Operational Modalities

I) What are Operational Modalities?
   - OM workflow

II) How to create an Operational Modalities template in the GMS?
   - Accessing the Operational Modalities module on GMS
   - Creating a new / cloning an existing template
   - Configuring the OM draft template

III) How to populate/edit a set of Operational Modalities?
   - Adding a modality
     - OM specification
     - Disbursement tranches
     - Narrative reports
     - Financial reports
     - Monitoring instances
   - Editing a modality
   - Deleting a modality
   - GMS tip: how to transpose the asterisk modalities in the OM template on GMS
   - GMS Focus: UN Agencies Operational Modalities

IV) Fixing the OM errors

V) How to submit the Operational Modalities template for approval?
   - What is the Operational Modality template tracking tab?

I) What are Operational Modalities? Top
The risk rating of non-UN partners has a direct impact on the control mechanisms that will be applied to their projects should they ever get CBPF funding. The assurance mechanisms that are used to manage grants vary depending on three factors:

i. Partner risk level  
ii. Budget value of the project  
iii. Duration of the project

These “operational modalities” are applied by OCHA as a minimum standard for CBPFs, and consist of determining the following elements:

i. Disbursement policy (i.e. number and percentage of disbursements)  
ii. Funding ceiling  
iii. Monitoring visits  
iv. Financial spot checks  
v. Narrative reporting requirements  
vi. Financial reporting requirements  
vii. Project audit

Here is an example of an Operational Modalities table.
The set of Operational Modalities for each fund is included in the Fund’s Handbook.

To ensure implementation and respect of these modalities, they must be saved in the GMS. This article is here to provide guidance on how to insert and save the modalities in the system.

**OPERATIONAL MODALITIES WORKFLOW IN THE GMS**
II) How to create a new set of Operational Modalities in the GMS? (HFU)  

ACCESSING THE OPERATIONAL MODALITIES MODULE ON GMS
To access the Operational Modalities module, follow this navigation:
System Setup > Configuration Setup > Operation Modality Configuration
The 'Manage Operation Modalities' module of the GMS allows authorized users to view existing OM templates, as well as create a new template in case of a change in the OM.

*Please note* that the template currently active and applied when approving new projects will be the most recent one (i.e. the template that does not have an end date).

In our example above, the currently active OM template is hence ‘Lebanon Humanitarian Fund – 2020 OM’, template code LEB005.

You can find a brief description of this page’s elements below:
CREATING/CLONING A NEW OM TEMPLATE

To create a new set of Operational Modalities on the GMS, you can choose between the below two options:

1- Create a new OM template from scratch
2- Clone an existing template

1- Create a new OM template from scratch:

To create an empty OM template which you will have to populate with all modalities, click on [Add New Template].

In the template’s page, enter the Template’s name (please always include the year in the template’s name), the start date of the OM, as well as the date the Advisory board approved the OM. To learn more about the date requirements, please refer to the below section.

Please tick the box ‘Pooled Fund’. If you are creating a Global OM Template, please tick the Global box.
Do not forget to click on [save and stay] or [save and exit] to save your template.

*Please note, it is not possible to create and save a new template if there is a draft pending approval in the template’s list. In this case, you must either edit the draft template already existing in the list, or delete it before creating a new template.

2- Clone an existing template
You can create a new OM template by cloning an existing one. This method is likely to be more time-efficient than creating an empty template, as you will be able to edit the modalities as necessary, instead of creating them all from scratch.

To do so, click on the clone icon of the template’s line you wish to clone. In the pop-up window, tick the Pooled Fund box and click on [Clone].

The new template is created at the top of the OM templates’ list, and its status is under ‘draft’.
CONFIGURING THE OPERATIONAL MODALITY DRAFT TEMPLATE

To edit the new OM template, click on the edit icon 📝 of its line.

To properly configure a new OM template, whether cloned or new, you will need to fill in the below mandatory fields.
**Template name:** Please enter here the template’s name. In case of a cloned template, this field will bear the name of the other template, please change it accordingly. Please always include the OM’s year in the template’s name.

**Start Date:** Please enter here the start date of this OM template on the GMS. The start date should reflect when the Operational Modalities have started being applied to approved projects.

