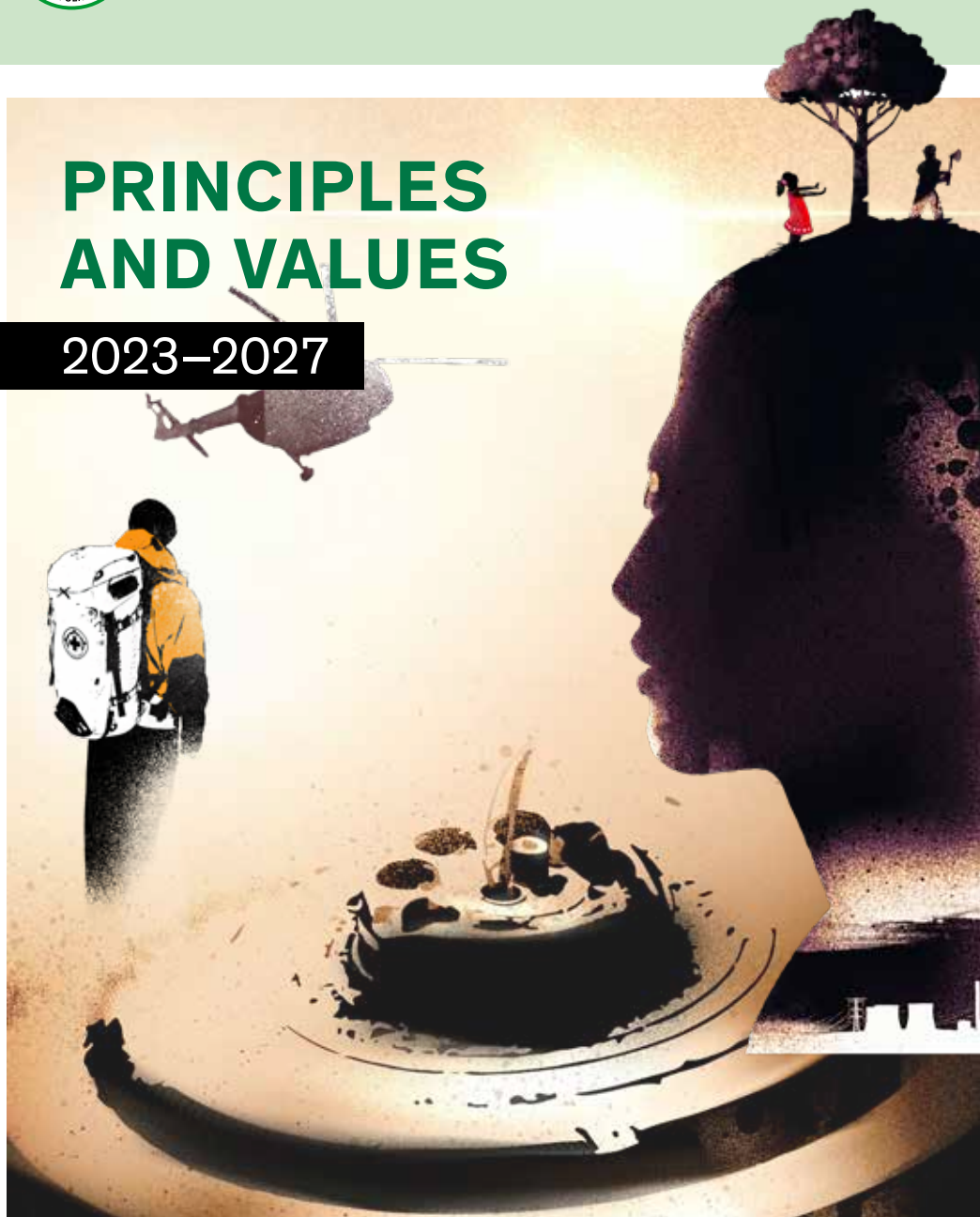




Norwegian People's Aid

PRINCIPLES AND VALUES

2023–2027



SOLIDARITY IN ACTION

Norwegian People's Aid is a member organisation founded by the Norwegian Confederation of Trade Unions (LO) in 1939. We are the trade union movement's humanitarian solidarity organisation, and we support the trade union movement's core values: Unity, solidarity and human dignity. Norwegian People's Aid's values are based on equal rights for all, regardless of gender, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, functional ability and social status. Norwegian People's Aid is an anti-racist organisation.

Norwegian People's Aid must be a credible, open and fearless organisation – an organisation that takes a stand based on knowledge and experience from practical work and an organisation that challenges power and injustice. We are a politically independent organisation and will take a stand on important public issues and debates. The organisation must consider gender equality and diversity in all processes and programmes. Our goal of achieving a more just and equal world means that we have partners who may be in opposition to or in conflict with those in power. Norwegian People's Aid should be recognised by its practical solidarity with people. Whether we are rescuing people in need in the mountains, doing solidarity work with local communities or clearing a school route contaminated with anti-personnel mines, our work is based on solidarity rather than charity.

