

GUIDANCE NOTE 2021

Introduction

1. The main purpose of this Guidance Note is to explain the characteristics of the Global Assistance Fund and provide practical information on the operation and management of the Fund.
2. The IOM Global Assistance Fund (GAF), established in 2000, is an emergency fund that offers personalized immediate protection and sustainable direct assistance to migrants in vulnerable circumstances across the globe.
3. GAF's objective is to contribute to migration management through the adoption of sustainable and integrated assistance solutions to vulnerable migrants across the world. By identifying the vulnerabilities of migrants in their countries of origin, along transit routes, or in host countries through the work of IOM and partners, and by providing these migrants with the support to recover and regain independence, GAF addresses root causes of irregular and unsafe migration, empowers the implementation of appropriate case management procedures to strengthen national protection systems, and counters the impact of human traffickers and smugglers among vulnerable communities.
4. GAF works closely with IOM country and regional offices worldwide, as well as with governments and partners, to identify and assist vulnerable migrants. GAF builds their capacity by providing technical support, guiding them through the case management process, delivering the financial support to assist vulnerable migrants and ensuring the assistance is timely, effective, and sustainable.

Main characteristics of the IOM Global Assistance Fund

5. IOM's approach to migrant vulnerability is rooted in the belief that the human rights of all migrants should be upheld and promoted and that all migrants who are vulnerable to violence, exploitation, and abuse should be afforded the protection and assistance services they require, irrespective of membership in any particular group or if they hold any particular status.
6. The Global Assistance Fund exists to cover protection and assistance gaps existent in the world. The Fund operates as an option of last resort, only assisting migrants that are identified in locations where local actors and regional programs have very limited or no capacity to address their urgent needs. Requesting IOM Country Offices or partners are responsible for assessing availability of funds at the national level, for example from government programmes, other IOM projects, NGOs, etc. before reaching out to GAF. The GAF manager identifies potential other sources of contributory funding at the global or regional levels.
7. GAF aims to deliver personalized services that address the specific vulnerabilities of migrants in a comprehensive and sustainable manner. The GAF team assesses migrant vulnerability using

standardized procedures that examine individual, household, community, and structural risk factors that increase vulnerability, and explore the unique situation and experiences of each migrant.

8. For GAF, case closure ideally comes once the migrant's case is sustainably resolved, for example through safe and dignified return and sustainable reintegration, successful local integration, or regular onward migration, with sufficient recovery from their experiences to allow them to achieve a state of well-being and self-sufficiency. Funding restrictions, migrant drop-out and other constraints may not make this always possible.

Beneficiaries

9. The beneficiaries of the Global Assistance Fund are migrants in extreme vulnerable situations across the world.
10. Migrants eligible for protection and assistance under the Fund include:
 - Migrants vulnerable to or who have experienced violence, exploitation and abuse;
 - Victims of trafficking;
 - Unaccompanied or separated migrant children;
 - Migrants in extreme psychological and physical distress with identified protection concerns (e.g., victims of torture or rights violations; kidnap, ransom, or arbitrary detention cases; etc.);
 - Stranded and/or smuggled migrants who require return assistance (including migrants in vulnerable situations and/or migrants with health needs).
 - Migrants unable to effectively realize their human rights and/or human dignity due to an inability to meet their own basic needs or those of their dependents as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.
11. GAF works across the world and assists migrants identified in any regions of the globe. However, some donors may have some geographical requirements. The GAF team will assess each application against GAF's eligibility requirements, and if the case is not eligible for geographical reasons, the team will try to match it with appropriate funding streams.

Funding for assistance

12. As GAF aims to deliver personalized services that address the specific vulnerabilities of migrants in a comprehensive and sustainable manner, the budget approved for protection and assistance varies on a case-by-case basis depending on the particular needs of each migrant and on funding availability.
13. The amount approved varies depending on the particular needs of each migrant on a case-by-case basis, but the following values are a general reference:
 - The average services cost for an individual is USD 200 per month, plus a maximum of USD 500 total for additional needs; and USD 500 per month for a family, with possibility to reach USD 1,500 more in total for additional needs.

