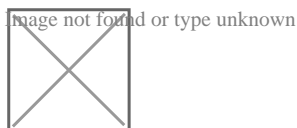
The timeframe to develop and submit a proposal for emergency response projects is usually shorter compared to non-emergency contexts. This is primarily because interventions need to be implemented immediately in order to provide lifesaving assistance to the affected populations. In addition to this, there is usually very limited information available, particularly at the onset of the emergency, which can be used for needs analysis. Developing proposals in an efficient and timely manner is essential to setting up and expanding IOM's emergency operations in response to crises.

## Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

**What is the difference between projects developed and submitted through HPC tools versus projects developed for specific donors?**

OPS sheets are the standardized project templates used by the humanitarian country team to consolidate all interventions that are part of a strategic response plan. They are part of an overall appeal that the HCT uses as a resource mobilization tool and are not targeted to specific donors. The projects presented in the OPS sheet will ideally serve as the overarching programme for IOM's sector specific interventions. This programme should encompass all activities that IOM plans to implement under this sector. Components of the programme could be funded by different donors through specific projects. Projects on OPS does not guarantee funding. Donor outreach still needed.

Illustrative example:



Projects developed and submitted through HPC vs Projects developed for specific donors

## Guidance on the Process

### 1) Gathering information to develop projects (Identifying the need)

**Needs Assessments:** Though there may be limited needs assessments available at the onset of the crisis, it is important to find what exists. The Multi-Cluster/Sector Initial Rapid Assessments (MIRAs), Humanitarian Needs Overviews (HNOs), Cluster assessments and government reports can be sourced through various stakeholders. OCHA in most cases would be able to provide information on the availability of these assessments. Contact OCHA locally or check their country-specific websites to access these documents. Cluster leads at the country level may also provide this information. Contact the relevant cluster leads or Cluster Information Management focal points at the country level to source this information. *See the [Humanitarian Programme Cycle \(HPC\) entry](#) for more information on inter-agency assessments and needs analysis.*

Note that if the country office is planning to implement projects in a specific sector, it is recommended that the mission is actively engaged in the assessment process, in coordination with the relevant sector leads. This will enable the country office to immediately and effectively identify needs and develop a strong project proposal and implement an efficient response. In situations where inter-agency assessments do not cover a migration-related issue that IOM may want to respond to, IOM can carry out its own assessments directly, coordinating with relevant stakeholders (i.e. government counterparts and the humanitarian community) accordingly. *See the [Assessments in Emergencies entry](#) for more information.*

**Situation Reports (Sitreps):** Situation reports from other humanitarian actors on the ground can also be useful for needs analysis. In most cases, OCHA provides situation reports that can be used to get baseline information. IOM situation reports should also be used as an important source of information to guide needs analysis and project planning.

**Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM):** Where DTM has been rolled out and information is available, information from DTM should be used as a source of information for projects. DTM information can also be used to inform the development of project baselines. For example, DTM could provide information on the total number of displaced persons in an area and the main sector-specific gaps that need to be addressed.

**Meeting Minutes:** Information from cluster meetings and working group meetings are also a useful source of information. Although it is not advised that these be used as your main reference documents, they can be a useful complement to the more formal documents such as MIRAs, Strategic Response Plans, and Sitreps.

If the proposed project or programme include support to non-UN state or regional security forces, country offices should conduct a human rights due diligence risk assessment during the project conceptualization phase, in line with IOM's commitments to the UN Human Rights Due Diligence Policy on UN Support to Non-UN Security Forces (HRDDP). This process will feed into the integration of monitoring mechanisms, as well as mitigating measures and cessation procedures in case of rights violations, into the project. For more information, see the IOM HRDDP Guidance Note.

## 2) Developing the project

The [IOM Project Handbook](#) is a useful tool to guide the development of project proposals. The handbook contains helpful information on the general concepts of project development (including definitions and tips for developing objectives, outcomes and outputs). In addition, it also contains guidance on the institutional processes related to development, endorsement, and implementation of projects.

In the context of emergencies, the following points should also be taken into consideration in project development.

**Coordination:** Projects should be developed in close coordination with the relevant stakeholders. This includes:

- The host government – to ensure that IOM will be able to implement the proposed activities;
- The humanitarian country team, through the relevant cluster or sector working group. *For instance: Shelter and NFI projects should be developed in close coordination with the Shelter and NFI Cluster to avoid duplication and ensure that the project contributes to the cluster's overall objectives for the response, and;*
- The affected population – to encourage active engagement of the affected population while also ensuring that the activities are designed are appropriate to the country context.

