

EVALUATION DEPARTMENT

Background Study 1/20



Responding to the
Covid-19 Pandemic
- Early Norwegian
Development Aid
Support

*Commissioned by
The Evaluation Department*

*Carried out by
Chr. Michelsens Institute*

*Written by
Elling Tjønneland*

This study is a background document that may be used for future evaluations, commissioned by the Evaluation Department. The study is the product of the authors and responsibility for the accuracy of data included in this report rests with the authors alone. The findings, interpretations, and conclusions presented in this study do not necessarily reflect the views of the Evaluation Department.

October 2020

Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation

www.norad.no

Post-eval@norad.no

Cover photo: Gunnar Zachrisen

ISBN: 978-82-8369-049-1

Content

Foreword.....	4
1: Introduction	5
2: The Norwegian Response – Policies and the Development Aid Budget.....	7
3: What is Norway Funding – an Overview of Initiatives, Purposes, and Recipients	9
A: New Projects: Volume, Purpose, Sectors, Channels, and Contract Partners	9
B: Adjustment of Ongoing Programmes	11
Embassies.....	11
Multilateral and Global Funds.....	13
Non-Governmental Organisations	14
Cuts in the Aid Budget	15
4: Funding, Goals, and Results Framework.....	17
UN Covid-19 Response and Recovery Fund.....	17
The UN Global Humanitarian Appeal.....	19
Humanitarian Appeal from the ICRC and the IFRC	19
CEPI – Vaccine development.....	20
Test Kits from the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).....	21
Support Through the Norwegian Public Sector	21
5: Conclusions: Strengths and Challenges	23
Annexes.....	25
Annex 1: Terms of Reference.....	26
Annex 2: List of Covid-19 Projects.....	28
Annex 3: Core Funding to Multilateral Institutions	30

Foreword

The revised national budget for 2020 states that Covid-19 will result in changed framework conditions for Norwegian and international aid, and that changes in priorities between long-term goals on one side and priorities and response to Covid-19 in the short and medium term on the other side, may be necessary.

The Evaluation Department in Norad is planning a series of synthesis studies and evaluations of support to Covid-19 related initiatives. This mapping will serve as a background document for this work. The report provides a mapping of the early Norwegian response to Covid-19 and presents a snapshot of the support in the first six months of 2020. It gives an overview of Norwegian development support to Covid-19 related initiatives, including goals and priorities of the support, partners, channels and reporting requirements.

Even though the mapping is mainly a background document for future evaluations, it may also provide useful input to the ongoing work of designing Norway's support related to Covid-19, as well as in the work of systematising follow-up and learning from the early Covid-19 support.

Oslo, October 2020

Siv J. Lillestøl
Acting Evaluation Director

1: Introduction

While Norway is spending huge amounts at home to contain the far-reaching consequences of Covid-19, major efforts are also being made to help address the crisis in developing countries. The government has helped initiate and support several global initiatives and the aid budget has been adjusted to meet needs created by the corona virus pandemic. Several initiatives and projects were quickly devised to save lives and to reduce the pandemic's damaging effects.

Covid-19 is not the first pandemic or urgent crisis that hits developing countries. This includes crisis such as the Ebola outbreak in West Africa or natural disasters such as the earthquake in Nepal. The relief efforts responding to these provide important lessons. One of them is that the pressure for urgent action can lead to critical missteps. Furthermore, well-intended actions are not always effective. As pointed out in a blog on how to tackle Covid-19:

What is most important, and at the same time most challenging, is striking the right balance between quick and flexible responses on the one hand, and coordination, quality planning and context-sensitivity on the other hand.¹

This report to Norad's Evaluation Department provides – based on the Terms of Reference – a mapping of the Norwegian support to Covid-19 related measures funded through the aid budget (Cf. Terms of Reference attached as Annex 1). The report covers support provided in the initial period – the first six months of 2020. It seeks to identify all projects and initiatives supported. This includes goals, priorities, partners, and purpose of the individual projects. Where possible this also includes sectors and recipient countries and data on planning and monitoring. The report reviews decision documents. The mapping will also include data on responsible management unit for the project (Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Oslo, Norad or embassies).

The report seeks to identify all new projects specifically designed to address the Covid-19 crisis, but it will also identify - to the extent data allowed this – major changes in ongoing projects and programmes. This includes presenting increases and cuts in the Revised National Budget related to Covid-19, and adjustments of ongoing projects and programmes. In assessing adjustments and changes managed by the Norwegian embassies the 16 focus countries for Norwegian development aid were selected as case studies.

Data has been collected from a variety of sources. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs' grant portal was used to identify all new projects related to Covid-19 in the first half of the year. All decision-making

¹ See Per Øyvind Bastøe, Wendy Asbeek Brusse, and Jörg Faust, "COVID-19 and Development Co-operation: we know a lot about what works, let's use the evidence", *OECD Development Matters*, 30 April 2020 (<https://oecd-development-matters.org/2020/04/30/covid-19-and-development-co-operation-we-know-a-lot-about-what-works-lets-use-the-evidence/>).

documents related to these (“bevilgningsdokument”, “fordelingsnotat” and others) were collected from the responsible management unit. Furthermore, the most relevant departments and sections in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Norad were approached to collect any additional data on new projects, as well as data related to Covid-19 adjustments and changes in ongoing projects and programmes. These departments and sections included from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs: The Human and Financial Resources Department (the Grant Management Unit); Department for Sustainable Development (Section for Partnership, Good Governance and Development Financing), Department for Multilateral Cooperation (Section for Humanitarian Affairs and the Section for Multilateral Development Banks) and the Regional Department.

From Norad, the following were consulted: Department for Health, Education and Human Rights (Global Health Section), Department for Civil Society and the Private Sector, the Knowledge Bank and the Unit for Multilateral Partners.

Various statements and press releases from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs as well the Revised National Budget approved in June provided additional information.

Major Norwegian Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) (the Norwegian Refugee Council, Norwegian Peoples Aid, Save the Children and Norwegian Church Aid) were also approached to collect data on any new projects and adjustment in their development aid-funded projects.

A draft report was submitted in mid-August. The final report has addressed all comments received from Norad’s Evaluation Department and from several departments and sections in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Norad. The report has also benefitted from quality assurance provided by Ottar Mæstad, Joar Svanemyr and Magnus Hatlebakk at CMI.

2: The Norwegian Response – Policies and the Development Aid Budget

The initial Norwegian policy response was dominated by three main pillars: major additional funding for health and vaccine projects, priority to UN and multilateral funding channels, and increased flexibility and rapid disbursements of funds in ongoing projects and programmes. All of these were aligned with what has become main features of Norwegian development aid – emphasis on global health and humanitarian relief combined with reliance on multilateral funding channels. Major early manifestations of this were additional funding for the *Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations* (CEPI). NOK 236 million was allocated earmarked for Covid-19 related efforts. Norway also provided NOK 150 million to a new UN Trust Fund – the *UN Covid-19 Response and Recovery Multi-Partner Trust Fund*. Norway played a key role in initiating this UN Fund. Furthermore, additional humanitarian aid – mainly through the UN - was provided.²

The government's revised national budget submitted to Parliament in May and approved in June provided further guidelines regarding Covid-19 allocations from the development aid budget.³ The new budget prioritised global health efforts and provided an additional NOK 541 million for this. Much of this is related to vaccine research but also other dimensions of prevention, testing, treatment, sanitation improvement and efforts to reduce starvation and malnutrition (sometimes also referred to as "health+"). This amount also includes additional NOK 150 million to priority countries, including several focus countries as well as Sudan and the Democratic Republic of Congo. The humanitarian budget was increased by NOK 38.2 million (mainly to be channeled through the UN and the Red Cross). NOK 180 million will be allocated to the IMF Catastrophic Relief Fund while NOK 102 million will be added to the core funding to the World Bank's IDA fund to strengthen funding for health-care efforts related to corona.

