



HRF Secretariat Report

The HRF Secretariat serves to support the work of the HRF Steering Committee and plays a coordinating role between the various entities making up the HRF governance structure. In this function, the Secretariat is responsible for delivering services in four areas:

1. Proposal Management;
2. Support to the Steering Committee;
3. Communications; and
4. Reporting.

In order to support these activities, the Secretariat also incurs expenses related to office management and travel. This report briefly summarizes the Secretariat's work in these areas since the last HRF Steering Committee Meeting, held on February 20, 2013.

1. Proposal management: This activity includes advising the Partner Entities and other entities interested in receiving financing from the HRF on proposal development and processing steps, receiving and processing project and program proposals, and advising the Steering Committee on the consistency between original concepts and final proposals in terms of objectives and financing needs.

Since the last Steering Committee meeting, the Secretariat has worked with its counterpart, the Ministry of Planning and External Cooperation (MPCE), the Ministry of Economy and Finance (MEF), relevant Partner Entities, line ministries, and Steering Committee members to try to advance several Project Concept Notes (PCNs) and project documents through the approval process. In particular, the Secretariat supported the MPCE to present several projects to the Council of Ministers, through the Prime Minister's Office and the President's Office. These include the US\$15 million school feeding program and the US\$3.5 million for the Support to the Implementation of the Education Plan and Reform Project. In addition, the Secretariat worked with the MPCE and MEF to create a streamlined approach to request financing for budget support operations. Through the new approach, the MEF can directly submit a request to the Council of Ministers without going through the MPCE. The MEF quickly applied these new procedures to present two budget support operations (US\$10 million and US\$13 million) to the Council of Ministers on August 8th. These operations were approved (though the second US\$13 million operation is awaiting finalization of the technical operation by the World Bank).

In addition, the Secretariat worked with the IDB to process the revised costing for the PCN for the Rehabilitation of the Peligre Transmission Line project. The revision resulted in a doubling

of the estimated cost for the project (from US\$8 million to US\$16 million) along with the need to request additional support from the HRF.

The Secretariat also worked with the MPCE to identify new focal points at the Ministry and the Prime Minister's officer following personnel changes. A new Special Advisor for External Cooperation was appointed by the Prime Minister who would fill the role played by the former Senior Technical Advisor, External Cooperation from the Prime Minister's Cabinet. The Secretariat briefed the new Special Advisor on the HRF and worked with him and the Director General to advance projects and get Council of Minister's approval.

To assess the efficiency of the HRF grant approval process, the Secretariat continues to analyze the performance of the HRF's overall grant approval process. On average, the full process took 106 days from the receipt of a project concept note to the transfer of funds to a Partner Entity¹. Summary information on the time required for each step of the process is provided in Attachment 1.

2. Steering Committee support: This activity involves: drafting and updating an Operations Manual to set out the Steering Committee's rules and procedures; organizing Steering Committee meetings (preparation of agenda and background materials in English and French, notification of members, venue logistics); drafting, circulating and disclosing minutes; responding to members concerning questions about Steering Committee matters; notifying the Trustee of funding requests approved by the Steering Committee and communicating instructions for the transfer of funds to Partner Entities; and performing any other functions assigned to the Secretariat by a decision of the Steering Committee.

The Secretariat successfully organized the Ninth and Tenth Steering Committee meetings, which were both held in Port-au-Prince on February 6th and February 20th, respectively. All necessary preparations for the Eleventh Steering Committee meeting, to be held on September 13, 2013, have been undertaken. The Steering Committee meeting will be held at the Inter-American Development Bank office in Port-au-Prince. Holding Steering Committee meetings at Partner Entity or Government offices saves administrative costs for the HRF. Other activities carried out in support of the Steering Committee include: briefing of the new HRF Chairperson and the new Special Advisor for External Cooperation; disclosure of the Trustee and Secretariat reports and minutes from the Ninth and Tenth Steering Committee meetings on the HRF website; communication of the decisions made at the Ninth and Tenth Steering Committee meeting to the Trustee and Partner Entities; liaising with the MPCE on forthcoming project proposals for HRF financing; and responding to a variety of member requests for information.