**Defining objectives:** The humanitarian community as a whole is moving towards a more harmonized approach to carrying out emergency response interventions. It is important to ensure that IOM's proposals are in line with the priorities and implementation plans of the broader humanitarian country team and the specific clusters under which the project falls. Most of the traditional donors in emergencies look for these synergies in project proposals. It is important to ensure that 1) the project is in line with these strategies and 2) it is clearly articulated in the project documents.

It is recommended that project objectives compliment or contribute to the overall objectives defined in Strategic Response Plans (SRPs). Strategic plans such as the Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP) or the Flash Appeal can also be helpful in identifying priorities for intervention. At the onset of an emergency, there may be cases where strategic response plans or cluster strategies are not yet finalized. In the event that projects need to be submitted to donors prior to the finalization of these strategies, it is important to access the draft versions of these documents or talk to relevant partners (e.g. the OCHA team leading the development of the HRP or the Cluster Leads) to get a sense of the agreed upon priorities and plans for intervention.

*See the Humanitarian Programme Cycle (HPC) entry for more information on inter-agency strategic response plans.*

Make sure that the project documents highlight the fact that the interventions planned are in line with the overall humanitarian strategy and the specific strategies of the cluster. Moreover, also highlight that in the event of a revision of the strategy, IOM will adjust accordingly, in close coordination with the donor.

**Developing, outcomes, outputs/results and using appropriate indicators:** Outputs or results should be developed in close coordination with the relevant technical specialists to ensure that what is proposed is appropriate and achievable. In addition to the IOM Project Handbook, the following resources also provide useful guidance for developing projects in emergency contexts:

- **The Sphere Handbook:** The Sphere Handbook contains the most widely used sets of common principles and universal minimum standards for the delivery of quality humanitarian response. The minimum standards listed in the handbook can be useful guide to develop project indicators. It is important to discuss the use of these indicators with the relevant technical experts and program managers to ensure that these indicators are used appropriately.
- **Global Cluster Indicators:** At the global level, clusters have put together a list of effective indicators that can be used to measure sector-specific response. Many of these indicators are developed in line with Sphere Minimum Standards. These indicators can also be used at the country level to develop both indicators for IOM specific projects and indicators to track the progress of the overall cluster

response in cases where IOM is acting as a cluster lead at the country level. In situations where IOM is acting as a cluster partner, it is important to check with the cluster leads to see if they have developed country specific indicators to measure the response of the cluster. If available, these can be used for project indicators.

- **Donors:** In some instances, donors may have a set of established indicators they require or recommend being used for monitoring the use of their contributions. Check with your donor counterpart or with the relevant IOM office (See the [Programme Support Functions: Who Can Help you? entry](#) for contact details) to see if this is available or required.

#### Examples of standard indicators from donors:

- In an effort to streamline the proposal writing/reviewing process and better measure the impact of the Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration (PRM) has increasingly promoted the use of standardized indicators. PRM's list of standard indicators is available in their General NGO Guidelines for Overseas Assistance page. Note that while the guidance is presented for PRM's NGO partners, the proposed indicators are also a useful resource for IOM staff that are developing indicators for similar sectors.
- ECHO has also developed key outcome and result indicators that should be used when developing ECHO projects. The full list of these indicators is available in the tools and reference section.

Note that in both cases, these indicators may change. It is important to consult the relevant IOM office for more information.

**Justifying IOM's Institutional Capacity to Carry out Specific interventions:** It is important that project proposals highlight IOM's institutional capacity to carry out specific interventions. For example, following the onset of a crisis, a country office may have no Camp Coordination and Camp Management (CCCM) experience prior to this crisis. However, if the need for this type of intervention is identified, IOM can quickly scale up the capacity in country through the rapid deployment of technical experts. Emphasizing this institutional capacity helps underline the fact that IOM is strategically capable of delivering results in specific sectors.

**PRIMA:** "PRIMA for All" was launched in 2019 as the IOM online project management system that supports the full project cycle and facilitates operational oversight of all projects, enabling consistent, insightful analysis and simplified reporting at the project and institutional level. The goal of PRIMA is to facilitate effective, efficient, and results-based project management that incorporates effective monitoring and evaluation of project implementation performance, and promotes learning and accountability to migrants, governments, and donors.