**What about the end date of the template?**
You are not required to enter the end date of the OM template. When a new OM template is approved on the GMS, the end date of the previous template is automatically generated by the system. It is set by the GMS as the day before the start date of the new template.

**Advisory Approved Date:** Please enter here the date of approval by the Advisory Board. Please note that this date CANNOT BE set after the start date of the OM template. If it is the case, the GMS will display an error message at the top, and will not allow to submit the template for technical approval by GMS Admin.

**Add Document/ Download all files:** It is MANDATORY to upload and save the Fund’s FULL Operational Handbook in PDF format, including the OM table. If the handbook is not uploaded, the GMS will display an error message and will block the submission of the OM template to technical approval.
Do not forget to click on [Save and Stay] or [Save and Exit] to save your changes.

The rest of the template is composed of all the operational modalities as set in the Fund’s Operational Handbook. Each line corresponds to one unique modality. *Please note, in case of a new empty template, there will be no modalities saved yet. You will need to create all the lines. To learn how to do so, please refer to this section of the article.*

Columns Description:

- **Id**: displays the modality code, or ID. Each modality has a unique ID code, which allows for easier identification process during the project Timelines’ setup for instance.
- **Partner type**: displays the Partner’s type. In the GMS template, modalities are broken down by Risk Level and by Partner Type to reflect all possible configurations.
- **Risk Level**: Displays the Partner’s Risk Level.
- **Duration**: Displays the project’s duration range taken into consideration by the modality.
• **Budget:** Displays the project’s budget range taken into consideration by the modality.
• **Disbursements:** Displays the disbursements tranches of the modality.
• **Financial reporting:** Displays the financial reporting requirements as set by the modality.
• **Narrative Reporting:** Displays the narrative reporting requirements as set by the modality.
• **Monitoring:** Displays the monitoring requirements as set by the modality.
• **Actions:** Displays the actions’ icons, namely view, edit, or delete, as well as the user(s) who created and last updated the template (with the corresponding dates).

After configuring the OM template and adding/editing all modality lines, do not forget to click on **[save and stay]** or **[save and exit]** before leaving the page.

III) How to populate the Operational Modalities template? (HFU) **Top**

From the template’s draft page, HFU officers are required to insert all operational modalities as set in the Fund’s Operational Handbook.

**ADDING A MODALITY**

To add a new modality line, click on **[Add new Operation Modality]**.

**Configuring the modality on GMS**
**Operation Modality**

*Draft*

### Operation Modality Specification

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><em>Partner type</em></th>
<th><em>Risk Level</em></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Select Partner Type</td>
<td>Select Risk Level</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>*Duration From:</th>
<th>*Duration To:</th>
<th>*Budget From:</th>
<th>*Budget To:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Possible values: &gt;, &lt;, &lt;=, &gt;=, No Limit</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Disbursement Tranches

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tranche #</th>
<th>Tranche Percent</th>
<th>User Actions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>Add Tranche</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Financial Reports

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Report Type</th>
<th>Is Mandatory</th>
<th>Required for Year End</th>
<th>User Action</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

- [Add Financial Report](#)

### Narrative Reports

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Report Type</th>
<th>Report Count</th>
<th>Is Mandatory</th>
<th>User Action</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

- [Add Narrative Report](#)

### Monitoring

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Monitoring Type</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>One / Partner / Year</th>
<th>User Action</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

- [Add Monitoring](#)
Fields Description:

• **Partner Type**: Select from the drop-down list the partner type this modality applies to.

• **Risk Level**: Select from the drop-down list the partner risk level this modality applies to.

• **Duration from**: Enter in this field the minimum number of months taken into consideration by this modality (for instance, for a modality which applies to a project from 0 to 3 months, enter 0 in this field).

  Select from drop-down list next to the field whether the minimum duration is strictly greater than (>), or greater than or equal to (≥) the number of months inserted. (For instance, for a modality which applies to projects from 7 to 12 months, you need to enter 7 in this field, and you can select the superior and equal (≥) sign)

• **Duration To**: Enter in this field the maximum number of months taken into consideration by the modality (for instance, for a modality which applies to a project from 0 to 3 months, enter 3 in this field).