In response to a request from Norway to discuss the future of the HRF, the Secretariat prepared a discussion paper, with inputs from the Trustee, to support the discussion that will take place during the Eleventh Steering Committee meeting. The discussion paper lays out issues for consideration, three options and the consequences and cost implications for each of those options.

¹ The average includes only those projects (14) which have completed all steps, i.e. funds have been transferred to the Partner Entity.

3. Communications: For this activity, the HRF Secretariat is required to: provide public information on HRF activities; develop and maintain the HRF website in English and French; develop and implement a communications strategy for stakeholders including Haitian beneficiaries, the Haitian and international media, and development partners; design and popularize the HRF “brand” (logo and slogan) in a manner that promotes donor visibility; and respond to inquiries from existing and potential donors, as well as the media.

Since the last Steering Committee meeting, the Secretariat has:

- Finalized 2 radio spots, which will be disseminated in September 2013
- Finalized an animated video, which will be disseminated in September 2013
- Issued the Press Release for decisions made at the last Steering Committee meeting
- Organized a photo exhibit at *Institut Francais* in Port-au-Prince, featuring photos taken of different HRF-financed projects
- Hired a new communications officer
- Met with media to maintain awareness about the HRF and its activities
- Conducted field visits to stay updated on the progress of the projects and take photos of the sites
- Met with partners to keep them informed of the activities
- Prepared and ordered new promotional materials including:
 - T-shirts
 - Pens
 - Pads
 - Stickers

The promotional materials will be distributed in October 2013.

In addition, the Secretariat met with project proponents and other interested parties, at their request, to explain the functioning of the HRF and provide any additional information required. The Secretariat proactively met with different media representatives to discuss the HRF.

4. Reporting: The Secretariat is responsible for: receiving and consolidating annual reports on implementation results; receiving periodic/quarterly reports submitted by the Partner Entities for distribution to the Steering Committee and all HRF donors; collaborating with the Trustee to ensure that the Trustee has all the information necessary to carry out its responsibilities; and responding to public inquiries concerning implementation results and financial performance.

The Secretariat prepared and distributed the Spring 2013 Quarterly Update. In addition the Secretariat prepared the 2012-2013 Annual Report for review by the Steering Committee. Following inputs from Committee members, both English and French texts have now been finalized. The graphic design and printing work have also been contracted locally through a competitive process.

5. Office and travel: In order to fulfill its responsibilities, the Secretariat is responsible for: equipping and maintaining an office; maintaining a vehicle and driver; financing the communications strategy; printing reports and other documents for Steering Committee

meetings; and translating communications materials, reports and Steering Committee documents. Since the last Steering Committee meeting, the Fund Manager presented the HRF experience and lessons learned at the following events: in March 2013 at the Aid and International Development Forum in Bangkok; in May 2013 at Forum on Fragile and Post-Conflict States organized by the World Bank in Washington/ Nairobi / Juba / Harare / Kabul / Islamabad / Jakarta; and, in June 2013 at the Haiti Renewal Alliance' conference in Washington, DC. To maintain mobility, the Secretariat procured a new vehicle to replace its original transportation. Once the new vehicle has cleared customs and been licensed, the existing HRF vehicle will be donated to the Government.