“Solidarity in action” is our vision that permeates our work and commitment. Norwegian People's Aid works within two core areas: Just distribution of power and resources and protection of life and health.

Over several decades, Norwegian People's Aid has developed a unique expertise in humanitarian mine action and explosive clearance and advocacy to ban the use of land mines and cluster munition. We use this expertise to protect civilians against explosives before, during and after conflict and war.

Norwegian People's Aid is one of the largest contributors to the Norwegian national rescue service. We help train the population in first aid and assist the local communities when needed. Local anchoring and cooperation between the public and voluntary sectors provide security and accessibility when an accident or disaster occurs. Civil society organisations play a significant role in the structure of Norwegian society and contribute to the development of democracy. Our members actively contribute to social cohesion, political change, a significant proportion of welfare and to develop society for the better.

Norwegian People's Aid has long and solid experience of partner cooperation for a just distribution of power and resources. We support our partners to advance their own agenda and strengthen their influence in society. For a long time now, we have witnessed power and resources being concentrated in the hands of the few. The unequal distribution of power affects who is heard and what decisions are made. Strong popular participation and organisation are crucial for changing this. Women's influence must be strengthened if women are to participate on an equal footing with men.

People are displaced in large parts of the world, but face closed borders. Increasing polarisation leads to fronts, increased xenophobia and a clear opposition to immigration among parts of the population. Discrimination in working life and society and increased inequality cause problems with inclusion and challenge our trust in one another. Norwegian People's Aid works actively and purposefully to ensure that asylum seekers and people with an immigrant background are included and given the opportunity to use their resources and contribute to society. As women with an immigrant background face a number of barriers when it comes to inclusion, we must actively support women so that they can increase self-esteem and strength. Young people are an important resource and a driving force for change in society. Their engagement is about the right to participate and to change the

society we live in. A strong and inclusive youth organisation, with targeted activity through Solidarity Youth and First Aid and Rescue Youth, ensures growth and recruitment of good representatives, volunteers and crews.

Climate change and destruction of natural resources affect our work both nationally and internationally. It will potentially create further societal imbalances, leading to political instability, increased levels of conflict and driving more people to flee. Climate change will also affect both the type and number of assignments our volunteers receive and require an even more robust rescue service and sociopolitical response team in Norway.

DEMOCRATISATION AND INTERNATIONAL SOLIDARITY

Genuine functioning democracies are a prerequisite to equitable distribution. World poverty will not be reduced by increased economic growth alone. That growth must also be equally distributed. Norwegian People's Aid will work towards democracy, rights and the distribution of power and resources.

An organised civil society is crucial for consolidating democracy in a country. Collective organisation not only represents the interests of its members, but also helps build and defend democracy by holding decision-makers accountable and demanding results, transparency and representation.

Norwegian People's Aid engages in cooperation with organisations that fight for political and social rights in societies where democracy is weak. As such, we support oppressed groups to make their voice heard and to become effective in the struggle for democracy. In these partnerships, Norwegian People's Aid is committed to advocate politically for democracy and just distribution of power and resources towards the Norwegian authorities and public opinion and by promoting international solidarity work in its own member organisation.

The experience and knowledge from the international programmes must be shared and anchored in the organisation in Norway to increase involvement among Norwegian People's Aid members.

Broad involvement in the organisation provides legitimacy vis-à-vis the Norwegian authorities and helps to develop knowledge about international issues in the Norwegian population.

Norwegian People's Aid aims to be a strong humanitarian organisation which together with our partners helps to prevent crises and provide humanitarian response during and after crises, disasters and conflicts. Humanitarian response will primarily be based on our long-term partnerships and aim to support development of more resilient societies. Humanitarian work must follow humanitarian principles and human rights, take into account that gender and diversity factors mean different groups of people, such as for instance women and men, are affected differently. The response will seek to strengthen local actors so that those affected by crises are to be able to exert influence over their own situation.

When climate-related crises occur in areas where Norwegian People's Aid is performing international solidarity work, and where our expertise is needed, we will provide timely humanitarian response. Local civil society organisations, that we have long-term partnerships with, are often the first responders and important actors when crises happen. We will support civil society to build required competence to deal with climate change adaptation and response to climate-related crises. Civil society organisations play a key role in promoting reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, protect nature and promote policies for adaptation to climate change. Norwegian People's Aid will build solidarity with the organisations, support their rights and civic space.

