

Supporting the global South with COVID-19

Starting-points for foundations

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How do you respond as philanthropic foundation to the COVID-19 pandemic in developing countries? Will you support COVID-interventions? This document offers a number of guiding questions that support foundations in making and supporting strategic decisions.

1. 1. Who are you as a foundation?

- Mission, vision, goal, core identity (together determine your mandate)
- What resources do you have at your disposal (capacity, funding, partner-network, knowledge/expertise)?

→ The mandate and resources of your foundation at all time should be decisive for making choices.

2. 2. What will you do in response to the corona crisis?

- You decide not to offer support (your mandate and resources do not allow this, you lack suitable applications)
- You decide to offer support immediately (acute emergency aid)
- You decide to offer support at a later stage (reconstruction aid)

→ Many feel a strong pressure to act and offer emergency aid. However, post-corona recovery will be a long-term process. Some foundations may be able to achieve the most impact with reconstruction aid after the peak of the corona pandemic.

3. 3. What is your assessment of the quality of the applying organization and intervention?

- a. To what extent does the applicant meet the 'principles of good organizations'?
 - is an already existing organization (not established during the outbreak)
 - can demonstrate a 'track record' (and worked in the area prior to the crisis)
 - is embedded in the local community
 - can demonstrate a strong local network (government & civil society)
 - seeks to cooperate with others
- b. To what extent does the proposed intervention meet the 'principles of good interventions'?
 - works in line with the (COVID-19) guidelines of the (local) government
 - is based on local needs, customs and conditions
 - considers that some groups (e.g. elderly people, persons with disabilities) are more vulnerable than others, and have other needs
 - is developed, or works in line with the work of (local/international) organizations and governments

→ These principles are derived from existing knowledge on successful organizations and humanitarian interventions. Do-no-harm principles are guiding. Note that the **above principles are not exhaustive**.

→ The starting-point is that the partner is best equipped to decide upon the nature of an intervention. What the 'best' interventions is, will always depend on the local context, customs and situation.

→ If your foundation does not receive suitable applications, yet strongly desires to offer support, do consider to cooperating with other foundations and their partners.

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Scenario's in COVID-19 applications

	Meets organizational principles	Does NOT meet organizational principles
Meets intervention principles	<i>Support</i> If the partner is unknown: try to verify via others or 'take a leap of faith'	<i>No support</i> If the interventions seems to be of great added value: consider whether cooperation with another organization is viable to mitigate risk
Does NOT meet intervention principles	<i>No support</i> If the partner seems of great added value: request to revise the intervention in line with principles	<i>No support</i>

General advice

- *Resist the tendency to act quickly (and as a result possibly ill thought-out).* Emergency situation in particular require 'keeping one's head cool'.
- *Local needs and priorities should be guiding.* Be critical of 'exporting' Western solutions or 'one size fits all' approaches. Use local partners to gain access to reliable information about local needs.
- *Give to and support local organizations.* They know the local context and culture best and know the local community and their needs. They will also be much needed for the reconstruction phase. Support interventions that support the existing expertise of local organizations
- *Cooperate when possible.* Working in 'splendid isolation', reinventing the wheel, duplication, competition and fragmentation are well known problems of humanitarian disasters. Supporting successful existing initiatives can work better than initiating new projects. Foundations can share information, channel funding and link reliable partners.

Interesting sources

Do-no-harm principles

- [Alnap \(do no harm\)](#)
- [COVID-19 guidance based on humanitarian standards](#)

Inclusion

- [Engaging communities about COVID](#)
- [How to make COVID-interventions inclusive](#)
- [COVID 19 from a gender perspective](#)

Impact COVID 19

- [Impact on developing countries](#)
- [Impact on Afrika](#)

Other

- [Effective communication about Covid](#)
- [Cash transfers](#)