6. **Secretariat FY13 activities.** Following Steering Committee approval of the Secretariat and Trustee budgets for FY13 in June 2012, the HRF Secretariat prepared its third year work program covering the period from July 2012 – June 2013. With a portfolio of seventeen projects, the Secretariat continued its focus on reporting, with three short quarterly updates (Fall, Winter and Spring) and a larger annual report (prepared during the summer). A review of the HRF was authorized during the latter half of the year and should be undertaken during the fourth year of HRF operations. The review would take stock of the HRF's performance and explore options for the future of the HRF. The review should address several dimensions of the HRF's performance, including efficient, effectiveness, both in terms of development impact and operational performance, and generate lessons learned. The outcomes of this exercise would then be summarized in the next HRF annual report. Following a transparent international competitive bidding process, and with guidance from an Advisory Group composed of Steering Committee members and observers, a firm was identified to undertake the mid-term review. Contracting of the firm is now awaiting a final decision by the Steering Committee.

The Secretariat will continue to provide a Secretariat Report at each Steering Committee meeting and will work with the Partner Entities to increase the project-level results reporting. The HRF Secretariat is actively engaged in increasing HRF visibility and communications activities by implementing the communications strategy, including dissemination of radio and television spots, press releases to announce major funding decisions, distribution of promotional materials, maintaining the HRF website in French and English, and supervising the Input Tracking System. In terms of proposal management, the HRF Secretariat will continue to work with the MPCE on the project pipeline and monitor the performance of the grant approval process. Finally, the Secretariat will continue to provide support to the Steering Committee on a day-to-day basis.

7. **Secretariat budget.** The Secretariat had a US\$148,548 underrun from the FY13 budget of US\$845,000 approved by the Steering Committee. This large savings is due to: a) the ability of Secretariat staff to charge portions of their time to other activities that are not financed by the HRF, b) an inability to post the purchase of the replacement vehicle to the FY13 budget and c) competitive contracting of services. These savings were returned to the general HRF account. The cost of the vehicle was not anticipated in FY14's budget so it may have consequences for our spending in FY14.

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The Trustee expenditures for FY13 were US\$123,000 for an underrun of US\$59,000 from the budget of US\$182,000 approved by the Steering Committee. The combined underrun of the Secretariat and Trustee for FY13 totals US\$207,548 or 20% of the approved budget.

The Steering Committee approved the allocation of US\$892,000 for the FY14 budget for the Secretariat and Trustee. In the Secretariat and Trustee's continuing effort to control HRF administrative expenses, the proposal represents a 13% reduction from FY13 and a 47% reduction from the original FY11 budget.

7. *Personnel changes.* The Secretariat hired a new Communications Officer, Ms. Bertovna Bourdeau Grimard, to replace the outgoing one (Ms. Berdine Edmond). A recruitment process has also been initiated to replace Ms. Maria Kim as the HRF Operations Officer.

