Preparation of Grant Agreement

- **What is the Grant Agreement and when should it be generated on the GMS?**
- **Preliminary steps to generating the Grant Agreement (HFU / IP)**
  - Validation of Timelines (HFU)
  - Granting authorization of project information (IP)
    - Bank Account Authorization
    - Project Start Date Authorization
    - Project Signatory Authorization
- **How to generate the Grant Agreement? (HFU)**
  - GMS Focus: Grant Agreement error icon
  - Uploading the generated GA on the project’s GMS page
- **The signature process (HFU, IP, HC, EO)**
  - Final HC approval and signature (HC)
    - Rejecting the Project Proposal
    - Granting final approval and signing the GA
    - GMS Focus: how to grant final approval and sign the GA on behalf of the HC?
  - IP counter-signature (IP)
  - EO Clearance and signature (HFU, FCS Finance and EO)
    - HFU: How to send the GA to EO / FCS for clearance and signature
    - EO clearance and signature
- **Project Revision: how to generate a Grant Agreement Amendment**
  - GMS Focus: NCE, Cost Extensions and Timelines Updates
  - GMS Focus: Grant Amendment Error Icon
  - GAA Signature Process
What is the Grant Agreement and when should it be generated on the GMS? [Top]

The OCHA Grant Agreement (GA) is the binding document between the Implementing Partner and OCHA specifying the terms and conditions applicable to the approved project (project duration, budget, activities and logical framework, work plan, affected persons information, reporting timelines etc.).

Partners commit to comply with all the requirements defined in the GA. Some requirements are directly linked to the Partner’s Risk Level and the CBPF’s Operational Modalities. Grant Agreements may be modified in a Grant Agreement Amendment to accommodate necessary changes in projects in case of project revision.

Grant Agreements with UN agencies, NGOs, and Red Cross and Red Crescent Movements are prepared by OCHA Country Offices (by the Humanitarian Financing Unit). Grant agreements are signed by the HC and counter signed by the authorized representative of the partner as recorded in the Due Diligence module of the GMS. Grant agreements are then sent to OCHA HQ/FCS for final approval and signature by EO (or a duly delegated officer). Grant Agreements must be submitted to OCHA HQ/FCS by the fund manager through the GMS.

The use of the GMS is the pre-requisite for implementing the GA process described below. The GMS enables the HFU to generate the GA and facilitates the GA signature process. Information entered in the GA derives directly from information inputted in the GMS.

WHEN TO PREPARE THE GRANT AGREEMENT (HFU)

The Grant Agreement should be prepared when the project workflow reaches “Under GA Preparation” phase.
Preliminary steps to generating the Grant Agreement (HFU/IP)

In order for the HFU to be able to generate the Grant Agreement, the Timelines should be validated by the Fund Manager and the Project Information should be authorized by the Partner. These two actions are mandatory pre-requisites to generating the GA on GMS.

1. Validation of Timelines tab (HFU)
Once the project reaches FCS Budget Clearance stage, the Timelines tab gets activated on GMS. The Timelines include the reporting and monitoring instances and the disbursement tranches of the project, which are all reflected in the Grant Agreement. They should be validated by the Fund Manager prior to the generation of the Grant Agreement.

Reporting and Monitoring instances: The HFU must enter and validate all reporting and monitoring instances of the project, as required by the Operational Modalities. To create or waive any reporting or monitoring instance, please refer to this article in the Help Portal. You can also watch this tutorial video on validating the timelines.

Disbursement tranches: The HFU also has to set up and validate the disbursement tranches. The tranches must correspond to the tranches as set by the latest Operational Modalities’ template. You can find guidance on how to set up and validate the disbursement tranches in this article.

Once the reporting and monitoring instances and the disbursement tranches have been entered and saved, the Fund Manager can tick the box ‘I confirm and authorize the Operation Modality generated below’ and click on [Save].

2. Granting authorization of project information (IP)

Ahead of the Grant Agreement creation, a validation is required from the Implementing Partner to ensure that the start date, the bank account and Grant Agreement signatory linked to the project proposal are authorized by the organization.

The authorization happens from a specific page, which is accessible from the project proposal and the Implementing Partner home page, where the status of the authorization will be displayed by a red or green checkbox tooltip.
Upon clicking on the tooltip’s text link [Click Here], users are redirected to the Project Information Authorization page, from where they can select the bank account linked to the project, the project actual start date and the GA signatory. For more transparency, a history log of the changes is kept and displayed.
Bank Account Authorization:
Select the correct bank account in the drop-down list and click on [Save].