The revised budget also emphasises more attention to Sub-Saharan Africa with an additional NOK 30 million in the bilateral Africa grant.

The revised development aid budget emphasises increased spending flexibility under several budget items to mitigate short-term and long-term pandemic impacts. This includes giving more flexibility to Norwegian Non-Governmental Organisations enabling them to provide rapid response to the crisis.

Furthermore, the revised budget states that corona-related projects will be paid for by moving funds between items and taken from measures that can and must be delayed as well as reordering spending within individual budget items. Main cuts have been in projects such as those managed by Norad's

² The official presentation of Norwegian priorities and initiatives can be found inter alia on the "corona page" on the website of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs - https://www.regjeringen.no/en/topics/foreign-affairs/corona_initiative/id2699925/.

³ See *Revidert nasjonalbudsjett 2020* from the Government submitted to Parliament 12 May 2020 - <https://www.regjeringen.no/no/statsbudsjett/2020/rmb/id2700940/?expand=factbox2701282>. This page also links to five press releases from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs summarising the main changes related to Covid-19. The new budget was approved in late June with no changes relating to the aid budget.

Knowledge Bank (NOK 200 million) and Norec (reduced by nearly NOK 60 million), Business development and trade (NOK 45 million), Renewable Energy (165 million), International Finance Corporation/World Bank (NOK 30 million), Sustainable oceans and marine pollution (NOK 135 million) and Education and Research (NOK 192 million). Additional funds have also become available due to reduced refugee costs estimates in Norway.

There has, however, been some dispute about the major funding for research and development of a new vaccine. Some or all of this may not qualify for development assistance as defined by the OECD's Development Assistance Committee and should have been funded outside the aid budget.⁴ This would apply to all or parts of the support to the Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations (CEPI), but potentially also to some of the support provided to the Research Council of Norway.

The next chapter provides further details of Norwegian priorities and allocations.

⁴ OECD DAC has in its initial response stated that while core contributions to CEPI for now can be classified as official development assistance since CEPI was set up to deal with diseases mainly affecting developing countries. Developing vaccines against corona does not fall in that category. See the report in <https://www.devex.com/news/coronavirus-vaccine-research-doesn-t-count-as-oda-says-oecd-97359>

3: What is Norway Funding – an Overview of Initiatives, Purposes, and Recipients

The overview provided in this chapter is restricted to the initial response. This is defined as the first half of 2020. The first part (A) will look at new projects and initiatives, including planned increases in the Revised National Budget. Then we look at changes in existing programmes and projects (B), including cuts in the budget as a result of Covid-19.

A: New Projects: Volume, Purpose, Sectors, Channels, and Contract Partners

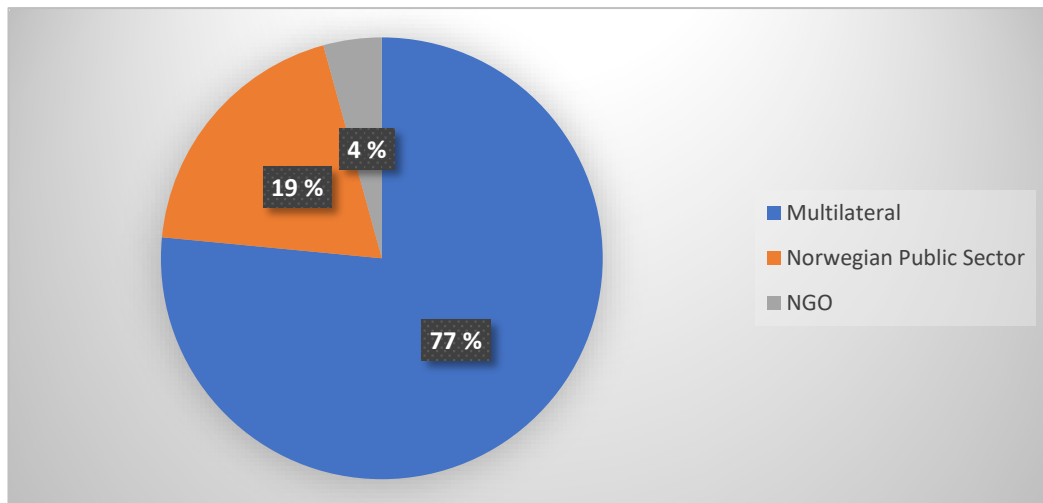
Annex 2 provides a list of 17 Covid-19 related new projects.⁵ Total disbursements were NOK 703.1 million. The projects ranged from three million (UNDP in Albania) to 236 million (CEPI), and with 3 projects (CEPI, the UN Response and Recovery Fund and the Norwegian Research Council) accounting for nearly 68% of the total disbursements. (New funding announced through the Revised National Budget – such as additional funding to the World Bank and IMF – are not included in statistics since the decision documents and contracts were not finalised when this study was completed, but they are included in the discussion where relevant).

Most funds were channeled through multilateral organisations. 12 projects with seven multilateral organisations accounted for 539 million or nearly 77% of the disbursement. Nearly 20% were disbursed through the Norwegian public sector (the Norwegian Research Council, Innovation Norway, and the University of Oslo) while the remaining 3% were channeled through Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) (2 projects through the Norwegian Red Cross). See also figure 1 (next page).

A notable feature is also that there are very few new projects managed by the Embassies (the only projects recorded in the database of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs are three contracts with the UNDP in the West Balkans). Strikingly, there is also very little new funding through the NGO channel. Traditionally, Norway has disbursed much additional funding through NGOs during humanitarian crises. The disbursement through the Norwegian public sector is also unusual (but largely explained by the heavy emphasis on research in the Norwegian response).

⁵ The NOK 14 million project through the Norwegian Church Aid (NCA) (humanitarian relief in 10 countries) is not included since it is not new funds but funded from the rapid response fund under the existing framework agreement between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and NCA.

Fig. 1: New Covid-19 Projects – Disbursement Channels



In financial terms the disbursements are dominated by research on vaccine and health related issues – the support to the Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations (CEPI) and the three projects with the Norwegian public sector. This accounts for about 51% of the disbursements. The humanitarian support related to Covid-19 – mostly through the UN system – accounts for 28% and the rest (21%) went to the UN Response and Recovery fund. Support in response to the UN Global Humanitarian Response Plan on Covid-19 is channeled through the World Food Programme (40 million), UN Population Fund (35 million), World Health Organisation (25 million through two grants), the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (15 million), and the International Organisation for Migration (10 million).

Outside the UN appeal there is also a grant to the International Atomic Energy Agency for testing equipment (22.5 million). There are two grants totaling 30 million channeled responding to Covid-19 appeals from the International Federation of the Red Cross and the Red Crescent Societies and the International Committee of the Red Cross (both grants were channeled through the Norwegian Red Cross). NOK 15.5 million were channeled in three grants to the UNDP offices in Bosnia-Herzegovina, Albania and Kosovo.

Most of the funding for new projects is global and not linked to individual countries. Except for potential allocations through the UN Response and Recovery Fund there is no specific attempts to address social and economic consequences in the early Norwegian response.

