

## UK Aid Match Round Five theme guidance: longer term impacts of COVID-19

Many of the Global Goals were off track before the pandemic but systematic improvement had been seen over the last 10 years. In [a recent report](#) released by Every Woman Every Child, it states there has been remarkable progress in improving the health of the world's women, children and adolescents, with under-five deaths reaching an all-time recorded low in 2019, and more than 1 billion children having been vaccinated over the past decade. Coverage of immunization, skilled birth attendant and access to safe drinking water reached over 80 per cent. Maternal deaths have declined by 35 per cent since 2000, with the most significant declines occurring from 2010. An estimated 25 million child marriages were also prevented over the past decade, says the report.

However, according to the Gates Foundation's [Goalkeeper](#) report, this year this progress has regressed; vaccine coverage in 2020 is at the same level as the 1990 level. The impact of the pandemic is likely to set achievement of the Global Goals back. The trajectory of the pandemic and impact of rates of infection predicted on lower income countries has not happened as the experts had predicted. This is possibly due to several factors such as the younger demographic profile of lower income countries or possible pre-existing immunity. However, the longer-term impacts of COVID-19 will be felt more strongly by these countries. The coronavirus-induced recession this year will cause global GDP to shrink by 4.5 per cent, the OECD said in its [interim economic outlook](#) in September 2020, this is better than the 6 per cent forecast earlier on in the year but far below the pre-COVID forecast.

The OECD states that prospects for an inclusive, resilient and sustainable economic growth will depend on a range of factors including the likelihood of new outbreaks of the virus, how well individuals observe health measures and restrictions, consumer and business confidence and the extent to which government support to maintain jobs and businesses succeeds in boosting demand. This economic downturn will impact on businesses and supply chains hitting the most impoverished. According to the Gates Foundation, the impact on individuals has been colossal: extreme poverty has risen by seven per cent in just a few months, with 37 million people now living on less than \$1.90 a day. The Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation ([IHME](#)) estimates poverty has increased by seven per cent in the last few months alone.

UK Aid Match recognises that the impact is likely to be greater on women and girls who are already marginalised and are more likely to work in the informal sector, which is the first to be affected and exempt from any financial support from governments. Applicants should provide evidence of the increase in sexual violence towards women and increasing teenage

pregnancies, which we know impacts the ability of young women to access quality education. The lack of early childhood development and education from closed schools and resulting impact on trying to get children back into school, will be especially hard on girls for whom the barriers are greatest.

Conflict and climate instability exacerbate the potential impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, intensifying existing inequalities and disrupting potential responses to the pandemic, particularly the provision of essential health services, both in response to the pandemic but equally affecting routine health service provision.

### **Looking to the future**

The long-term impacts of the virus will be experienced across many sectors and any interventions that contribute towards the achievement of the Global Goals should consider how these impacts can be addressed in the project design.

Potential longer-term impacts could relate to the full range of Global Goals, including impacts on the most vulnerable and marginalised, delays to education outcomes, access to quality basic services and responsiveness of systems.

Whilst lessons have been learnt by many lower income countries from previous epidemics, such as Ebola, that have led to the early introduction of preventative measures, there is still much to be done to strengthen health systems to respond to crises with better reporting, surveillance and data.

UK Aid Match is looking for projects that are specifically responding to these long-term impacts and not pivoting of an existing project. Many believe that this is the opportunity to 'build back better' and reverse the short-term damage caused by COVID-19 to prevent even greater longer-term consequences on the Global Goals. To do so addressing the impacts of climate on long-term recovery will be key.

Applicants are expected to:

- Respond to and prepare for neglected or under-funded needs arising from the COVID-19 pandemic, filling a gap of existing responses of public health and government structures, funding mechanisms and other NGO responses
- Assist vulnerable groups that have not been previously identified or covered by existing funding, whether neglected communities or geographies.
- To work as far as possible to mitigate further spread or impact of COVID-19 by implementing early action and anticipatory activities.

- Outline the anticipated impact and consequences of COVID-19 throughout their applications
- Consider the current context in the proposed country of implementation, highlight the challenges and how they plan to address them throughout each element of their application.

It is appreciated that the context may be significantly different between now and when projects are planned to start. Applicants should outline the anticipated consequences of COVID-19 when providing the rationale for the proposed interventions. We will work with successful applicants during the grant set-up process to review the project design and agree appropriate adaptations that reflect the change in context.

### **Community engagement and accountability**

Accountability contributes to better quality responses. The Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office believes that by listening to people, understanding their concerns and acting on what they say, organisations can drive up the quality of development assistance.

Applicants must demonstrate that they systematically seek and incorporate the views of affected populations and communities to improve programming quality. Activities must be proportional and reflect what is feasible for different response contexts.