*Please Note,* if you see an error in the entered bank information or wish to link a new bank account to your new project, do NOT select any bank information, and please contact your HFU, as this is the bank account that will be stipulated in your OCHA Grant Agreement. You will need to update your Due Diligence form, and have it re-approved by the HFU before being able to select the correct bank account in the project authorization page. Please refer to our article on Due Diligence to know how to amend bank info in the GMS.

Project Start Date Authorization:

*Note: Any change of the project dates / duration after agreement signature will be allowed only via revision process.*
Check, and amend if necessary, the actual start date of the project, and click on [Save]. The actual start date should be discussed between the HFU and the IP.

**Project Signatory Authorization:**

To authorize the Project signatory, select him or her in the drop-down list, tick the box ‘I authorize selected signatory to be linked with the project’ and click on [Save]. This person will be authorized to sign the Grant Agreement.
**Please note**, the selected signatory must have a verified email address in the Due Diligence form of the GMS. To know more about email verification, please check our dedicated article. If the contact’s email address is not verified on GMS, you will also have the opportunity to send a verification link to the contact from the authorization page.

**Please note**, the contacts entered in the drop-down list are drawn from the Due Diligence contacts list. If you do not see your legal signatory in the drop-down list, please inform your HFU, and check your due diligence form. You will need to edit the contacts’ section of the form. To know how to do edit the Due Diligence contacts, please refer to this dedicated article.

All information from the Project Authorization page must be saved and validated by the IP. The GA will not be generated by the system if the tooltip is red.

**Please Note**, The Partner will NOT be able to validate the information in the Project Authorization section if the project surpasses the “GA Preparation” phase. HFU should ensure that the project information has been authorized by the IP prior to pushing the project to “Under HC signature of GA”.

How to generate the Grant Agreement? (HFU)  [Top](#)
After a project proposal has successfully been recommended within its technical review, and the two preliminary steps have been taken by both the HFU and the IP, the HFU can prepare the Grant Agreement. At this point, HFU clicks on the [GA Under Preparation] button.

On screen, you should see the button 'Send to HC Signature'. BEFORE you press this button, you need to generate the Grant Agreement.

To do so, go to Reports > Reports > Grant Agreements
Once on the Grant Agreements page, locate the project by selecting from the filtering options:

- Allocation Type
- Agency Type
- Organization
- Status

*Please note,* Allocation Type and Agency Type are required, as indicated by the asterisks.
Once done with your selection, click on [Filter].

Once your project appears, tick the checkbox next to your project and click on [New OCHA Grant Agreement]. If the Implementing Partner is a UN Agency, click on [Grant Agreement for UN Agency].

A pop-up window reminds you of the Bank information and the legal signatory selected by the partner in the Project Authorization box.

If the partner wishes to change the linked project signatory or bank account, they must revert to the project authorization page and re-authorize the information accordingly.

If the information is correct, click on [Generate].

*Please note*, the email icon at the left-hand side of the signatory’s name must be green (as in the screenshot below). If the signatory’s email address appears in red, it means that his/her email has not been verified. The address must be verified to generate the Grant Agreement. To know how to verify the email address, please refer to this article.
Upon clicking on **Generate**, the Grant Agreement will be generated in PDF and downloaded on your computer.

**GMS Focus: error icon preventing the Grant Agreement (GA) generation**

You might encounter the following error message when trying to generate the GA, preventing you to tick the project box.
In the case of a Grant Agreement, this error appears in two cases, as mentioned in the sections above:

- **The Timeliness have not been validated by the Fund Manager**, or
- **The project information has not been authorized by the IP (bank info, start date of the project, project signatory)**.

Click on one of the 2 options above to access the relevant guidance. that will redirect you to the relevant section.

**UPLOADING THE GENERATED GA ON THE PROJECT’S GMS PAGE**

Once you have downloaded the Grant Agreement, you need to link it to its according project. To save the Grant Agreement within GMS, go to the project main page, and click on the Documents’ tab.

Click on the [Add Document] button.
Next an 'Upload Document' window will pop-up;
Fields Description:

- **Select Category** *(required – Select the document category type)*: please note when uploading a Grant Agreement, use Grant Agreement as the Category.
- **Attach Document** *(Required – locate the document on your computer)*
- **Leave Document comments** *(optional),

then click on [Upload].
After a successful upload, the Grant Agreement will appear in the Document Page.

