
Covid-19: Temporary exemptions for partners with an agreement in accordance with the template for Non-governmental organisations (NGOs)

The Covid-19 epidemic has profound worldwide consequences. Norad recognizes the challenges that you and your organisations now experience. We understand that it may be necessary to adjust agreed-upon plans and budgets. Therefore, Norad has decided to make some temporary exemptions to our standard requirements for grant management for partners with an agreement in accordance with the template for Non-governmental organisations (NGOs). We present these temporary exemptions below. They will be valid until 30.09.2020. All other provisions of the agreements remain valid and in effect.

Please note that our grant agreements already allow for some flexibility when needed. The temporary exemptions described below open for additional adjustments in these extraordinary times. If for example you are not able to adhere to the deadlines for reporting, mid-term reviews, evaluations etc as specified in the Agreement due to Covid-19, you may send a request for postponement to Norad by e-mail. Such a request should include a short explanation and a proposed new date for submission. Norad will do its utmost to accommodate for such delays.

If there is a need in your organisation to make use of any of these temporary exemptions, please read the information carefully. We also encourage you to have a close dialogue with us to discuss the best way forward.

1. Standard requirement in the Agreement's General Conditions, Article 12.2 (d) on the requirement of preapproval of changes in the project's annual budget which entails a reallocation of more than 10% per budget line.

Temporary exemption: The threshold for preapproval has been increased to 20% for 2020.

Necessary reallocations between budget lines of up to 20% to accommodate for changes in the working environment due to Covid-19 can now be made without written preapproval. This flexibility may be used for adaption and mitigation measures to reduce the spread of the virus among staff, partners and others directly affected by project activities, to facilitate the continuation of activities within the project, as well as for adjustments of input factors. This flexibility is limited to activities contributing to the agreed outcomes and impact of the project.

2. Standard requirement in the Agreement's General Conditions, Article 12.2. c) that any changes to the implementation plan which implies a delay of more than three months of any activity is subject to Norad's prior written approval.

Temporary exemption: Necessary adjustments to the implementation plan timeline and activities due to Covid-19 in order to achieve the agreed upon expected results can now be made without prior written approval. Future reports must reflect deviations from the original implementation plan and clearly explain and justify changes.

3. Standard requirement in the Agreement's General Conditions, Article 12.2. b) that any changes to the results framework or scope of the Project is subject to Norad's prior written approval.

Temporary exemption: Necessary adjustments at the *output level* due to Covid-19 in order to achieve agreed outcomes and impact can now be made without prior written approval if the following preconditions are ensured by our agreement partner:

- Such changes will not imply entering into new countries.
- Our agreement partner will use its existing networks and expertise.
- All project activities and outputs still qualify as official development assistance (ODA) according to OECD DAC's criteria.
- Future reports will reflect the original results framework and clearly explain and justify changes.

4. Normal procedure is that changes to the results statements at outcome level require a signed addendum.

Temporary exemption: Necessary adjustments to the *results statements at outcome level* due to Covid-19 can be made *with a prior written approval by Norad*. Please note that any such adjustments should still contribute to the agreed impact. Norad will not open for new outcomes from a different thematic area (e.g. in an education project, new outcomes may be proposed due to the extraordinary context of Covid-19 but they should still be education specific and not new health objectives).

If you need to make such adjustments of results statements at outcome level, you may send a request by e-mail to Norad. Such a request can be rather short, but it must include:

- Explanation of the changes that are needed in order to contribute to the agreed impact. Please specify which outcome(s) in the agreed results framework will have to be adjusted/postponed/abandoned and specify potential new results statements at outcome level. Please also include an overall explanation of the implications for your main deliverables (outputs).
- Justification of the presented changes, i.e. why these changes are necessary due to Covid-19.
- Overall presentation of plan for collection of results information (e.g. post epidemic evaluation etc.).
- Risk analysis related to the proposed changes, including risk for causing harm on the surroundings.
- Assurance that the changes will not imply entering into new countries and that existing networks and expertise will be used.
- Assurance that all project activities and outputs still qualify as official development assistance (ODA) according to OECD DAC's criteria.

Please note that future reports will have to reflect the original results framework and clearly explain changes made.

5. Standard requirements in the Agreement's Specific Conditions, Article 5.5, that disbursements are subject to Norad's receipt and approval of the progress and financial reports.

Temporary exemption: Disbursements may now be made before reports have been received and approved.

Disbursements are no longer conditional on the receipt and approval of the progress and the financial reports. Hence, for the time period of this temporary exception, the due dates for progress and the financial reports may be postponed, but Norad may still make disbursements. All other articles under Specific Conditions, Chapter 5 Disbursements, remain valid and in effect.