Norway is a significant donor to CEPI and to the new UN Response and Recovery Fund. By July 2020 Norway's contribution to the UN Fund amounted to about 28% of the total income from donors.⁶ Norwegian humanitarian support to the UN Covid-19 humanitarian appeal accounts for only a small portion of the donor support (although Norway is a significant donor in relation to core funding to some of the UN agencies). By July 2020, the UN Covid-19 Global Humanitarian Response Plan has received about USD 2 billion. Norway contributed about 1.3 % of this. The four biggest donors (the US, Japan, UK, and Germany contributed nearly 60%).⁷

⁶ These figures are derived from the Fund's website - <http://mptf.undp.org/factsheet/fund/COV00>

⁷ These figures are derived from the financial tracking services of the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs - https://fts.unocha.org/appeals/952/donors?order=total_funding&sort=desc

Funding for these new projects were drawn for available (non-allocated) funds from the aid budget, but also through cuts in planned allocations. In the case of the NOK 150 million to the new UN Fund, funding was drawn from a variety of chapters, mostly related to multilateral and UN related activities. This included NOK 40 million from planned allocations to UNDP initiatives and NOK 94 million from planned allocations to the UN Joint SDG Fund.

The Revised National Budget from May and approved by Parliament in late June provided several Covid-19 related increases in aid allocations. They are summarised in Table 3.1 below.

Table 3.1. Revised National Budget – Increases in the Aid Budget Related to Covid-19

Budget chapter and item	Name	Amount (NOK million)
150/70	Humanitarian aid	38.2
159/75	Africa grant	30
160/70	Global health	541.1
172/70	World Bank/IDA	102
170/72	IMF Catastrophe Containment and Relief Trust	108*

*Additional reallocations from 172/70 makes the total contribution to the IMF Fund NOK 180 million

The Revised National Budget also provides for the use of several budget chapters and items for the Covid-19 related purposes but without providing additional funding. This includes 152/70 Human Rights and 164/70 and 73 Gender and vulnerable groups.

See also Table 3.2 in the discussion below for data on Covid-19 related cuts in the aid budget.

B: Adjustment of Ongoing Programmes

There is not sufficient data available allowing for a proper overview of how individual projects and programmes were adjusted or redesigned to cope with delays, new implementation challenges or to address Covid-19. Some project activities were also expected to be halted as a result of implementation challenges. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs announced – most strongly in the revised budget – that they would allow for greater spending flexibility by recipients. It was also announced that core funding to multilateral organisations and programmes was disbursed early enabling greater flexibility. Significant core funding to several key multilateral institutions also provide for great flexibility and facilitate quick response and adjustment of priorities according to rapidly changing needs related to Covid-19 (see also an overview of funding through multilateral institutions and programmes in Annex 3).

Embassies

Norwegian embassies - with a few exceptions (mainly in the West Balkans) – have not reported on new contracts or new partners related to Covid-19.⁸ They report on delays in implementation,

⁸ This section is based on responses to a questionnaire by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to all embassies. Responses are summarised in memos to the development policy leadership in the Ministry from the relevant sections in the Regional Department (the Sections responsible for Africa, Asia, Middle East and North Africa, and Latin-America). See Seksjon for Vest-Afrika og Afrikas horn/Seksjon for sørlige og sentrale Afrika, *Afrika sør for Sahara. Foreløpig justeringer som følge av Covid-19*, Notat til utviklingspolitisk ledelse, 12 May 2020 (6 pages); Seksjon for Midt-Østen og Nord-Afrika, *Covid-19 og bistand*.

adjustments, and greater flexibility within existing programmes. New initiatives or major adjustments have mainly come within various multi-partner country funds where Norway is one of several contributors. The main adjustments are related to humanitarian needs – mostly related to health, but also food security, education and other, often with an emphasis on targeting vulnerable groups. Below we have extracted main findings from a survey relating to Norway's 16 focus or partner countries. This was an internal survey from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs based on a questionnaire to all embassies. It must be emphasised that this was undertaken in April and May. The reports are highly uneven in the details provided and a new survey three months later may have provided a different picture. In September 2020 MFA's annual reallocation process will take place and this may see a portfolio adjustments and shift between countries and between thematic areas because of the pandemic and new needs. Still, the April/May data – together with additional data provided by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs⁹ - provide a useful snapshot of the very early response from the embassies. A planned allocation of NOK 150 million to select focus and priority countries from the Revised National Budget planned increase in global health will see further changes. Below we have summarised the findings related to Norway's 16 focus countries.

Norway contributed NOK 13.4 million to *Malawi's* USD 140 million response plan. The support was reallocated from the Norwegian support to the multi-partner health sector fund and was intended for the purchase of protection gear for health personnel. Funds were also reallocated from planned disbursement related to food security to a programme implemented by the WFP on cash transfers to poor urban households. In *Uganda* funds were reallocated to support refugees, including reallocating NOK 20 million from the UNHCR to a UN emergency country appeal. The embassy was also considering a planned allocation of NOK 10 million to the work of the Norwegian Refugee Council.

In *Ethiopia*, the support through UN Women, UNICEF and IOM was partly reprogrammed to support Covid-19 efforts. NOK 40 million was disbursed early to a food security project through the World Bank to meet Covid-19 challenges with a further NOK 24 million allocation planned. The mission to the AU is also planning to contribute NOK 12 million to the African Union Covid-19 Preparedness and Response Plan. The funds that have been identified in the AU-Norway Framework Agreement 2020 budget to be reallocated to support Covid-19 related activities will be implemented by the Africa Centre for Disease Control to provide technical support, coordination and capacity building in AU-member states.

In *Palestine*, the main reported response was a NOK 100 million early disbursement of the budget support (channeled via the World Bank). In *Indonesia*, the Embassy was considering a new NOK 20-30 million grant to WHO. In *Tanzania*, the Embassy was considering additional funding to the Norwegian Church Aid for support to the Haydom Lutheran Hospital.

In *Nepal*, there will be adjustments and reallocations within the main Norwegian programmes in energy, education and governance. In late June it was decided to allocate NOK 10 million to Covid-19 related activities targeting marginalised and vulnerable groups. This will be implemented by civil society organisations and managed by Norad.

Sammendrag av svarene på bestillingen til ambassader med forvaltning/tiltak i sitt distrikt om konsekvenser av Covid-19-pandemien (n. d., 3 pages); Seksjon for Sør-Asia og Afghanistan, *Orienteringsnotat: Sør-Asia og Afghanistan. Status for fordelte midler over alle budsjettposter 2020 i lys av Covid-19*, Notat til Utviklingsministeren, Utenriksministeren, 7 May 2020 (9 pages); *Covid-19 og bistand. Øst-Asia* (n. d., 9 pages); and Seksjon for Latin-Amerika og Karibia, *COVID-19 og bistand*, (n. d., 3 pages).

⁹ Additional data from May/June was provided by the Regional Department in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in their response to the draft report. They have been incorporated where relevant.

In *Colombia*, the Embassy was preparing a NOK 10 million grant related to Covid-19.

In *Afghanistan*, some of the NGOs receiving support have adjusted their activities within the existing grants. Applications for additional funding has been turned down with Norway preferring to fund to be channeled through the multi-donor funds managed by the World Bank and the UN/UNDP.

For the other partner countries – *Ghana, Mali, Niger, Somalia, South Sudan, Mozambique, and Myanmar*– there were no reported adjustments or new initiatives. However, all embassies reported on delays in implementation and the likelihood of unspent funds. Furthermore, most initiatives for reallocation or new initiatives seems to have come from resident UN agencies and multilateral multi-partner funds in the countries.

Multilateral and Global Funds

Norad and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs are also managing several programmes implemented by multilateral agencies, programmes and international NGOs (in addition to core funding discussed above). Adjustments by recipients are most visible in health-related programmes and in planned disbursements from the multilateral development banks and the IMF.¹⁰

In relation to health there are several initiatives with Norwegian support. One is the *Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria (GFATM)*, an international organisation designed to accelerate the end of AIDS, tuberculosis, and malaria as epidemics. As an immediate response to Covid-19 GFATM has made up to USD 1 billion available through a Covid-19 Response Mechanism and increased grant flexibilities.

Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance, is set up to help vaccinate children against deadly and debilitating infectious diseases. Its adaption to Covid-19 included providing USD 29 million in urgent initial funding to 13 low income countries to support their response to Covid-19, helping them to protect health care workers with personal protective equipment, perform vital surveillance and training, and fund diagnostic tests, with more support up to USD 200 million being made available. This early funding is designed to provide immediate support until more substantial support from other sources is unlocked.

Norway is also contributing to the Global Covid-19 Vaccine Procurement Facility (Covax). This is a global funding mechanism designed to promote equitable access to Covid-19 vaccines for all countries, independent of their level of development. It is led by CEPI, GAVI and WHO.¹¹

The *UNAIDS* has provided for the use of up to 50% of the 2020 UNAIDS country envelope fund, amounting to USD 12.5 million, for Covid-19 related activities. Similar changes are reported also by other agencies, such as the UN Population Fund (particular in relation to supplies of contraceptives).

Norway is also supporting several international NGOs in the health sector that has adapted to Covid-19. This includes organisations such as Unitaid and the Robert Carr Fund. The Robert Carr Fund was set up as a pooled funding mechanism to support regional and global civil society networks in the health sector. Its steering committee – where Norway through Norad is a member - has approved several measures to address Covid-19. This includes allowing recipients greater flexibility in

¹⁰ The discussion below is based on emails from the health section in Norad to the author as well as memos from the Section for multilateral development banks in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (in particular “*Covid-19. De multilaterale utviklingsbankene og IMF’s rolle og respons. Oppdatert orienteringsnotat. 03.07.2020*”) as well as the websites of relevant agencies mentioned below.

¹¹ See also the press release 12 June from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs - https://www.regjeringen.no/en/aktuelt/covid19_vaccines/id2706195/

reallocating grants (by increasing the ceiling from 10 to 20%) and by providing top-up funding to all recipients for Covid-19 activities.

The biggest volume of funding is from the multilateral finance institutions. In March, the *World Bank* set up a “Fast-Track Covid19 Facility” with USD 14 billion based on 6 billion reallocations from IBRD (for middle-income countries) and IDA (for low-income countries) and 8 billion from the IFC (private sector). Funding through this window from the IBRD and IDA has initially been targeted at the health sector. The IFC’s focus during the crisis has been support to banks and financial institutions. Norway’s main financial contribution has been core funding to IDA (see also Annex 3). In the revised National Budget approved in June Norway increased its funding to IDA and provided an additional NOK 102 million (and reduced its funding to IFC).

The *International Monetary Fund (IMF)* has a special facility providing loans to low income countries – the Catastrophic Containment and Relief Trust Fund. The fund provides donor-funded subsidies to cover interests and repayments on loans to the IMF. Norway contributes NOK 180 million to this fund following the Revised National Budget.

In April, the *African Development Bank* approved a special Covid-19 Rapid Response Facility of USD 10 billion. The funds are reallocations from planned loans and disbursements and frontloading of expected future donor contributions. Norway contributes NOK 800 million to the Bank and its Africa Fund in 2020.

The *Asian Development Bank* has made USD 20 billion available to finance related to Covid-19. The *Asian Investment Bank for Infrastructure* has made USD 10 billion available for budget support. The *InterAmerican Development Bank* provides similar amounts. Norway is a contributor to all of these.

The World Bank and IMF has also initiated a special debt moratorium for low-income countries. From 1 May there will be a postponement of interests and repayments of all state-owned loans for the remainder of 2020.

Non-Governmental Organisations

Norwegian NGOs are a major channel for Norwegian development aid – typically accounting for nearly 25% of all aid funds disbursed. The bulk of the funding is now managed by either Norad’s civil society and private sector department or MFA’s Section for Humanitarian Affairs. Norad’s main Covid-19 response in relation to the NGOs was three sets of temporary exemptions to make it easier to provide additional funding and adjust agreed-upon plans and budgets.¹² In March they were temporary exempted from contributing own funds (“egenandel”) when receiving support from Norad’s civil society grant. In April, new temporary guidelines allowed for reallocations between budget lines without seeking pre-approval of up to 20% to accommodate for changes in the working environment. The standard threshold was 10%. 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.

¹² Cf Ministry of Foreign Affairs decision to temporary exempt the NGOs from contributing own funds when receiving support from Norad’s civil society grant (https://www.regjeringen.no/no/aktuelt/pm_bistand/id2694476/) and Norad, *Covid-19: Temporary exemptions for partners with an agreement in accordance with the template for Non-governmental organisations (NGOs)*, 23 April 2020 (3 pages), and *Coverage of the most necessary operating costs if implementation is disrupted due to Covid-19*, 20 May 2020 (1 page).

Furthermore, Norad allowed for temporary adjustments to the implementation plan, timeline, activities, and outputs, as well as result statements at outcome level without prior written approval. Disbursements could also be made before receipt of progress reports and financial statements.

In May, Norad made a further temporary adjustment in the rules and regulations. This time they ensured that the NGOs would be allowed cover the most necessary direct project costs (e.g. salaries for project staff not able to work because of lock down or travel restrictions) even when the projects temporarily are not delivering results according to the agreed plan.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs mainly channels funds to Norwegian NGOs from the humanitarian budget. (Funding from other MFA budgets such as the regional grants are now mostly managed by Norad). The humanitarian section now has Strategic Partnership Agreements with six Norwegian NGOs. This gives the NGOs great flexibility and predictability in using the funds for humanitarian purposes. The main budget is agreed but flexibility is provided through 1: possibility to redirect up to 20% of the budget across thematic/geographic areas, and 2: 20% un-allocated funds to be able to respond to needs during the year upon request to the MFA. There has not been any increased humanitarian funding through this channel relating to Covid-19. Several NGOs have made use of this in relation to Covid-19. In the case of the Norwegian Church Aid (NCA) they were granted about 14 million for Covid-19 activities in 10 countries (see also Annex 2).¹³

The NGOs consulted have not reported on any needs to move beyond the Norad ceiling of 20% or applied for fresh funds. The main changes are at country level operations with shifts to Covid-19 related activities or adjustment to cope with new challenges.¹⁴ In the case of the Norwegian Red Cross for example, the main changes has been a reduction in project activities outside the health sector (their main focus is on health so this has applied to only a few countries). NCA concentrates on water, sanitation, and hygiene, on gender-based violence and related issues. In some cases - e.g. in the case of NCA in Malawi – there has been a shift from local partners to the NCA Office in implementing some activities.

Cuts in the Aid Budget

The Revised National Budget provided for Covid-19 cuts in several budget chapters. They are summarised in Table 3.2 (next page) (see also the increases summarised in Table 3.1. above). In general, these cuts in the budget are justified by expected reduced activity and/or needs to increase other Covid-19 expenses (listed in Table 3.1).

¹³ Cf Humanitarian Section, MFA, *KN – tilråkning søknad om bruk fleksible midler*, (n. d., 1 page), and Norwegian Church Aid, *Covid-19 Global Response Plan*, Oslo: NCA 27 April 2020 (11 pages), <https://www.kirkensnodhjelp.no/contentassets/8abff0f345b64bca9571b39506c27105/nca-covid-19-global-response-plan-27.4.2020.pdf>.

¹⁴ The six main Norwegian NGOs were consulted. Data was received from Norwegian Church Aid, Norwegian Red Cross, Save the Children, and the Norwegian Refugee Council.