The Grant Agreement’s signature process Top

When the Grant Agreement has been generated and saved in the documents’ tab of the project’s main page, and if it is ready to be signed by the Humanitarian Coordinator (HC), please click on the [Submission to HC Signature] button.
Next, you will see that the project has been moved to the 'HC Final Approval and GA Signature' phase.

*Please note* that the HC should be notified that the project is ready for their approval and GA signature.

**FINAL HC APPROVAL AND SIGNATURE (HC)**

Final HC Approval is the final opportunity for the HC to approve or reject a project proposal after it has completed the technical review, and prior to the point that a Grant Agreement has been submitted to the Implementing Partner for their signature.
During the HC Final Approval and GA Signature phase, the HC can review the project proposal, make comments, and upon satisfaction can sign the attached Grant Agreement and forward it to the Implementing Partner for their signature.

Upon receiving notification that a project proposal has entered the 'HC Final Approval and GA Signature' phase, the HC or Deputy Regional HC is to log into GMS. On the HC's home page, the projects will be in the Projects Task List. Within the Project Task List, locate the project by clicking on the project code or by locating it through the filtering options provided.
In case the HC opted for the filtering option, they can access the project by clicking on the Edit icon next to the desired project.

Upon opening the project proposal, the HC can review all enclosed tabs and leave comments if necessary.

Rejecting the Project Proposal (HC)
After review, if you wish to reject this project, click on [HC Rejected].

**Granting Final Approval and Signing GA (HC).**

If you give this project your final approval, you now need to sign the Grant Agreement. To retrieve the Grant Agreement, go to the Project’s Documents tab.

You should see the Grant Agreement on the Documents page. If not, please contact your HFU.

Next to the Grant Agreement, in the ‘Action’ column, click on the [View] hyperlink to download the document.
Open the downloaded Grant Agreement and print it.

Then, Sign the last page of the GA (right before Annex A), add your initials on each page (including the Annexes), Scan and Save the GA to your computer.

After signature, you need to upload the signed GA on the project’s document’s tab.

To do so, click on [Add Document] of this tab.
### Primary cluster

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### Documents

<table>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grant Agreement.doc</td>
<td>[View] [Edit]</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Next an [Upload Document] window will pop-up:

Fields Description:

- **Select Category** *(required – Select the document category type)*. When uploading a Grant Agreement, use Grant Agreement as the Category.
- **Attach Document** *(Required – locate the document on your computer)*
- **Leave Document comments** *(optional)*,

Then click the [Upload] button.

After a successful upload, the Grant Agreement will appear in the Documents Page.

To avoid any confusion between the documents, please add a specific ‘HC signed’ mention to your document’s name (see the uploaded document’s name in the screenshot below).
If you are ready for the Implementing Partner to sign the Grant Agreement, please click on the [HC Signed] button.
Next, you should notice that the project has been moved to the IP counter-signature stage. The Implementing Partner should automatically receive an email notification, informing them that the Grant Agreement is ready for their signature.

*Please Note: All project tabs (except Documents) will automatically be locked when the project proposal is sent to the IP for counter-signature to make sure the IP cannot do any changes after the GA has been generated.

If you have approved the Project Proposal or Grant Agreement in error, please contact the HFU immediately.
A Deputy Humanitarian Coordinator can act on behalf of the Humanitarian Coordinator on GMS, provided he/she has the appropriate user access role. In doubt, or if any issue arises, HFU can contact their respective FCS Desk Officer to ask for assistance in this matter.

Once the necessary user access is granted, the Deputy HC can follow the same directions explained above.
IP GA COUNTER-SIGNATURE

When the Grant Agreement is ready for the Implementing Partner's signature, they should receive an email notification indicating such. Once notified, the Implementing Partner is to log in the GMS.

Once on their Home Page, the Implementing Partner should see the particular project in their Projects section, and next to it, an Edit icon. Click on the Edit Icon.

*Please Note: All project tabs (except Documents) will automatically be locked when the project proposal is sent to the IP for countersignature to make sure the IP cannot do any changes after the GA has been generated.

Once in the project’s main page, go to the Documents’ tab, where you will find the Grant Agreement.
*Please note,* the Grant Agreement should have first been signed by the Humanitarian Coordinator, if that is not the case, please contact HFU immediately.

