

# MA Guidance note on updating Programme Manual requirements during the COVID-19 pandemic

## Background

Some projects have or will experience challenges in the implementation of their project due to the extensive restrictions of different activities due to the COVID-19 pandemic. For all travel and meeting restrictions will apply, likely cancelling project events or meetings.

All projects are asked to thoroughly evaluate their work plans and to identify activities that are at risk as well as make plans for alternative activities (online instead of physical meeting, postponing or changing the methodology of an activity, etc.) Despite the updates made, it is possible that some projects cannot fully achieve their planned results in the original timeframe.

In this situation it is likely that both the projects and the programme will have to adapt to the existing situation and compromise on some plans. For projects this means that it may not be possible to achieve every part of the original Application Form. The focus must be on securing project results.

## Updates to Programme Manual rules

1. The programme will allow for extending the project activities 2 months into the closure period. Use of the closure period requires discussing the needs with the JS contact person, who will confirm the availability of this option for the project. (Updating the rule on Closure period in the Programme Manual v3.1 page 47.)
2. The programme will show flexibility regarding the six-month rule on the deadline for applying for prolongation via a modification request. (Updating the rule on Modification procedures in the Programme Manual v3.1 page 72.)
3. The programme will allow to change the workload of a staff position without a fixed limit comparing to the plan in the Application Form, if the change is due to work arrangements in the partner organisation being adjusted due to COVID-19. This can relate to organisations laying employees off for a shorter term or adjusting their working time. (Updating the rule on Modification procedures in the Programme Manual v3.1 page 70.)
4. The programme will show flexibility also on prolonging the duration of small projects if other conditions of this MA guidance note deem it necessary. (Updating the rule on small projects' duration in the Programme Manual v3.1 page 36.)



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### Programme guidance to projects

1. Each project shall actively update their project plan and look for best available implementation tools in the current situation.
2. Projects must accept that in some cases the general situation may affect individual projects so that the full Application Form activity plan or objectives may not be achieved. In these cases, an analysis of the situation should be provided to the JS contact person.
3. Prolonging the project duration via a modification request would be limited to cases where the original objectives of the project are seriously compromised due to COVID-19 effects. This would be the case if a considerable share of the project's results, promised in the Application Form, cannot be achieved.