Table 3.2 Revised National Budget – Reductions in the Aid Budget Related to Covid-19

Budget chapter and item	Name	Amount (NOK million)
144/1 and 70	The Norwegian Agency for Exchange Cooperation (Norec)	59.5
161/70	Education*	165
161/71	Research**	27
161/72	The Knowledge Bank and technical cooperation***	200
162/70	Business development and trade****	45
162/72	Renewable energy	165
162/73	International Finance Corporation/World Bank	30
163/71	Sustainable oceans and marine pollution	135

* The cuts are NOK 100 million to the Global Partnership for Education (Unicef's projects in the Sahel and projects related to technical and vocational education are shielded from cuts), NORHED (50 million) and NORPART (15 million).

** Mainly cuts in support to research institutions in Africa.

*** This is mainly linked to cuts in the programmes managed by Norad's Knowledge Bank but also some cuts in technical cooperation managed by the Embassies.

**** Mainly projects related to job creation and economic growth, including application-based grants managed by Norad's private sector department.

4: Funding, Goals, and Results Framework

This chapter reviews the individual new Covid-19 related projects with an emphasis on goals, priorities, results framework, and funding sources. The discussion is based on data provided in decision documents and related documents. The information provided in decision documents is highly uneven – also judged against the criteria laid down in rules and procedures for grantmaking and disbursements of funds. Some critical decision documents have limited attention to risks, monitoring and reporting requirements. Some do not move beyond assessment of relevance and needs. In general, documents from Norad are more comprehensive than documents from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

UN Covid-19 Response and Recovery Fund

The United Nations Covid-19 Response and Recovery Fund is a UN inter-agency fund mechanism to help support low- and middle-income countries to respond to the pandemic and its impacts. It was announced in late March and seeks to offer fast and flexible finance to meet shifting demands of a rapidly evolving global crisis. It is a multi-partner fund hosted by the UN Multi-Partner Trust Fund Office (based at the UNDP). UN Country Teams can leverage this Fund to support national governments and communities in meeting priorities and defining programming responses that assure their recovery and reach the poor and the vulnerable.¹⁵

This new UN Covid-19 Fund seeks to build on the lessons learned from the Ebola Response Fund (2014-2018) and the Central Fund for Influenza Action (2008-2012). These Funds have demonstrated that a coordinated funding mechanism can strengthen the response to and recovery from infectious disease outbreaks. The UN resident coordinator will apply for project funding from the Fund's office in New York. Funding will be disbursed directly to recipient UN Organisations to undertake single-agency or joint programmes aligned with the Fund's objectives. Government institutions and/or civil society organisations will be implementing agents.

The Fund has three ambitious windows with distinct objectives. Window 1 seeks to enable governments and communities to suppress the transmission of the virus through access to quality treatment and infection control and prevention measures through multi-sectorial aid.

¹⁵ See more about the Fund in the official presentation by the UN, *The Secretary-General's UN COVID-19 Response and Recovery Fund*, New York: UN April 2020 (<https://unsdg.un.org/sites/default/files/2020-04/COVID19-Response-Recovery-Fund-Document.pdf>) (4 pages). The full Terms of Reference (11 pages) - *Terms of Reference for the UN COVID-19 Response and Recovery Multi-Partner Trust Fund* - and other data is available from the Fund's website <http://mptf.undp.org/factsheet/fund/COV00>.

Window 2 aims to mitigate the socio-economic impact and safeguard people and their livelihoods through funding social protection mechanisms meant to help prevent people falling into or farther into poverty. Window 3 seeks to help countries recover better to ensure the achievement of SDG targets by 2030 despite the current and possible future shocks.

By early August, the Fund had received about USD 51 million from eight donors¹⁶. 45 million have been disbursed to 30 UN agencies in nearly 50 developing countries. All recipient countries have received a total of USD 1 million each (microstates receive 0.3 million and two big countries – India and Indonesia – have received 2 million). Each country has received funding for one or two projects. The Fund’s coverage include all low- and middle-income countries, but countries receiving support from the UN Global Humanitarian Appeal will initially not qualify for support.

Four of Norway’s focus countries have received funding from this Fund. In the case of *Malawi* USD 1 million was dispersed to three UN agencies (WHO, UNWOMEN and UNFPA) for a project termed “Covid-19 Emergency Response for Continuity of Maternal and New-born Health Services in Malawi”. In *Ghana* USD 1 million was disbursed to four UN agencies (WHO, UNDP, UNFPA and UNICEF) for a project on “Addressing gaps in Ghana’s Pandemic Response for the most vulnerable populations.” In *Nepal* there is USD 1 million to a project on “Immediate UN Response for coherent safeguarding the livelihoods of people made most vulnerable by COVID 19” with the money dispersed to four UN agencies (UNDP, IOM, ILO and UNESCO). In *Indonesia* the USD 2 million grant was disbursed to four UN agencies (UNDP, WFP, UNICEF and UNWOMEN) for one project “Protecting People: Supporting the Government of Indonesia and Key Stakeholders to Scale-Up Inclusive Social Protection Programmes in Response to COVID-19”.¹⁷

The Fund is intended to complement the WHO’s Strategic Preparedness and Response Plan and the UN Consolidated Global Humanitarian Appeal for Covid-19 (see more below on the other UN funding streams).

Norway is a financial contributor to all three but was the initiator of this joint Fund. It is the second biggest donor (after the Netherlands) having contributed USD 14 million of the 51 million deposited with the Fund by early August.

The decision to provide funding was prepared in March by the UN Section in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (the management of the Norwegian support has since been transferred to Norad’s new “Enhet for multilaterale partnere”). The decision memo is a 3-page document which outlines relevance (intentions and political needs) and emphasises the importance of the UN being able to work coherently in responding to the pandemic. The creation of a multi-party trust fund based on the experiences from the Ebola fund is considered to be potentially an effective way of facilitating coherence between humanitarian and long-term development aid. The document does not discuss or properly identify risks with this new initiative and steps to deal with them during implementation.

The decision document also identifies budget sources for the NOK 150 million grant. These are largely derived from expected unspent funds on other items because of Covid-19.

¹⁶ By mid-October, the Fund has received about USD 61.5 billion from 12 countries. Five countries have contributed more than USD 5 billion each and five countries less than USD 0.5 billion each.

¹⁷ All data in this paragraph is derived from the Fund’s website - <http://mptf.undp.org/factsheet/fund/COV00>. In general, the funds were disbursed to the agencies in May.

The UN Global Humanitarian Appeal

Norway disbursed NOK 115 million to five UN agencies as a response to the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA)'s Consolidated Global Humanitarian Appeal for Covid-19.¹⁸ In addition, NOK 10 million was disbursed to WHO – before the launch of the appeal - for their early response to Covid-19. (After the completion of this report the MFA has informed that the total allocation to the response plan has reached NOK 173.2 million, including 35 million to the country based pooled funds in Yemen, Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan and Ukraine).

The UN launched their appeal on 25 March and provided a list of the financial needs of nine UN agencies as well as a facility for NGOs. The initial total financing need amounted to USD 2 billion in 2020. This amount steadily increased and in the July update OCHA's figure was over USD 10 billion and operations in 63 countries.¹⁹ This included nine of Norway's 16 partner countries (Afghanistan, Colombia, Ethiopia, Mali, Mozambique, Myanmar, Niger, Somalia and South Sudan).

The global response plan builds on a joint inter-agency analysis of the immediate health and non-health needs of vulnerable populations and offers a multi-partner multisectoral response to the pandemic. It is articulated around three strategic priorities: contain the spread of the Covid-19 pandemic and decrease morbidity and mortality; decrease the deterioration of human assets and rights, social cohesion and livelihoods; and protect, assist and advocate for refugees, internally displaced people, migrants and host communities particularly vulnerable to the pandemic.