Open the Grant Agreement signed by HC by clicking on [View], and review the document.

Print, Sign and Stamp (both the last page of the GA and Annex B), Initial Scan and Save the signed agreement to your computer.

Upon re-entering GMS, go back to the Documents’ tab of the project. When you are ready to upload your signed Grant Agreement, click on [Add Document]. Next an 'Upload Document' window will pop-up;
Fields Description:

• **Select Category** *(required – Select the document category type)*, Please note when uploading a Grant Agreement, please use Grant Agreement as the Category.
• **Attach Document** *(Required – locate the document on your computer)*
• **Leave Document comments** *(optional)*

Click the [Upload] button.

*Please note*, to avoid any confusion, please label your document with the mention: ‘IP signed’ (see example in screenshot below).

After a successful upload, the Grant Agreement will appear in the Documents Page.

Once you are satisfied that the you have successfully uploaded your Grant Agreement, press [Notify HFU of GA signature].
Next, you should notice that the project has been pushed to the IP Submission of GA to HFU phase. HFU is automatically notified of your action.

EO CLEARANCE AND SIGNATURE

**HFU: How to send the GA to EO for clearance and signature**

After the Implementing Partner has signed the Grant Agreement, it should come back to HFU. Please review and ensure all is satisfactory, including all relevant signatures are present from HC and the Implementing Partner. Once reviewed and if you want to send the project and Grant Agreement to OCHA Finance for their review, EO Agreement Clearance and initiation of the Disbursement process, press [Send to FCS for final signature].
Upon clicking on [Send to FCS for Final Signature], a pop-up window with scorecard-related fields will appear. The answer the HFU will give in this pop-up window will be the first score received by the partner under their Partner Performance Index.
Fields Description:

- **Comments (optional)**: you have the possibility to add comments when sending the GA for final EO signature.
- **Performance Index - Options (mandatory)**: GA's signature process is taken into account for Performance rating. Please select the option as faithfully as possible. It will count for the partner's adjusted risk rating.
- **Performance Index - Comments (mandatory)**: Please add comments on the GA's signature process in this field.

After inputting all necessary information, click on [Save and go to EO Agreement Clearance].

**EO Clearance (FCS - EO):**
OCHA Finance Team should receive an email notification when a Grant Agreement is ready for EO Agreement Clearance.

Please log into GMS. Locate the project by looking up the project code in the Project Task List, or selecting through the filtering options made available, and access the documents’ tab of the project.

![Image of CBPF GRANT MANAGEMENT SYSTEM (GMS) interface]

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HOME - https://gms.unocha.org
You should see a series of signed Grant Agreements under 'Grant Agreement' in the Documents' tab.

At the point that the Grant Agreement has reached OCHA Finance for the EO Agreement Clearance, the Grant Agreement should have been signed by the HC as well as the Implementing Partner.

If it has not, notify HFU immediately – enter your comments in the pop up window and press [Send Comments on GA to HFU]. If you have any further concerns or questions, also submit your comments in the Project Proposal and press [Send Comments on GA to HFU].

If you notice the Grant Agreement has been signed by the IP and the HC, you can proceed with review and final signature.

Open the Grant Agreement (please ensure the IP and HC signature is included), review the document.

Print the GA and obtain the EO's physical signature. Then, Scan and Save the signed agreement to your computer.
Upload the signed Grant Agreement with the HC, IP and EO's signatures on the Documents’ tab of the Project Proposal.

To do so, click on [Add Document]. An 'Upload Document' window will pop-up;

Fields description:

- **Select Category** (*required – Select the document category type*), Please note when uploading a Grant Agreement, please use Grant Agreement as the Category.
- **Attach Document** (*Required – locate the document on your computer*)
- **Leave Document comments** (*optional*),

Click on [Upload].
After a successful upload, the Grant Agreement will appear in the Documents Page.

Once you have successfully uploaded your Grant Agreement, press **[GA counter-signed]**.

Next, you see that the project has been pushed to the Disbursement phase, meaning that the Grant Agreement has been signed by all parties and the GA process is over. The OCHA Finance – Disbursement Officer should receive an email notification that this project is ready for disbursement processing.

