Strategic Review

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What are Pre-Strategic and Strategic Reviews? Top

The Pre-Strategic Review is an optional first step after project proposal submission by the partner. It is not meant to be a comprehensive review of the project, which the HFU will carry out during later Review stages. Pre-Strategic Review is instead meant to ensure that the proposal is duly filled out and is ready for Strategic Review. HFU should not send back to the partner with substantive comments at this stage, but should only send back if key sections are not duly filled out, or if information is incomplete or not in compliance with the allocation paper.
The **Strategic Review** aims at identifying and prioritizing project proposals considered best suited to address the needs identified in the allocation paper. The pre-selection of projects is intended to stimulate efficiency and allow for a rapid process that correctly targets identified needs.

**Strategic Review Workflow – Standard Allocation**

**Strategic Review Workflow – Reserve Allocation**
How to conduct a Pre-Strategic Review (HFU) [Top]

**HFU:** After an Implementing Partner has submitted their initial project proposal, the project proposal will be sent to the HFU for preliminary review, or 'Under Pre-SR'.

First, access the project proposal by using the Project task list of your homepage.
Once on the project proposal page, review all tabs, and leave comments if necessary.

After the review, the HFU has three options:

- [Project Rejected] – which will reject the project proposal at this Pre-SR stage.
- [Send to IP for Re-Draft] – the HFU has the ability to make comments on the project proposal, and send it back to the Implementing Partner for re-draft.
- [Send to SR] (SR = Strategic Review) if HFU believes the project proposal looks favorably as is, they may move forward with the project workflow and send it to Strategic Review by clicking this button.
Implementing Partner Re-draft (optional, only if the HFU sends the project proposal to Redraft):

If the HFU sends the project proposal back to re-draft, the partner should check the comments left by the HFU, make the necessary amendments and send the project proposal back to under Pre-Strategic Review by clicking on the button at the top [Submit Project Proposal].
How to conduct a Strategic Review (HFU) Top

**Parties involved in the Strategic Review**

**CLUSTER COORDINATOR (CC)** - The Cluster Coordinator(s) will support CBPFs at the strategic level, by ensuring that there are linkages between the fund, the HRP and cluster strategies. The Cluster Coordinator has a key role in the Strategic Review, as they are the main evaluator, and have the responsibility to save the results in the Partner’s project scorecard and recommend (or not) the project.

*Please note* that in some circumstances, HFU can act on behalf of the Cluster Coordinator on GMS, during the Strategic Review stage.

**HFU**: Under SR the role of HFU is to facilitate the review and, if necessary, to fill out the scorecards on behalf of the CC. Following the Clusters’ review, the HFU sends the project proposal to either the Humanitarian Coordinator for endorsement, or, if relevant, to the Review Board.

**REVIEW BOARD (RB)** (*Only for Standard Allocations - optional*) - The review committee participates in the strategic review and selection of a shortlist of project proposals after Cluster Review.

*Please Note* that not all funds have a review board. Also, review boards do not have access to the GMS as such, and do not fill out scorecards.
THE HUMANITARIAN COORDINATOR (HC) (*Only for Standard Allocations*) – In a standard allocation, the first HC endorsement happens after the projects are reviewed and scored by the cluster coordinators. The HC then has the possibility to either discard the project proposal or endorse it and send it to the Technical Review stage.

THE STRATEGIC REVIEW PROCESS

*Cluster Coordinators:*

After HFU has performed the Pre-Strategic Review (if any), the project is pushed to ‘Under SR’, during which the Cluster Coordinator(s) has the opportunity to evaluate the project proposal by reviewing the project proposal and providing comments. In addition, the Cluster Coordinator(s) evaluate the project proposal by filling out a scorecard on GMS. (To know more about scorecards, please read the next sections of this article).