Norwegian People's Aid will

- cooperate with popular organisations and civil society to promote democratisation and contribute to a just distribution of power and resources
- support partners' work to ensure that strategic natural resources are managed sustainably and benefit all people
- promote democracy, human rights, gender equality and the just sharing of power and resources between women and men
- work to ensure that Norwegian development policy focuses more on the distribution of power and resources
- strengthen the resilience of communities at risk of crisis by strengthening the local actors
- promote the role of local organisations in responding to humanitarian crises and strengthen their capacity to take on this role
- contribute to increased involvement and understanding in our local chapters, among members and in the general population on development issues
- strengthen cooperation with trade unions on democracy development and international solidarity
- reduce our own climate and environmental footprint in line with applicable international agreements
- be a reliable knowledge bank for the Norwegian public on the relationship between climate, crises and inequality
- For all questions concerning climate and crises, consider the consequences this has for women, as well as for vulnerable groups, and support them as actors in the work to face climate change.
- be a clear voice to ensure that local population is consulted and respected in climate and environmental initiatives, promote a, just green transition and human rights, and ensure that civil society in the South is heard and protected in the fight to save the environment and safeguard livelihoods

FIRST AID AND RESCUE SERVICE

The Norwegian rescue service is based on all appropriate resources – public, private and voluntary – being used in a publicly coordinated effort to save lives and health. Norwegian People's Aid is one of the country's largest voluntary rescue organisations and a key player in the rescue service. We make our resources available in case of disasters, search for missing persons, avalanches and other types of rescue operations. Norwegian People's Aid is constantly seeking new knowledge to develop subjects and expertise. This is what allows our crews to do the best possible work, all year round, in all types of conditions.

Norwegian People's Aid is one of the country's largest contributors to voluntary health emergency response teams, where we provide response ambulances to support the health service, volunteer emergency responders and first aid response teams at cultural and sports events.

Safe activities for children and young people contribute to unity, education and personal development. The activities have a great intrinsic value, while also facilitating children and young people to become future crews for Norwegian People's Aid.

A nationwide first aid and rescue service is a prerequisite for us to be able to live and be active throughout the country. In Norway, resources must be local to be available when accidents, crises or terrorism occur. This requires us to build competent rescue resources across the country so that Norway is a safe community to live in.

Preventive work is important for a comprehensive rescue service. This involves training in first aid, mountain knowledge and sensible use and faring in nature. With proper training, individuals can avoid danger, save themselves and help others when accidents and illness strike. Climate-related crises, such as extreme weather incidents, can also hit Norway, and will challenge societal security in the future. A situation like this requires both local climate adaptation and a robust rescue service that responds quickly. The assignments of the voluntary first aid and rescue service in

Norwegian People's Aid will more often be a result of climate change, and we must expect to see an increase in the number of assignments and their severity.

Norwegian People's Aid will

- be a visible operator and set the political agenda in first aid, rescue services and accident prevention
- strengthen our position as a robust, nationwide player within the Norwegian rescue service
- strengthen our position as a support system for the health services and municipalities within voluntary health emergency services
- develop and ensure high professional standards in our efforts, and ensure that our crews are adequately trained
- strengthen and develop NPA First Aid and Rescue Youth so that they become an important source of recruitment and competent contribution to our voluntary rescue and first aid efforts
- work towards achieving good financial framework conditions for the voluntary rescue service
- work to ensure that those working in the voluntary rescue service avoid loss of wages, have adequate insurance schemes and sound financial conditions
- work to ensure that the Norwegian population knows first aid, and ensure that we provide high-quality first aid training
- work towards closer cooperation, joint professional development and standardisation within the rescue service
- carry out active preventive work to avoid accidents
- help by providing first aid response teams at various cultural and sporting events
- be an organisation that contributes acutely and over time to crises and disasters
- ensure organisational building and strategic placement of local branches so that we can respond quickly to incidents that require our efforts
- focus on providing ongoing training for crews to ensure they are prepared for the complexity of the assignments they encounter

REFUGEES AND INCLUSION

Volunteerism plays a crucial role in the creation of an inclusive society. Norwegian People's Aid is an important contributor to promoting participation in local communities and organisations and helps people to gain good networks and become active citizens in society. Practical experience and a focus on rights are a solid foundation for political influence.

Far too many refugees and other vulnerable groups are currently out of work. These are people who will benefit greatly from a working community and who represent a great resource for society. Economic problems and increased tensions between different groups of the population can undermine the desire and willingness to include for many people in the majority population. Increased xenophobia and generalisation contribute to increased discrimination in working life and society.

Norwegian People's Aid must combat discrimination and contribute to creating an inclusive working life and society for all. Other groups in Norwegian society also need our solidarity. Many of Norwegian People's Aid's local branches are important contributors, providing local social initiatives that the public sector does not take on. Preventing exclusion will be key to the society of the future.