To learn more about the disbursement phase, please refer to this dedicated article on the Help Portal.
Project Revision: How to generate a Grant Agreement Amendment? [Top]

In the case of a Project revision, a Grant Agreement Amendment needs to be generated if there are changes in:

- Logical Framework, Locations, Workplan.
- Project duration/end date (No Cost Extension)
- Reduction in total grant amount
- Budget variance of more than 15% of budget categories
- Addition of a new budget line item
- Change in bank account to be used for disbursement of funds.

Prior to generating the GAA, the HFU must click on [Revision Approved – prepare GA Amendment] in the relevant revision page.
To generate the GAA, go to Report > Report > Grant Agreements
Use the menu filters to generate a list of projects and select the appropriate project in the list by ticking its box, then click on [Grant Agreement Amendment NGO] for NGO projects or [Grant Agreement Amendment UN] if it is a UN project.

In the pop-up box, enter the following information:
1. Select the correct revision in the drop-down list,
2. Tick the relevant articles boxes in the ‘Show articles for’ section. This will allow to show only the articles related to the revised project sections in the GAA;
3. Click on [Generate].

*Please note, the legal signatory email address must have been confirmed to generate the GAA. (as shown by the green envelop in the screenshot above). To know more about legal signatory, please refer to the project authorization page section of this article.

GMS Focus: NCEs, Cost Extensions and Timelines’ updates

In case of a No Cost Extension, make sure to edit the reporting and monitoring active and due dates in the Timelines’ tab of the project prior to the generation of the Grant Agreement Amendment (GAA), as the requirements’ due dates are included in the Annex B of the GAA. To do so, click on [update]
Once redirected on the Timelines’ tab, update the reporting and monitoring active and due dates, and click on [Save].

In case of a Cost Extension, the HFU must go on the timelines’ tab of the project and recompute the disbursement tranches.
GMS Focus: Error icon preventing the Grant Agreement Amendment (GAA) generation

You might encounter the below error icon when trying to generate the GAA, preventing you to tick the revision box.
In the case of a Grant Agreement Amendment, this error appears because the Project's timelines have not been validated previously. For projects that were approved before 2020 and going through a revision, the Fund Manager or the Program Officer with authorized access must re-validate the timelines. Otherwise, the system will not allow you to generate the GAA.

To re-validate the timelines, go to the Timelines’ tab of the project’s page or click on [Update timelines] from the Grant Agreements' page. Check that all the instances are correct. If not, add or waive the required instances, before validating the timelines. To learn how to add or to waive instances in the Timelines tab, please refer to this dedicated article in the Help Portal.

*Please note*, in case of an NCE, make sure to edit the reports’ active and due dates.
To validate the timelines, tick the box [I confirm and authorize the Operational Modalities below], and click on [Save].
SIGNATURE PROCESS OF THE GAA

The signature process of the GAA is exactly the same as the signature process of the GA. You can refer to the GA Signature process (above section of this article) to access more detailed guidance on this topic.

Namely, the HFU must 1/ upload the generated GAA in the Documents’ tab of the Revision page, before 2/ clicking on [Send GA Amendment to HC signature].
Then 3/ the Humanitarian Coordinator must go to the Revision page, to the documents' tab, download the GAA, print it; scan it and upload it back in the documents' tab of the revision page.

When the signed by HC GAA has been correctly uploaded, the HC must 4/ click on [GA Amendment signed by HC]
5/ The Implementing Partner must then go to the project revision, to the documents' tab. Download the GAA, print it, sign it, scan it and upload it back on the Documents' tab of the revision page.

Then, 6/ after making sure the document has been properly added, the IP must click on [GA Amendment Counter signed].
7/ The HFU can then:

- Move forward with the signature process and send the GAA to the EO for final signature and clearance;
- Send the GAA back to the Implementing Partner for signature;
- Send the Project Revision to re-draft by the Implementing Partner.
8/ The Executive Officer must then go to the Revision Page, to the Documents’ tab, download the GAA; print it, review it, sign it, scan it and upload it back signed on the Documents’ tab of the revision page.

9/ If the EO has signed the GAA and wishes to go forward with the process, they can click on [GA Amendment Cleared].

If there is an issue with the GAA, the EO can insert comments in the revision page, and click on [Send comments on GA Amendment to HFU]

Once the GAA is signed by all parties, the Project Revision is automatically approved, and HFU can click on [Overwrite]. This will erase the previous project data and replace it with the revised data from the revision.

When the GAA is signed by all parties, you can revert to the Project Revision article to learn the next steps.