**First,** access the relevant project proposal by selecting it from your Project Task List in your homepage. You can also use the advance Switchboard on the right-hand side on the screen to find the project proposal based on the project code.
The Cluster Coordinators should review all tabs of the project proposal, and add all necessary comments (please click here to learn how to add comments in the project proposal). Once all the comments are inserted and all the recommendations are saved in the scorecard, the cluster coordinator (or the HFU on behalf of the CC) pushes the project to the next stage [Strategic Review Assessed]. Based on the cluster(s)'s comments, the HFU will then send the project to HC Endorsement for standard allocations or Technical Review for reserve allocations.

*Please note that under reserve allocations, the project proposal can also be rejected by the HFU right after the strategic review assessment.

Click on [SR Considered] after saving all necessary comments to send the project proposal to HFU.
All parties involved in the project proposal draft, review and approval have the possibility to leave comments. This is particularly important when corrections are required in the proposal and the project is sent back to re-draft.

Comments can only be inserted at specific workflow stages, depending on the user role. More specifically, you can only save comments when the project proposal is active under your user role.

For instance, the HFU will be able to save comments at the ‘Strategic Review Assessed’ step of the workflow, while the Cluster Coordinators will be able to leave comments at ‘Under Strategic Review’ step of the workflow.
Leaving comments at Tab -Level on the Project Proposal:

To add comments at the tab level, either go to the bottom of the tab, and enter the comments within the comments section provided.

Or click on the comments’ icon located on the lower right margin of the screen.

After comments are made, do not forget to press [Save].
*Please note,* you also have the possibility to add general comments on the project proposal by clicking on **[Add Comments]**. This option will save the comments under the "More Comments" pop-up window, but will not show the comments directly on the project proposal. To learn more about saving comments in project proposal, please refer to this article of the Help Portal.

**Accessing the comments:**

Users can view comments that have been made on the project proposal at the bottom of each project proposal tab, view the comments trail provided within. The comments trail will provide you with who made the comment, the date and time stamp of the comment, the workflow project status in which the comment was made, and the comment itself.
If a comment was saved in a tab, you will see it right away, as an icon in the tab’s header will indicate so.
Scoring project proposals as part of the strategic review (CC)  Top

In addition to reviewing the project proposal, the Cluster Coordinator(s) must fill out the Partner’s project scorecard. Cluster Coordinators must complete these scorecards by answering questions from the categories below:

a) Strategic Relevance,
b) Programmatic Relevance
c) Cost Effectiveness
d) Management and Monitoring
e) Engagement with Coordination

Accessing the Partner’s project scorecard (Cluster Coordinator[s])

To access the Partner’s project scorecard, go to Allocation > Project Scoring.
Filter the projects by selecting the allocation and corresponding scorecard. You can filter by cluster or by project status (usually projects would be [Under Strategic Review]).

**Filters Description:**
- Allocation Type: List of all projects submitted in the GMS system with the allocation type and year for the pooled fund.
- Scorecard: List of scorecards available for the pooled fund.
- Status: Lists the type of allocation source and the name of the project status.
- Cluster: List of clusters part of the selected allocation.

Click on [Filter Projects].
### SCORING AND RECOMMENDING PROJECTS

To enter the project’s scorecard, select the ‘Score this project’ icon 🌈 at the left-hand side of the project’s line in the list.

This opens the project’s scorecard.
The Cluster Coordinator(s) can score the project based on the questions defined in the categories. For each question and category, the Cluster Coordinator(s) can provide comments.

Once all information is correctly inputted, click on [Save and Stay] or [Save & Back to the list] to save your answers and comments.

In the information section at the top, you will notice that the total score of this review is automatically calculated based on your answers to each question in the scorecard.
However, you have the flexibility to manually select the recommendation to be given for the project from the dropdown list provided (in other terms, whether you recommend the project or not).

You can also click on the **Add Remark** icon to add remarks for the reason of giving the selected recommendation.

**HOW TO CREATE ANOTHER VERSION OF THE SCORECARD?**

Multi-cluster projects may need to be scored multiple times by different clusters. The GMS hence offers the option to create and save different versions of the scorecard.