All concept notes and proposals must be developed in PRIMA. However, the workflow will be different for CERF and ECHO projects, or those that need to be developed, reviewed, and submitted to the donor within 72 hours.

For more in-depth guidelines on how to use PRIMA throughout each phase of the project cycle, please visit the PRIMA intranet page. For preparedness and emergency response projects, please refer to the PRD PRIMA Guidelines (in references) for further information. Guidance on how to upload CERF and ECHO projects into PRIMA is provided in references as well.

### 3) Project Templates

Different donors have different requirements for the submission of proposals. In some cases, donors have specific templates for emergency projects that IOM must use to present their proposed interventions. **When developing projects for specific donors it is important to clarify immediately if the donor has a specific template required or if the IOM template can be used.** PRIMA allows for the user to select whether IOM template, a donor template or both, is used.

**The IOM Template:** When donors do not require a specific format, IOM submits project proposals in its own institutional template through PRIMA. The IOM proposal template is a standardized project document that is designed to:

- Be the primary tool for conveying an IOM project idea and implementation plan to external parties, including host governments, project partners, and donors;
- Guide the Project Manager through the planning, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of the project; and
- Serve as an instrument to facilitate the Organization's institutional need to collect and analyze project data.

**IOM Gender Marker:** The IOM Gender Marker is a tool that assesses how well projects integrate gender considerations, coding on a scale of 0 to 2. It establishes a clear set of minimum standards for incorporating gender considerations into projects and sets out a coding system based on how many minimum standards are met. It allows IOM to track the percentage of its projects and financial allocations that are designed to contribute to gender equality. The Gender Marker aims at improving the quality of IOM projects by emphasizing the importance of addressing the specific needs and concerns of women, girls, boys and men, inclusive of people with diverse sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression and sex characteristics (SOGIESC), and of different ages, so that everyone benefits in an appropriate way. IOM's Gender Marker is a mandatory requirement for all projects. Please refer to the [Gender Mainstreaming page](#) or the IOM Gender Marker Guide for details on how to use the IOM Gender Marker tool.

Note that the IASC updated their Gender Marker with the Gender with Age Marker using a 0-4 scale. Gender and age intersect in relation to migration in a number of ways, and it is important to acknowledge that **age is also a key factor in migration**. While age will not be coded in the same way as gender, it is an important variable to consider when developing your project proposal to ensure that the needs and capacities of different age groups are considered. Please see the [IASC GAM website](#) for more information, or refer to the IOM Gender Marker Guide for specific details on how to incorporate age.

**Expedited Procedure for Project Endorsement (EPPE):** In exceptional circumstances, a project proposal will be channeled through the Expedited Procedure for Project Endorsement (EPPE). EPPE omits the requirement that a proposal is formatted in the standard IOM proposal template to receive endorsement. Instead, an eligible proposal should be formatted according to the expected donor's requirements only, with the exception of the risk assessment plan, which must be completed for internal purposes, regardless of the template used. If no formatting requirements are specified, then the EPPE proposal template is to be used. IOM's EPPE proposal template is an abridged version of the IOM proposal template. The main difference is the optional character of the Summary, Monitoring and Evaluation sections.

As a fast track procedure, EPPE is intended for use in the context of a humanitarian emergency only, when there is:



- a direct and imminent threat to human security requiring the immediate intervention of IOM, and
- fewer than 10 days available for proposal development, review and endorsement, the submission of the proposal to the donor, the receipt of funds, and the start of project implementation.

In such a context, the need for an immediate start-up of the activities and delivery of humanitarian assistance is such that IOM waives the standard endorsement procedure.

### *Eligibility for EPPE*

In general, the declaration of an L3 emergency will trigger the EPPE process for those projects that conform to the eligibility criteria. The Office of the Director General will declare in writing an L3 emergency in response to a large-scale humanitarian crisis for a clearly specified period of time, not exceeding three months. Note that project proposals which are to be implemented in an emergency context but which do not directly respond to the humanitarian emergency will continue to follow the standard project development and endorsement procedure, not the EPPE.

The EPPE may also be confirmed on a case-by-case basis by the relevant endorsing Division within the Department of Programme Support and Migration Management (DPSMM) or the Department of Operations and Emergencies (DOE), in coordination with the DOE RTS in the Regional Office.

