

The COVID-19 pandemic will have implications for nonprofits as well their staff members, volunteers, interns and beneficiaries. We have therefore put together this practical guidance to help nonprofits cope and think through their operations during the pandemic. This document responds to some of the common challenges we see nonprofits facing.

How will COVID-19 affect our work?

The pandemic will affect organisations differently and we must all prepare for it. To do this, organisations must develop a robust understanding of what will happen to their activities or projects during and after the pandemic. The following checklist provides guidance on steps an organisation can take to reflect on the effect of COVID-19 to its operations.

List the key products and services your organisation provides which if disrupted for any reason will have the greatest impact.	Identify the maximum length of time you can manage a disruption for these products and services.	Which of these products and services would need to resume or go on in the event of a disruption?	What critical activities are required to deliver your key products and services?

What resources are required over time to maintain the critical activities at an acceptable level? (People, technology, information and partners).	What are the potential risks associated?	Potential impact	Steps to mitigate risk.

Should our staff members work from home?

To reduce the risk of spreading the coronavirus disease, governments across the country have asked that people must stay at home where possible. We encourage nonprofits working in the non-essential services field to obey these orders and to consider a work-from-home arrangement. A work-from-home arrangement also helps you meet your contractual obligation to staff members ensuring that you can continue to pay salaries for work done. Here are some areas to consider in supporting staff members, volunteers and interns to work from home:

Hardware	<p>Access to computers and good internet connection</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the organisation able to provide laptops for staff members to bring home? • Can the office cover costs associated with internet use? <p>As much as possible, avoid having staff members use their personal laptops as this can cause issues in relation to security and data protection.</p>
Software	<p>Would you need a messaging or video conferencing system? Choose the right one for your organisations.</p> <p>We recommend Zoom and Google Hangouts/Meets for video conferencing and WhatsApp for messaging.</p>
Meetings	<p>Weekly meetings can be conducted via video conferencing or over the phone where practical.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appoint a chair to run the meetings • Develop and circulate agenda prior to meeting time, allocate time and speaker for each item. • Set weekly schedules of work for each staff members during the meeting • Review agreed actions via check in meetings during and at the end of the week.
Processes	<p>Consider the team's day-to-day processes and schedule by asking these questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What did you work on yesterday? • What are you going to focus on today? • What roadblocks are preventing you from achieving your goal? <p>Staff members' phones, chats, videos must always be available. Ensure staff members complete a time sheet on a daily basis for work done. This is an important accountability tool for justifying payment of salaries especially for activities requiring desk work.</p>

Support /Self-care

Since this is a new way of working, staff members should feel supported. It is important to create time between work and personal time. The entire staff members may be encouraged to start and close work at the same. Regular office hours should be encouraged with staff members clocking in using online registers. Allow for trial-and-error and flexibility in ways that ensures you can find the best approach that will suit your team. Having a 30 minutes check-in with staff members by supervisors at the personal, official and career growth level is also encouraged. Due to issues around electricity and internet connections, understand that not all staff members may be able to work from home.

Your beneficiaries/service users

- The stay-at-home order will generally affect your beneficiaries and service users. It is important that you communicate with them on what the lockdown will mean to their benefits and how you hope to continue to support them.
- Communicate clearly your plans in easy to understand format and circulate widely.
- Provide contacts they can use in reaching out to your organisation during the pandemic and in case they run out of supplies or have an emergency.
- You can play a role in providing awareness to your beneficiaries on preventive measures like handwashing, social distancing, personal hygiene and wellbeing.
- If for any reason your beneficiaries have to gather to receive their benefits, ensure you do not flout the local gathering limits for your State, practice social distancing and make available water, soap or alcohol-based hand-sanitizers.

Managing your finances

COVID-19 will create a financial crunch for the activities of nonprofits. To mitigate this, we recommend taking these few steps to prepare now and for the future:

- Chase all outstanding debts
- Focus on cash flow management
- Know what your fixed costs are and when they are due for payment
- Invoice for all services already delivered and then ensure that these invoices are paid
- Delay committing to any expenditure that is not essential
- If you are receiving funding, submit any required reports on time to make sure that you receive future instalments on time. (Note most donors are working remotely)
- Implement a recruitment freeze on all vacant posts

Talk to your funders

Most funders are waiting to hear from you on how COVID-19 is impacting your work, so speak to them. They understand organisations will be affected differently during the outbreak hence they will be interested in knowing they can adapt their support to suit your circumstances. Here are things to consider:

- Let them know what difficulties you may be experiencing in achieving some of the outputs or outcomes agreed for your grant during the outbreak.
- Speak to your funders about the impact of cancelling or delaying project activities which are part of funding agreements.
- Discuss the possibilities of maintaining your grant payments at originally agreed levels during this period.
- If you think you will not be able to meet your reporting deadline and timelines, let your funders know and negotiate a more realistic time.
- Discuss the possibilities of moving money between budgets to ensure your work can continue during this period.
- Speak to them about the possibilities of emergency funding to support your overhead.

AML/CFT

During this period there will be many organisations and individuals promising support or organising support to communities through nonprofits. Ensure you carry out due diligence and bear in mind the anti-money laundering and countering of terrorism financing measures/ regime you need to adhere to:

- NPOs are required to file cash-based transactions for cash transactions in excess of \$1,000 or its naira equivalent (as stipulated under Section 5 of the Money Laundering Prohibition Act)
- NPOs are required to file cash-based transactions for cash transactions in excess of \$1,000 or its naira equivalent (as stipulated under Section 5 of the Money Laundering Prohibition Act)
- NPOs are required to file cash-based transactions for cash transactions in excess of \$1,000 or its naira equivalent (as stipulated under Section 5 of the Money Laundering Prohibition Act)

COVID Scams

Beware of scams around this period. If it looks too good to be true, please trust your intuition.