Once a project has been scored, it is possible to save this version of the scorecard by clicking on the ‘Create Version’ checkbox, then **[Save & Stay]**. This will save the current version at the bottom of the scorecard page. Another cluster coordinator can then re-enter into the project’s scorecard on GMS, and fill it out with their answers and comments. They can then save it as another scorecard version by clicking on the ‘Create Version’ checkbox, then **[Save & Stay]**.
As a history of versions is saved at the bottom of this page, it is important to tailor the scorecard titles based on the cluster and the date. For instance, name your scorecard ‘Health Scorecard – 15/09/2020’ and click on [Save].
Saving your version of your scorecard of a multi-cluster project is important. If another cluster scores the same project after you have, and you had not created a version, they will overwrite your scoring with their own.

**RECOMMENDING MULTIPLE PROJECTS**
In the filtering list of projects generated, you can select the checkbox of the projects for which you wish to submit a recommendation. You can select multiple projects. By clicking on the first checkbox, all projects will be selected.

After selecting the projects, click on **Recommend selected projects**.
In the pop-up window, select the recommendation and enter the remarks if any. Then, click on [Proceed to Update recommendation].
**EXPORT / PRINT THE PROJECTS' SCORECARD**

You also have the option to export or print the scorecard of a project by clicking on the Print Icon of its line in the filtered list of projects.
To export or print multiple project scores, start by selecting the projects which score you wish to extract by ticking their boxes. Then, click on either of the two options present at the top-right corner of the filtered projects list.

- Click on the Print Selected projects score icon to print the project’s score after selecting the desired project from the filtered list.

- Click on the Export Score Overview icon to export the scoring details after selecting the desired projects from the filtered list.

How to move forward with the process after the Strategic Review

Once the Cluster Coordinator has finished its review, the project appears in the HFU’s Project Task list as ‘SR Assessed’. Click on the link to access the project proposal.

*Please note* that the Strategic Review process differs between Standard and Reserve Allocations.

**STANDARD ALLOCATION (HFU, RB, HC)**

In the case of a Standard Allocation, after Clusters’ review, you can send the project proposal to either the Review Board (if relevant in your Fund and allocation parameters), or send the project proposal to HC endorsement.
After Review Board Assessment, you can send the project to HC endorsement.
HC Endorsement
The Humanitarian Coordinator (HC) will be notified by email that a project has been sent to their review and endorsement. To access the project, the HC can click on its link in the ‘Project Task List’ of their homepage.
After review of the cluster recommendations and comments, the HC can either reject or endorse the project proposal by either clicking on [SR rejected] or on [HC considered] Respectively.
**HFU**

If the HC rejects the project, the HFU can then notify the organization by clicking on [Notify IP of rejection] on the project’s Cover Page.
If the HC endorsed the project, the HFU needs to access its cover page and click on one of the following options:

- **Send to IP for Re-draft**: depending on the HC’s comments, click on this button to send for re-draft.
- **Project withdrawn**: see section below: [how to withdraw a project proposal at SR stage](#)
- **Send to Cluster Coordinator for TR**: click on this button to move forward with the project workflow and start the [Technical Review stage](#).
- **Send back to HC for final decision**: click on this button to send to project back to the Humanitarian Coordinator.
RESERVE ALLOCATION (HFU)

In the case of a Reserve Allocation, and based on the cluster coordinator(s)’s comments, the HFU can (i) send the project directly to the Cluster Coordinator for Technical Review, (ii) reject the project, or (iii) withdraw the project (see section below on how to withdraw a project).

Click on the button of your choice, at the top of the project’s cover page.
How to withdraw a project proposal at the Strategic Review stage [Top]

**Partner:**

The Partner may choose to withdraw the project at the Strategic Review stage. To do so, the Partner has to communicate their decision to HFU, who will withdraw the project. Partners themselves don't have the option to withdraw their project on GMS.

**HFU:**

Following a partner’s request, the HFU has the possibility to withdraw a project. In the case of a Standard Allocation, they can withdraw the project by clicking on [Project withdrawn] after HC endorsement stage.
In the case of a Reserve Allocation, they can do so by clicking on [Project Withdrawn] at the SR Assessed stage, after Cluster review.