- Migrants are also eligible for return or relocation assistance, as well as a one-time in-kind or cash assistance of USD 1,500 for an individual and USD 3,000 for a family for their (re)integration. The case worker will discuss and plan with the migrant so that the financial assistance for (re)integration is applied sustainably, contributing to, for example, invest in equipment, training and start-up a business.

Duration of assistance

14. All eligible migrants can be provided with initial basic assistance, consisting of in-kind or cash assistance, for a maximum period of three months. Exceptionally, an extension of the assistance can be considered up to six months upon the submission of an extension request by the case worker.
15. For highly vulnerable migrants with identified protection needs, the assistance can last up to six months. Exceptionally, an extension of the assistance can be considered up to nine months upon the submission of an extension request by the case worker.
16. All cases must be closed within their timeframes unless the GAF team approves an exceptional extension request from the case worker.

Application procedures

17. GAF follows a case management approach that encompasses the following phases:
 - The caseworker from the requesting IOM Country Offices or partner organization is to complete the appropriate **GAF screening form** in paper or digital format and the **funding availability assessment form** (available online).
 - The GAF manager will approve or reject the case or refer it to another internal funding mechanism, based on eligibility criteria and funding possibilities.
 - If the GAF Manager approves the case under GAF, (s)he will notify the caseworker from the requesting IOM Country Office or partner organization normally within 48 hours.
 - The case worker will complete the **assistance planning and budget form** in paper or digital format and submit it to the GAF manager.
 - The GAF manager will review the assistance planning and budget form and will approve or work with the caseworker to revise as necessary. The GAF manager will also liaise with other local, global or internal contributing funds, if applicable, and will provide WBSs for each cost element.
 - At 3, 6 and 9 months (in case of longer-term assistance), the case worker is required to complete the **monitoring form** in paper or digital format, upon the beneficiary's consent.
 - At three months, the **case closure form or extension request** must be completed for basic assistance cases.
 - At six months, the case closure or extension request must be completed for protection assistance cases.

Monitoring of cases

18. Participating in monitoring is voluntary on the part of the person being assisted. For each GAF case, the case worker should ask the beneficiary if they are willing to participate in monitoring during and after the assistance has been delivered, explaining that participation is not mandatory and will not affect their eligibility for services.
19. The GAF team encourages case workers to monitor the case at 3, 6, and 9 months (in case of longer-term assistance), to assess if all protection and assistance needs are being adequately met, and if the migrant is recovering well.
20. Monitoring can include in-person visits or follow-up calls, as appropriate. GAF can support the costs associated with monitoring up to USD 200 per case. These funds can be used to cover the costs of travel in the case of in-person monitoring and costs of telecommunications. All expenses require prior approval from GAF.

Case closure

21. The GAF team recognizes that not all cases can be closed within a three months (for basic assistance cases) or six months (for extremely vulnerable cases) timeframe. In those situations, the case worker will discuss the case with the GAF manager to determine the way forward, including advocacy with the national authorities to assume responsibility for longer-term care and monitoring, as appropriate and when in the best interest of the migrant.

Cost sharing

22. The GAF manager will identify potential other sources of contributory funding at the global or regional levels, for example the IOM Humanitarian Assistance Fund for Stranded Migrants (HASM), the IOM Emergency Fund for Victims of Trafficking (EVA), and regional funding mechanisms (e.g., the Bali Process assisted voluntary return and reintegration fund, the Better Migration Management project, etc.). Requesting IOM Country Offices or partners are responsible for assessing availability of funds at the national level, for example from government programmes, other IOM projects, NGOs, etc.
23. In some cases, GAF may cost share the assistance with other program that is better placed to provide more support to that particular type of migrant or particular need.