  Select from drop-down list next to the field whether the maximum duration is strictly less than (<), or less than or equal to (≤) the number of months inserted. (For instance, for a modality which applies to projects from 0 to less than 3 months, you need to enter 3 in this field, and you can select the strictly inferior sign (<). This means that the 3 months + 1 day projects will not be included in this modality line, but will be included in the modality which applies to [3 to XX months] projects).

If the modality does not include a duration top limit, please tick the box **[no limit]**.

• **Budget From**: Enter in this field the minimum budget taken into consideration by the modality (for instance, for a modality which applies to a project with a budget from 0 to 250 000 $US, enter 0 in this field).

• **Budget to**: Enter in this field the maximum budget amount taken into consideration by the modality (for instance, for a modality which applies to a project with a budget from 250 000 to 500 000 $US, enter 500 000 in this field).

If the modality does not include a budget top limit, please tick the box **[no limit]**.

Do not forget to click on **[save and stay]** or **[save and exit]**.

**Disbursement tranches:**
To add the disbursement tranches of the modality, click on **[Add tranche]**. Enter the tranche percentage in the editable field, then repeat the process for all tranches, according to the modality.
Do not forget to click on [save and stay] or [save and exit].

If the tranches’ sum does not amount to 100%, the system will display an error message. This message will disappear once the tranches’ sum amount to 100% and you click on [Save].

**Financial Reports:**
To add the Financial Reporting requirements, click on [Add Financial Report]. Select from the drop-down list the type of Financial Report, tick the ‘Is mandatory’ box if the report is mandatory, and tick the ‘Required for year end’ box if it is a year-end required report.
Repeat the process to add all financial reports’ requirements.

Do not forget to click on [save and stay] or [save and exit].
**Narrative reports:**

To add the Narrative reporting requirements, click on [Add Narrative Report]. Select from the drop-down list the report type, enter in the field the number of this report type that is required, and tick the ‘Is Mandatory’ box if this(ese) report(s) is(are) mandatory.

![Narrative Reports Table]

Do not forget to click on [save and stay] or [save and exit].

**Monitoring**

To add a monitoring requirement, click on [Add Monitoring], select from the drop-down list whether it is a Monitoring visit or a Financial Spot Check, enter in the field the number of instances for this monitoring type. If the monitoring type is required for each partner per year, tick the box ‘One/Partner/Year’.

![Monitoring Table]

Do not forget to click on [save and stay] or [save and exit].

**After configuring the modality, do not forget to click on [save and stay] or [save and exit].**
To better understand how to configure a modality, let's take a concrete example and configure the line in red in the screenshot below, taken from the Global Operational Handbook Operational Modalities table.

![Operation Modality Table]

To configure the line in red, follow these steps:

1. Select the appropriate category in the Risk level column (High, Medium, Low, or N/A).
2. Enter the corresponding values in the Project duration (months) and Project value (thousand USD) columns.
3. Ensure that the Maximum amount per project (thousand USD) is correctly set.
4. Complete the Disbursements (in % of total) values accordingly.
5. Fill in the Financial reporting columns for For disbursments, St-Jan, Final, Progress, and Final.
6. For Narrative reporting, indicate the project monitoring and financial spot-check activities.
7. In the Monitoring column, specify the audit cycle as per plan.
8. For UN Agencies, set the values as required for each category.
Below is how this line should be configured on the GMS:

*Please note* that audit requirements are not configured in this module of the GMS. To learn more about audit requirements, please refer to this article of the Help Portal.

**EDITING A MODALITY**

To edit a modality already saved in the template, click on the edit icon of its line.
*Please note*, it is not possible to edit a modality in a template which has been approved.

**DELETING A MODALITY**

To delete a modality already saved in the template, click on the red cross of its line.

*Please note*, it is not possible to delete a modality line of a template which has been approved.

**GMS tip: How to transpose the asterisk modalities in the OM template on GMS**

There are cases where you will need to create multiple modality lines even though the modality fits on one line in the OM table of the Operational Handbook. This will be the case when you see asterisks in the OM table of the handbook.