Norway responded quickly with funding to five of these institutions. The decision was based on a "fordelingsnotat" – a procedure where the Humanitarian Section allocates funds from the humanitarian grant based on appeals – in this case the global appeal from the UN. This memo allocates funding to selected organisations based on a very brief assessment of each organisations. The World Food Programme is given the highest amount because of the expected need for improved logistics and air support, support to UNFPA is prioritised because of the assumed increase in sexual and gender-based violence during a crisis, and the decision not to allocate funds to UNICEF is justified because Norway expects that UNICEF will be able to save money on education projects that will not be implemented or delayed because of the corona.²⁰

Humanitarian Appeal from the ICRC and the IFRC

NOK 30 million was provided from the humanitarian section as a response to appeals from the *International Committee of the Red Cross* (ICRC) and the *International Federation of the Red Cross and the Red Crescent Societies* (IFRC). (After the completion of the report the final figure was 45 million – 30 to ICRC and 15 to IFRC). On 26 March, the ICRC and IFRC made a joint appeal for 800 million Swiss francs. 550 million would be for IFRC to support National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies in health care, prepositioning of goods, risk communication, lessons learned from global network of local responders, cash grants for families, and mitigating impacts of large outbreaks. Out of the 550 million

¹⁸ See UN, *Global Humanitarian Response Plan Covid-19. United Nations Coordinated Appeal April – December 2020* (80 pages) - (<https://www.unocha.org/sites/unocha/files/Global-Humanitarian-Response-Plan-COVID-19.pdf>).

¹⁹ See the update provided in *GHRP July Update* (110 pages) - (https://www.unocha.org/sites/unocha/files/GHRP-COVID19_July_update.pdf).

²⁰ See Section on Humanitarian Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, *Fordelingsnotat. Fordeling av 90 mill. kroner til Covid-19-respons over det humanitære budsjettet*, 30 March 2020 (3 pages).

Swiss francs, 150 million Swiss francs is for IFRC to support National Societies in need, while the remaining 400 million Swiss francs will be raised by National Societies domestically. The ICRC was appealing for 250 million Swiss francs to respond in places of conflict and violence, to support medical facilities and places of detention, curb the spread among and ensure medical access for displaced people and detainees, and to support National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies in their response.²¹

Norway provided NOK 45 million to the two appeals. In both cases, MFA signed contracts for the two grants with the Norwegian Red Cross – the normal procedure for supporting ICRC and IFRC. The short decision document is also limited to provide a justification for the grants based solely on the relevance of the appeal and on the perceived important role and track record of these two organisations.²²

CEPI – Vaccine development

Norway's single biggest new grant was the NOK 236 million support in 2020 to CEPI for development of vaccines against Covid-19. An additional NOK 2 billion will be available for the 2021-2030 period (and frontloaded through the International Finance Facility for Immunisation). CEPI – or the *Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations* - is a global partnership launched in 2017 to develop vaccines to stop future epidemics. The Norwegian support will provide funding for CEPI's support to companies and institutions developing candidates for vaccine against Covid-19. Through 8-10 parallel projects the aim is to arrive at three vaccines that can be ready for licensing and production.

In addition to supporting vaccine development CEPI, has also with WHO and GAVI launched a facility to help ensure manufacturing and more equitable access to Covid-19 vaccines and end the acute phase of the pandemic by the end of 2021.²³

The CEPI Secretariat is based in Norway (and hosted by the Norwegian Institute of Public Health). The World Bank acts as a financial manager. The Norwegian grant to CEPI is managed by Norad, but decision to support CEPI had already been made by Parliament with an appropriation letter from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs instructing Norad to manage it. A comprehensive decision document by Norad, prepared after the decision, argues that the support is highly relevant – both in relation to needs of developing countries as well as in relation to Norwegian policies and rules and procedures for Norwegian support in the health sector.²⁴ The document also identifies several risks – some of them high. One is that that the grant or parts of it may not qualify as Official Development Assistance, that vaccine development may fail, or that there will be poor access to the vaccine for developing countries. This is followed by identification of key issues to be monitored and addressed in the dialogue and communication with CEPI.

²¹ See more on the joint appeals here <https://www.icrc.org/en/document/international-red-cross-and-red-crescent-movement-appeals-800-million-swiss-francs-assist>

²² See Section for humanitarian affairs, MFA, *Støtte til COVID-19 appellene fra Den internasjonale Røde Kors-komiteen (ICRC) og Det internasjonale forbundet av Røde Kors- og Røde Halvmåneforeninger (IFRC)*, 7 April 2020 (2 pages).

²³ See more about CEPI and Covid -19 at their website - <https://cepi.net/>

²⁴ Cf Norad, *Beslutningsnotat (BD) – Norges støtte til CEPIs Covid-19 respons*, 9 June 2020 (9 pages + annexes)

Test Kits from the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs has provided NOK 22.5 million to the IAEA for delivery of test kits to 10 developing countries. Each kit contains 2000 tests. IAEA has developed a nuclear-derived diagnostic technique that can help detect and identify the coronavirus accurately within hours in humans, as well as in animals that may also host it. It was originally developed in cooperation with FAO for use in veterinary science, but has also been used in detecting Ebola, Zika and African Swine Fever viruses.²⁵

The Norwegian grant is intended to cover the costs of supplying two test kits to each of the 10 countries. This includes delivery and (on-line) training in the use. The request for funding originated in dialogue between IAEA and the Embassy in Vienna. The project will be managed by MFA and its Department for Security Policy and the High North (responsible for relations with IAEA). The grant will be funded from the global health item in the aid budget. The decision document assesses the proposal but does not identify risks or outline a results framework. It assumes that the IAEA will implement this in close cooperation with the WHO.

Support Through the Norwegian Public Sector

Three main grants totaling about NOK 135 million have been channeled through Norwegian public sector institutions. They are all broadly focused on research and innovation. One is a NOK 30 million grant to *Innovation Norway* with a view to develop new technologies, products or solutions related to Covid-19 in developing countries and with a special focus on Sub-Saharan Africa. Allocations will be application based and available for Norwegian commercial actors. It is estimated that some 3-4 companies will receive support under this arrangement.²⁶

This builds upon an existing grant to Innovation Norway – Vision 2030 – established in 2016. The overall objective of the Vision 2030 initiative is to promote poverty reduction in countries receiving Norwegian development assistance through developing and scaling innovative solutions within the areas of Sustainable Development Goals 3 and 4 (health and education). Norad has the overall responsibility for the funding mechanism and collaborates with the Research Council of Norway and Innovation Norway as implementing partners. Vision 2030 provides funding for Norwegian companies that develop and commercialise innovative solutions. Priorities will be given to the 16 partner countries in Norwegian aid. The new special Covid-19 addendum to the programme has focus on health only, to projects at a more advanced stage and with priorities to Sub-Saharan Africa (but without any further specification related to countries).

There is a comprehensive decision document prepared by Norad providing the platform for deciding on the grant. This also discusses risks, but this is mainly confined to the quality of the applications and the management of the project – not discussing e. g., the ability to provide innovative solutions that can be scaled up, commercialised and make a difference in relation to Covid-19.²⁷

²⁵ See more on this at the IAEA website - <https://www.iaea.org/newscenter/pressreleases/iaea-to-support-countries-in-the-detection-of-novel-coronavirus>

²⁶ See the presentation provided in the announcement with call for applications - <https://www.innovasjon Norge.no/visjon2030> (in Norwegian only)

²⁷ See Norad, *Beslutningsdokument for Innovasjon Norges forvaltning av ekstraordinær utlysning på Visjon 2030 i 2020 som del av Covid-19 respons*, 2 April 2020 (6 pages).