ATTACHMENT 1

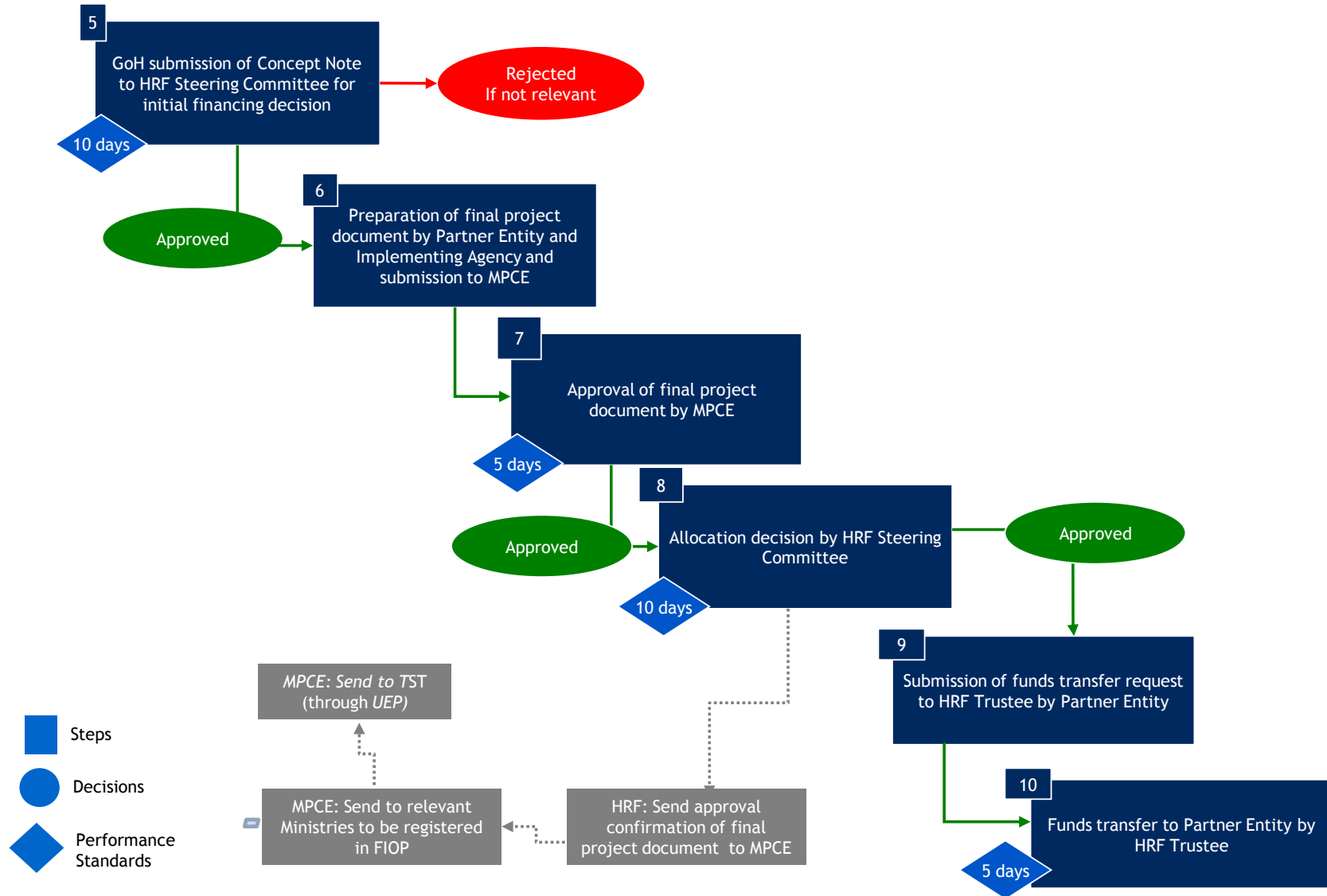
Performance of HRF Grant Approval Process

1. HRF grant approval process – The new grant approval process was approved by the Steering Committee in July 2012, but the process remains similar to the previous one, consisting of six simple steps as detailed in Figure 1. New performance standards will be established by the MPCE with the support of the Secretariat. The HRF grant approval process is aligned with the MPCE project review process to facilitate a fluid processing of funding requests.

2. Average processing time - As of July 2013, the average processing time from the submission of a project concept note to the HRF by the GoH up until the transfer of funds by the Trustee to the Partner Entity was 106 days² with the total processing time per project varying from 11 days for the IHRC Capacity Building Program to 178 days for the Reconstruction of the Education Sector project (Figure 2). On average almost half of the processing time (51.9 days) was used to prepare the full project document. The performance standard for the approval of the project concept note and the approval of the full project document by the HRF Steering Committee and the GoH were closely adhered to with these steps taking respectively on average 9.7, 7.9 and 7.4 days, cumulatively representing less than 24 percent of the total processing time. The HRF showed its capacity to rapidly respond to Government financing requests by processing the request for funding of the first phase of President Martelly's priority 16 Neighborhoods/6 Camps projects within two months.

² The average includes only those projects (14) which have completed all steps, i.e. funds have been transferred to the PE.

Figure 1: HRF Grant Approval Process



**Figure 2: HRF Project Preparation and Implementation Timeline
(Number of Days)
Data as of September 30, 2012**