For instance, in the screenshot below, you can see the modality which is outlined has different narrative and monitoring requirements depending on project duration. According to the table, 10-months projects and more will require 3 progress narrative reports and 2 monitoring visits.
To properly reflect this in the GMS OM module, you are required to split the modality in your OM into two different lines in the GMS, as shown in the screenshot below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Risk level</th>
<th>Project duration (months)</th>
<th>Project value (thousand USD)</th>
<th>Maximum amount per project (thousand USD)</th>
<th>Disbursements (in % of total)</th>
<th>Financial reporting</th>
<th>Narrative reporting</th>
<th>Monitoring</th>
<th>Audit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>NGO</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>&lt; 7</td>
<td>&lt; 250</td>
<td>00-40</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>1 mid</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>&gt; 250</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>60-60</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>1 mid</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>&gt; 250</td>
<td>800</td>
<td>40-30-30</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>2 - 3*</td>
<td>1-2**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>&lt; 7</td>
<td>&lt; 250</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>60-60</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>1 mid</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>&gt; 250</td>
<td>700</td>
<td>60-60</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>1 mid</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>&gt; 250</td>
<td>1,200</td>
<td>40-60</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>1 mid</td>
<td>0-1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>&lt; 7</td>
<td>&lt; 400</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>60-60</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>1 mid</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>&gt; 400</td>
<td>1,000</td>
<td>60-60</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>1 mid</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>&gt; 400</td>
<td>800-2000</td>
<td>60-60</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>1 mid</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Three progress reports are only required for projects of 10 months or more.
** Additional field visits are only required for projects of 10 months or more.
*** Monitoring arrangements for projects implemented by UN agencies will be determined at the country level according to specific agreements outlined by the HC and the AE. Monitoring of UN agency projects is mandatory and should be based on a sampling methodology considering country-specific factors as required (see 4.5 Monitoring).
The OM module on GMS requires a specific configuration regarding UN Agencies’ modalities. Although the UN Agencies do not have associated Risk Level in the operational modalities as defined in the handbook, the GMS requires HFU officers to configure the UN Agencies’ modalities as if they had Risk Levels. Therefore, the HFU must enter and save the UN modalities 3 times, for Low, Medium, and High Risk Level, as you can see in the screenshot below.

If all Risk Levels are not saved for UN Agencies, the system will display the following error message:
"The combination of Partner type and Risk level should be covered in order to make the operation modality valid"
The system will consequently prevent users to approve the OM template. To fix this error, please make sure that the UN Agencies modalities are entered 3 times, once for each Risk Level. You can also refer to the below section on troubleshooting.

IV) Fixing the errors preventing from submitting the OM template

The GMS will issue error messages in case of an invalid entry. If you encounter one of the errors messages displayed in red, the system will not allow the OM template to be submitted for technical approval. Please find below all the different error messages you can see, and how to fix the problem.

- The combination of Partner type and Risk level should be covered in order to make the operation modality valid
- Start date can not be blank / Approved date can not be blank
- Start date of the template should be greater than the existing templates. Please change the start date.
- Invalid template as there is no operational modality defined under this template.
- Please upload Pooled fund operational handbook against each operational modality template which will be published on the CBPF BI portal (CBPF Data Hub)
- Issues Found in this template, please correct them to proceed further

1- The combination of Partner type and Risk level should be covered in order to make the operation modality valid
This error will appear when the system detects missing data. In order to complete the Operational Modalities template, all partner types and risk levels should be reflected. This means that the HFU must create the modalities for both:

- UN Partners
- Non-UN partners

And should, for both partner types, reflect the modalities applicable for all three Risk Levels:

- High Risk Level,
- Medium Risk level
- Low Risk level

Please make sure that UN Agencies’ modalities are entered 3 times to reflect all risk levels! Even if UN Agencies do not have associated Risk Levels, the GMS requires this configuration in the Operational Modalities module to approve the OM template. To know more about this, please refer to this section of the Help Portal article.

To solve this error, make sure that all combinations of Partner Types and Risk Levels are covered before clicking on [save and stay].

2- Start date cannot be blank / Approved date cannot be blank
The system will display this error message when you save the template without inserting the template’s Start Date or Approved by Advisory Board date. Both date fields are located at the top of the template (see screenshot above). Please fill in these fields before clicking on [save] to solve the error.

3. **Start date of the template should be greater than the existing templates. Please change the start date.**
The system will store all previously saved OM templates in the list displayed in the ‘Manage Operation Modality’ page. There can only be one authorized set of Operational Modalities for a specific period, and the templates should be listed in a chronological order. Therefore, you cannot save a template which start date is included or lower than an already approved template from the list.