The NOK 5.1 million grant (+ 20 million for 2021) to the *University of Oslo* is a Covid-19 related addendum to the ongoing (since 1994) support to the University's HISP project – a health information systems project managed at the Department of Informatics. They have developed the DHIS2 software - an IT system for collecting, validating, analysing and presenting data for health information management. The system is widely believed to have revolutionised collection and use of health data in developing countries and is now used at national level in more than 60 developing countries (and in more than 100 countries at sub-national levels) and at several international agencies.²⁸

HISP has been engaged since before the Ebola outbreak in responding to disease outbreaks and building specific tools for various data aspects in monitoring and responding to epidemics. Early in the Covid-19 outbreak HISP has built an epidemic management tool for detection, contact tracing, aggregate and event-based surveillance. Over 30 countries have begun testing and setting up the tool for national use.

The grant from Norway is intended to support HISP in expediting work to develop and maintain the software package as well as provide technical support to countries in the testing and use of the package at country level. These activities are currently considered to run to the end of 2021.

Norad has provided a detailed and comprehensive assessment of the project application – including the results framework. This has been in accordance with guidelines and by using the MFA/Norad template for decision-making documents.²⁹

The final disbursement is NOK 100 million to the *Research Council of Norway*. The purpose of the grant was to improve the knowledge base for the management of the Covid-19 pandemic in Sub-Saharan Africa and to improve the capacity to contain the next crisis facing these countries. The grant was intended as support to WHO's research (20 million); call for proposals from Norwegian research institutions (20 million for an emergency call and 20 million as an addition to the regular call under the global health programme); 38 million to international collaboration; and two million as added contribution to the strategic institute programmes of four Norwegian research institutes (PRIO, NUPI, CMI and FNI) to strengthen their work on social and economic analyses and related work. The Research Council will have the opportunity to shift funds between these components as long as it contributes to the overall objectives and is in accordance with the OECD DAC guidelines for official development assistance.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs provided guidelines for the use of the allocation to Research Council through an appropriation letter addressing the needs for strategic interventions.³⁰ The funds were not additional or new, but from available funds allocated to the Research Council. The guidelines in the appropriation letter were also based on suggestions from the Research Council.

²⁸ See more about HISP here - <https://www.mn.uio.no/ifi/english/research/networks/hisp/>.

²⁹ See Norad, *Decision Document, Covid-19 Pandemic Surveillance Support – DHIS2*, 3 April 2020 (11 pages).

³⁰ Cf. Ministry of Foreign Affairs, *Statsbudsjettet 2020 – Tildelingsbrev nr. 2 fra Utenriksdepartementet til Norges Forskningsråd*, 26 March 2020 (3 pages).

5: Conclusions: Strengths and Challenges

This mapping and analysis of the early Norwegian development aid response to address the Covid-19 epidemic have identified several key features:

- 1: Significant funds – over NOK 700 million - were mobilised in a short period. This was largely taken from expected unspent funds in programmes and projects that could not be implemented due to the pandemic. However, some or all major funding for research and development of a vaccine against Covid-19 may not qualify as official development assistance and if so, should have been funded outside the aid budget.
- 2: Norway played a key role in facilitating the launch of new global initiatives. This was mainly related to the launch of the UN Response and Recovery Fund.
- 3: There was much attempt to provide flexibility for grant recipients, including early disbursement of funds. Key elements were greater flexibility for Norwegian non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and early disbursement of core funding to multilateral institutions. This was intended to facilitate shifts to more Covid-19 relevant activities through Norwegian NGOs with the help of local partners and from multilateral institutions.
- 4: A notable feature is strong use of the multilateral channel with a range of different UN agencies, development finance institutions and global programmes as recipients. There were significant funding and new initiatives through Norwegian public sector institutions, while there were no additional funding or initiatives through Norwegian NGOs – traditionally a major channel for Norwegian aid, especially in humanitarian aid.
- 5: Most initiatives and funds were directed at the global level with very limited focus on direct support to new activities in individual countries. This also applied to Norway's 16 focus or priority countries which received limited new bilateral attention in the early period. The Revised National Budget however provided for an additional NOK 150 million to some focus countries and other priority countries from the additional funding under global health.
- 6: A pattern is also evident in the sectors supported. It was dominated by health and health-related activities (or "health+") coupled with funds for humanitarian aid. Financially, this was dominated by support for development of vaccines as well as health-related research. A significant feature was also the launch of a new UN response and recovery fund building upon lessons from the fight against Ebola. Furthermore, there was very little attention to social and economic issues in the early response – although the new UN Fund potentially will address this. However, the early disbursement of committed core funding to multilateral institutions together with additional funding to the World Bank and the IMF provided in the Revised National Budget is intended to address some of these challenges.

This report also reviewed the decision documents underpinning the new grants and projects supported. To what extent do they adhere to rules and procedures for grantmaking? What are reporting requirements and the results framework in the various initiatives? Do the documents identify and provide guidelines for monitoring and follow-up by Norway to help reduce risks and improve efficiency?

The decisions documents are highly uneven with most restricting themselves to provide justification for an allocation based on perceived needs and relevance of the proposal. The documents rarely provide a proper discussion of risks or results framework or reflect upon what Norway should focus in the monitoring and dialogue with the recipient. Among the decisions behind new initiatives reviewed there is probably only one that is fully compliant with the MFA/Norad guidelines for decision documents.

It is not possible at this early stage to assess implementation and results. However, with the deepening of the crisis and observations of priorities and disbursements three main challenges stand out.

One is the challenge of making the Norwegian-initiated UN Covid-19 Response and Recovery Fund an effective instrument. It has so far attracted limited donor-funds and does not yet seem to be able to move beyond implementing scattered and small projects.

A *second* is how Norway should address the Covid-19 pandemic in the 16 focus countries for Norwegian aid. How should this be linked to multilateral initiatives at the global and/or country level?

A *third* is the consequences of reallocating funds from existing programmes and projects. There is very little reflection of this in the documents behind these decisions. These challenges will become even bigger as development countries will move from health and containment of the virus and into recovery and rebuilding in a situation where a large part of a country's population may have been moved into extreme poverty. The challenges are reinforced with shrinking global aid flows.

Introduction and Rationale

The revised national budget³¹ states that Covid-19 will result in changed framework conditions for Norwegian and international aid, and that changes in priorities between long-term goals on one side and priorities and response to Covid-19 in the short and medium term on the other may be necessary.

The Evaluation Department in Norad is planning a series of synthesis studies and evaluations of support to Covid-19 related initiatives. To establish a basis for these evaluation products, the Evaluation Department will initiate a mapping and analysis of Norwegian development support to Covid-19 related initiatives for the period January to June 2020.

Purpose and Objectives

The purpose of the mapping is to obtain an overview of Norwegian development support to Covid-19 related initiatives, including goals and priorities of the support, partners, channels and reporting requirements. The report will also discuss key issues and challenges related to moving funding from other development initiatives to Covid-19 related initiatives. The mapping will serve as a basis for synthesis studies and evaluations of some of the Norwegian-supported Covid-19 initiatives.

The objectives are to:

- 1) Provide an overview of Norway's development support to Covid-19 related initiatives
- 2) Identify goals, priorities, partners and channels for the Covid-19 related funding
- 3) Identify from which sectors/development initiatives funds have been moved from
- 4) Discuss consequences of moving funds from development initiatives to Covid-19 related initiatives

Scope

The mapping will cover the period from January-June 2020. All data shall be captured and presented in tables, graphs, figures and text.