### **Donors that usually accept proposals in the IOM Template:**

Below is a list of some traditional donors that usually allow the use of the IOM template for emergency response project proposals. **Note that this list provides general guidance. It is still important to confirm at the country level what template should be used.** Moreover, though the donor may accept the use of the IOM template, some donors have additional sections that they request to add into the template. It is important to discuss this with the donor and agree on the template to be used during the development of the proposal.

- The Government of Canada through Global Affairs Canada or the Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development (DFADT);
- The Government of Japan;
- The United States Government through: the Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA), United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and the Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration (PRM); and
- The Swedish Government through the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA).

Though institutional agreements are in place between IOM and all of the above donors at the global level, there are some instances where country level representatives are unfamiliar with IOM's status as an inter-governmental organization and the global agreements in place between IOM and the donor. On occasion, they may mistake IOM as an International Non-Governmental Organization (INGO). In the event that donors at the local level share guidance documents that are specific to NGOs or INGOs it is important to seek guidance internally within IOM on how to proceed.

The IOM Proposal Template (Standard and EPPE) are available in the Tools and Reference section.



**Donor Specific Templates:** Below is a list of the most common donors that have supported IOM's emergency response interventions that require their own donor specific templates for projects. Guidance on how to complete these templates is available on their websites. It is important to constantly check their websites as these templates and guidance may change over time.

- UN Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF)
- European Commission's Humanitarian aid and Civil Protection Department (ECHO). In addition, the ECHO corner in the DOE Portal provides additional information in ECHO, relevant to IOM. Please contact RO Brussels for the latest ECHO template versions.
- Country-based pooled funds managed by OCHA. A free, self-directed online training with theoretical and operational guidance on CBPFs is available on Kaya. In addition, please see the OCHA CBPF Factsheet (2017) in the References and Tools section.
- Instrument Contributing to Stability and Peace (IcSP).

**Project Endorsement:** Prior to submission to the donor, project proposals need to be reviewed and endorsed by the Regional Office in coordination with the relevant DOE divisions in Headquarters as well as with other IOM offices with liaison or resource mobilization functions depending on the donor. Information on the endorsement process is available in the IOM Project Handbook. Moreover, do not hesitate to reach out to the DOE RTS or [Preparedness and Response Division \(PRD\)](#) for additional guidance or clarification about the process.

## Links

- [IOM Project Handbook](#)
- [IOM Intranet PRIMA page](#)
- [Sphere Handbook](#)
- [Indicator Registry for Clusters](#)
- [Financial Tracking Service \(FTS\)](#)
- [IASC Gender with Age Marker](#)
- [CERF website](#)
- [CERF Application Templates \(download with Google Chrome or Internet Explorer\)](#)
- [CERF Guidance](#)
- [ECHO Policies and Outcomes \(latest indicators can be found here\)](#)
- [IOM USAID Handbook](#)

## Contacts

For more information and guidance, contact the DOE RTS in your region or the Preparedness and Response Division (PRD): [prdcare@iom.int](mailto:prdcare@iom.int).

The relevant IOM Offices that liaise with specific donors can also provide additional guidance. See the [Programme Support Functions: Who Can Help You](#) entry for contact details.

## References and Tools

- [IOM House Style Manual](#)
- [IOM Spelling List](#)
- [EPPE Proposal Template \(2018\)](#)
- [Concept Note Template \(2018\)](#)
- [Proposal Template](#)
- [Sample Project Tracking Template](#)
- [PRIMA User Guide](#)
- [PRD PRIMA Guidelines \(v. Jan 2022\)](#)
- [CERF PRIMA Guidance \(Sept 2022\)](#)
- [CERF Application Guidelines](#)
- [CERF Life-Saving Criteria \(2020\)](#)
- [CERF ALERT Guidelines \(Apr 2022\)](#)
- [ECHO PRIMA Guidance](#)
- [IOM Gender Inclusive Communication Guidance \(May 2021\)](#)
- [IOM Gender Marker Guidance](#)
- [OCHA CBPF Factsheet](#)
- [Overview of CERF-IOM Cooperation \(2011-2020\)](#)

## Other Entries in this Topic

- [Humanitarian Programme Cycle \(HPC\)](#)
- [Assessments in Emergencies](#)
- [Situational Reports \(Sitreps\)](#)

## Document date

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