For instance, if the current list of OM templates on GMS is the following:

And you wish to create a new template for the year 2021, this 2021 new template’s start date cannot be before ‘01/06/2020’ (the start date of the 2020 OM template). The start date of the 2021 template must be later than ‘01/06/2020’.

4. Invalid template as there is no operational modality defined under this template.
This error message will be displayed by the system when the template is empty, i.e. when there are no operational modality lines in the template. To solve this error, the HFU must fill in the template with the OM, as they are defined in the Fund’s operational handbook.

5. **Please upload Pooled fund operational handbook against each operational modality template which will be published on the CBPF Data Hub**
This error message will be displayed by the system when the Fund’s Operational Manual has not been uploaded. The Fund’s OM must be uploaded for each Operational Modalities template on GMS. The HFU can upload the manual at the top of the template’s page by clicking on [add document] (please see screenshot above).

*Please note* that following donors’ requirements, the operational handbooks of all funds are published on the CBPF Data Hub, under the Allocation Timeline visualization.

6- Issues Found in this template, please correct them to proceed further (blank error message box)
The system will display this error message when it detects a discrepancy in the data inserted in the Operational Modality lines. It often points out to either budget or duration mismatches. To locate the discrepancy when seeing this message, scroll down to see the modality lines, and look for an error icon ▲ in the lines.
For instance, in the screenshot above, we can see that there is an overlap in the budget distribution between the two lines.

- The first line (2060) has a budget range from 0 to 350,000 USD (non-UN partner, high risk level, duration 0 to 7).
- However the second line (2061) has a budget range from 250,000 to 500,000 USD (same characteristics: non-UN partner, high risk level, duration 0 to 7).

Which means that projects with a budget ranging from 250,000 to 350,000 USD could theoretically be linked to either of these two lines, which is impossible, as each project should only have the possibility to be linked to one modality line.

To solve this discrepancy, one of the lines must be modified. To do so, click on the pen icon of the line, and check the configuration. The system should also indicate an error message in the modality line page. In our situation, the following message is displayed: ‘Budget To is within existing range’.
Modify the budget range and click on [Save] before exiting the modality line page. Back in the template draft, the error icon from the OM lines should disappear. Then click on [Save and Stay] at the top of the template’s page to save the whole OM template. The error message ‘Issues Found in this template, please correct them to proceed further’ should also disappear.

V) How to submit the Operational Modalities template for technical approval?  **Top**

Once your OM template is finalized on GMS, you need to submit it to technical review by GMS Support. To submit it, please send an email to GMS Support, copying the Programme Unit in New York, to notify them that the new OM template needs to be reviewed and approved on GMS. GMS Support will make sure that the Programme Unit in New York has reviewed and approved your new Operational Modalities, and that all the modalities are properly transposed into the GMS module, before approving the template on the system. Once the OM is approved on GMS, it will start being applied to newly approved projects as of the Start Date saved in the template. The OM line is linked to each project’s Timelines at Budget Approval stage, so it is important to make sure that the correct OM template is saved and approved on GMS before new projects reach the Budget Approval stage. [To learn more on the Timelines process and OM linkage, please refer to this article.]

After the OM template is approved and linked to projects, it is no longer possible to edit nor delete it.

**WHAT IS THE OPERATIONAL MODALITY TEMPLATE TRACKING TAB?**
The Operation Modality Template tracking tab allows users to track the who, what, when, pertaining to the approval of the OM template. This tab shows all the steps of the OM workflow, including the dates when its status changed, and the user who pushed it to the next stage.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Template Name</th>
<th>Operation Modality - Yemen - 2020</th>
<th>Start Date</th>
<th>01/05/2020</th>
<th>End Date</th>
<th>Status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Review</td>
<td></td>
<td>(05/05/2020 11:21 AM)</td>
<td>Approved</td>
<td>Approved</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Draft</td>
<td></td>
<td>(04/05/2020 05:14 PM)</td>
<td>Review</td>
<td>Review</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- ©2021 OCHA-GMS.
Contact Information | Terms Of Use | Privacy Statement | Download offline copy of website