The mapping will include:

- Total volume of direct Norwegian ODA to Covid-19 related initiatives
- Goals and priorities for the Covid-19 related funding
- Partners and channels of support
- Chapter posts /budget lines

³¹ Revidert Nasjonalbudsjett 12. juni:
<https://www.regjeringen.no/no/dokument/statsbudsjettet/statsbudsjettet-2020/revidert-nasjonalbudsjett-2020/id2700940/?expand=ud>

- Recipient country/country distribution
- Sectors
- Information on reporting requirements of the support (i.e. results indicators and results frameworks)

Evaluation questions

1. What is the volume and character of Norwegian support to Covid-19 related initiatives January-June 2020?
2. What are Norway's objectives and priorities for support to the Covid-19 related initiatives?
 - a. What are the objectives and priorities per initiative?
3. What are the reporting requirements for the Covid-19 related funding?
 - a. Has the aid administration developed Covid-19 specific results indicators?
 - b. Is the Covid-19 reporting requirement in line with rules and procedures for aid management, including the financial regulations (Økonomireglementet)?
4. Where has funding been taken from?
 - a. To what extent are implications of moving funds to new Covid-19 related initiatives assessed?

Data

Data sources will among others include:

- Revised National Budget (RNB)
- Decision documents
- Requests from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to embassies and Norad

Interviews and conversations with case officers will also be necessary to track and map the support.

Data limitations:

- Not all decisions for funding has a decision document tied to it. The consultant will need to be creative in identifying all initiatives.

The Evaluation Department in Norad will appoint a contact person for the assignment and he/she will help facilitate access to data (decisions documents and contact persons in relevant MFA/Norad department and sections).

Budget and Deliverables

- Sketch of mapping report
- A report of maximum 25 pages, including figures and graphs, excluding annexes.
- Datasets/database in .csv or Excel compatible format

The assignment is estimated to a maximum cost of 200 000 NOK ex. mva., including any travel costs, and will be carried out between 18 May – June 20nd 2020

Annex 2: List of Covid-19 Projects

The table lists identified new projects with disbursements in the first half of 2020. The table does not list adjustments in existing global, multi and bilateral programmes that addresses Covid-19. Some of these are significant. They are discussed in Ch. 3 above.

The table has been compiled based on the Ministry of Foreign Affairs' grants portal. This portal provides an overview of all grants from the Ministry and Norad for which agreements have been entered into, and for which disbursements are planned for this year and for up to the next four years.³² Additionally, the data has been collected from ongoing internal mapping by the Ministry.³³ The most relevant sections in MFA and Norad has also been contacted directly to collect and validate data.

<i>Project</i>	<i>Contract partner</i>	<i>Implementing partner</i>	<i>Norwegian management</i>	<i>Sector and global/country</i>	<i>Amount in 2020 (NOK million)</i>
UN Covid-19 Response and Recovery Multi-Partner Trust Fund	UNDP/UN Multi-partner Trust Fund Office	UN agencies at country level	Norad/Multilateral unit	Multi-sector Global	150
UNFPA – Humanitarian Thematic Fund and COVID-19 Global Response Plan	UNFPA	UNFPA	MFA/Section for Humanitarian Affairs	Humanitarian Global	35
WFP – Support to global response to Covid-19	WFP	WFP	MFA/Section for Humanitarian Affairs	Humanitarian Global	40
WHO – Global response to Covid-19	WHO	WHO	MFA/Section for Humanitarian Affairs	Humanitarian Global	15
WHO – Support to WHO's early response to Covid-19	WHO	WHO	MFA/Section for Humanitarian Affairs	Humanitarian Global	10
UNHCR Covid-19 Response Plan	UNHCR	UNCHR	MFA/ Section for Humanitarian Affairs	Humanitarian Global	15

³² See <http://udtilskudd.regjeringen.no/#/en/country?year=2020>

³³ See especially the 7-page memo “Norsk innsats Covid-19” (n.d.)

IOM Covid-19 Response Plan	IOM	IOM	MFA/ Section for Humanitarian Affairs	Humanitarian Global	10
Research related to Covid-19	Norwegian Research Council	WHO, Successful applicants + CMI, NUPI and FNI	MFA/Department for Sustainable Development	Research Global/Norway	100
Innovation related to Covid-19	Innovation Norway/Vision 2030	Successful applicants (Norwegian companies)	Norad/Section for Research, Innovation and Higher Education	Research and innovation Global/Norway	30
Covid-19 Pandemic Surveillance Support – DHIS2	University of Oslo	Health Information Systems Project	Norad/Section for Global Health	Global health Global	5.1 <i>(25.1 for 2020-2021)</i>
Testing equipment for Covid-19	IAEA	IAEA in cooperation with WHO	MFA/Department for Security Policy and the High North	Global Health Multi-country (10 countries)	22.5
Rapid Covid-19 Vaccine Development	World Bank	CEPI	Norad/Section for Global Health	Global Health Global	236
Covid-19 appeals from the International Committee of the Red Cross and the International Federation of the Red Cross	Norwegian Red Cross	ICRC and IFRC	MFA/Section for Humanitarian Affairs	Humanitarian Global	30 <i>(Two contracts, only one had been signed by mid-June with 15 mill disbursed)</i>
NCA Covid-19 Response Plan	Norwegian Church Aid	NCA	MFA/Section for Humanitarian Affairs	Humanitarian 10 countries	14 <i>(this is from 35 mill flexible framework between NCA and MFA's humanitarian section)</i>
Albania Immediate Response to Covid-19	UNDP	n. a.	Embassy	Disaster Prevention and Preparedness, Albania	3
Bosnia-Herzegovina Assistance to critical local needs Covid-19	UNDP	n. a.	Embassy	Disaster Prevention and Preparedness, Bosnia-Herzegovina	7,5
Kosovo Immediate response to Covid-19	UNDP	n. a.	Embassy	Disaster Prevention and Preparedness, Kosovo	5

Annex 3: Core Funding to Multilateral Institutions

This table provides a list of core funding to multilateral agencies and programmes. The data is derived from an internal MFA memo and the Revised National Budget.³⁴

Institution	Norwegian funding	Disbursement 2020
UNFPA	Largest provider of core funds in 2019	NOK 530 million. Disbursed 31 March
UNDP	3rd largest core funder in 2019	NOK 555 million. Disbursed 3 April
UNICEF	4th largest core funder in 2019	NOK 410 million. Disbursed 3 April
UNHCR	3 rd largest core funder in 2019	NOK 380 million. Disbursed 11 February
WFP	5 th largest core funder in 2019	NOK 300 million. Disbursed 6 February
UNWomen	4 th largest core funder in 2019	NOK 100 million. Disbursed in April
UNAIDS	5 th largest provider of core funding in 2019	NOK 60 million Disbursed 30 April
UNRWA	11 th biggest contributor of core funds in 2019	NOK 125 million. Disbursed 11 February
OCHA	3 rd largest contributor of non-earmarked support in 2019	NOK 90 million. Disbursed 2020
OHCHR	Largest provider of core funds in 2019	Planned NOK54.8 million in second half of year
WHO	3 rd largest provider of core funds in 2019	Planned disbursement of NOK 229.5 million 2 nd quarter
UNESCO		NOK 25 million disbursed by Education Ministry in January
UN Central Emergency Response Fund	3 rd largest provider of core funds in 2006-2020	NOK 420 million. Disbursed 31 January
Global Fund (GFTAM)	11 biggest bilateral funder in 2019	NOK 440 million (to be disbursed in April and October)
Global Financing Facility	Largest donor	NOK 600 to be disbursed in April
GAVI	Biggest provider of bilateral core funding in 2016-20	NOK 1.3 million disbursed 3 April
World Bank		NOK 900 million to IDA. An additional NOK 102 million was provided in the Revised National Budget
African Development Bank	9 th largest provider of funds to the Africa Fund	NOK 800 to the Bank and its Africa Fund
International Monetary Fund		NOK 180 million to the Catastrophe Containment and Relief Trust was provided in the Revised National Budget

³⁴ The data is extracted from a 7-page memo "Norsk innsats Covid-19" (n.d.) with additional data from the Revised National Budget.