When climate change leads to increased political instability and conflict levels, and also makes it harder to live in many areas of the world, it means that more people flee their homes, across national borders. Norwegian People's Aid's voluntary sociopolitical response teams in Norway will play a crucial role in responding quickly to receive refugees. Crises lead to unrest and uncertainty. Our volunteers ensure that information is disseminated in multiple languages, as well as create safe meeting places in turbulent situations, and ensure that fundamental rights are safeguarded for all, over time.

Norwegian People's Aid will

- through practical efforts contribute to the inclusion of refugees and other vulnerable groups in society
- strengthen cooperation with the trade union movement to combat discrimination and create an inclusive working life for all
- be a driving force and advocate for rights, equality and good living conditions for immigrants, refugees and asylum seekers
- strengthen local branches to ensure good organisational knowledge, recruitment and increased impact in political advocacy efforts
- strengthen the local branches' ability to meet refugees from different conflict areas and their knowledge to handle refugee and inclusion issues in general
- strengthen and develop Solidarity Youth so that they become an important source of recruitment and a competent contribution to our refugee and inclusion work and other social issues
- build bridges between gender, groups, cultures and generations in the local community via the local chapters
- be a visible operator and set the political agenda in the refugee and social inclusion field
- counteract falsehoods and prejudices

HUMANITARIAN DISARMAMENT

Humanitarian disarmament is about reducing and preventing civilian suffering caused by weapons and ammunition. Civil society operators play a crucial role in this effort. In all the work we do, we aim to contribute to increasing national and local competence.

Millions of people are exposed to the consequences of armed conflicts, even long after the conflicts are over. Landmines, cluster munitions and other types of weapons lead to civilian harm, injury or death and destruction, hindering access to humanitarian response and critical services, as well as blocking opportunities for peace and development. Women, men, boys and girls, as well as different ethnic and religious groups are affected differently by conflict; there are a number of critical visible and invisible diversity factors which NPA must take into account within our organisation and the work that we do, to ensure that the needs of all affected persons are reflected in our response, without leaving anyone behind.

The long-term goal of Norwegian People's Aid's humanitarian disarmament work is to reduce the risk posed by mines, cluster munitions and other weapons to a level where civilians can live safely and where development is not constrained. Through our work, we will prevent harm and suffering associated with weapons and ammunition before, during and after they are used.

Norwegian People's Aid will be one of the most important global operators in humanitarian mine action clearance operations. We will also use our expertise to secure and safely destroy weapons and ammunition. We will strengthen our operational as well as policy and advocacy efforts to protect civilians from explosive weapons in populated areas. Meanwhile, we also need to ensure full and effective implementation of adopted conventions as well as work towards a ban on other weapon types which cause immediate and protracted harm to civilians.

Based on our experience from the successful processes that led to the bans on anti-personnel mines and cluster munition, Norwegian People's Aid will contribute to further humanitarian disarmament agendas. We will continue our efforts towards strengthening international norms and rules for the protection of civilians.

Nuclear weapons are the greatest threat to humanity and the environment. Norwegian People's Aid will continue its efforts to ensure that more countries join the ban on nuclear weapons, and will increase knowledge and understanding of the humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons. As a leading global humanitarian mine action operator, rapid response for Norwegian People's Aid means early intervention and sometimes operating in conflict-affected, which is why it is particularly important for us to always uphold our humanitarian principles. War causes major environmental problems, destruction of natural habitat, as well as pollution and degraded agricultural areas. We will continue to mainstream environmental protection within our organisation and our programmes and operations.

Norwegian People's Aid will

- work operationally and politically to increase the protection of civilians before, during and after conflicts and to strengthen international rules and norms for humanitarian disarmament
- work to improve quality, efficacy and cost-effectiveness in the land release contaminated with mines, cluster munition remnants and other explosive ordnance
- work to strengthen international rules and norms around weapons in order to protect civilians
- work to reduce the threat posed by mines, cluster munition remnants, post-war toxic waste, explosive weapons, unsecured weapons stockpiles, nuclear weapons, and incendiary weapons
- work to increase knowledge about the humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons and to ensure that Norway and other states join the ban on nuclear weapons
- work to stop the use of explosive weapons in densely populated areas, as well as contribute to civil response and protection of civilians against explosive weapons
- contribute to increased involvement and activity in local branches, and increased understanding of humanitarian disarmament among the population
- reduce civilian suffering in conflict by requiring end-user declarations on Norwegian arms exports, also to allies
- work towards increased protection of the environment and climate in explosives clearance and disarmament, and contribute to the protection of the environment before, during and after conflict



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The theme of The General Assembly 2023 was Climate and Crises and the illustrations in this periods Principles and Values reflects this topic.

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