



Norwegian People's Aid

# MONITORING, EVALUATION, ACCOUNTABILITY AND LEARNING POLICY

– FOR THE INTERNATIONAL WORK  
OF NORWEGIAN PEOPLE'S AID





*NPA MEAL Officer during a beneficiary satisfaction survey for protection project, Iraq.  
Photo: Norwegian People's Aid*



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## POLICY STATEMENT

NPA shall commit to a Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability and Learning architecture which serves to ensure adherence to NPA values of unity, solidarity, human worth and rights for all (irrespective of gender, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, disability and social status), promote wider learning and improve performance.

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## PURPOSE

The purpose of the NPA MEAL approach is to promote strategic and systematic application of knowledge, lessons learned and good practice into our work to enhance participation, accountability to the population we support and transparency of decision making, and to promote organisational learning and the continual improvement of interventions, in support of NPA values, policies and strategies. The MEAL approach is valid for all of NPA's international programmes, including programme partners with contractual obligations.

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## OBJECTIVES

1. The policy shall commit NPA to Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability and Learning, as key components of a Results-Based Management System.
2. MEAL activities shall contribute to the promotion of NPA's values and policies
3. MEAL activities shall focus on the analysis of coherence, relevance, efficiency, effectiveness and impact of NPA interventions and the sustainability of its results.
4. NPA shall continuously improve based on quality knowledge development, the sharing of good practice and challenges, and incorporate lessons learned into NPA decision-making and interventions.

*Non-Technical Survey in Myanmar by NPA Cambodia staff led team.  
Photo: Norwegian People's Aid*



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# COMPONENTS

Monitoring, evaluation, accountability and learning are in synergy, and must be implemented concurrently in order to achieve the objectives of this policy. In practice, all programmes' MEAL systems form part of a participatory and inclusive approach across the programme cycle. The components should be planned and implemented together with partners and the population we support. These are:

## 4.1 MONITORING

Monitoring is a term used for all types of progress tracking. However, this policy focuses on monitoring programme results in the form of deliveries (outputs) and the effects of the deliveries (outcomes and impact). NPA HO departments and all programmes have responsibility for and must plan and implement monitoring activities to track progress on the deliveries and effect of implemented interventions, with emphasis on the latter. The plan shall clearly define NPA and partners' roles in these activities.

## 4.2 EVALUATION

Evaluation is a tool to examine the quality of performance and deliveries by identifying and reflecting on results achieved and lessons learned. NPA HO departments and all country programmes shall plan and implement evaluations, either internal or external, at least once during the course of the programme period. The size and scope of the programme shall determine the scope of the evaluation and one may use one evaluation for several programmes.

## 4.3 ACCOUNTABILITY

Norwegian People's Aid (NPA) is committed to being accountable towards rights-holders, partners, institutional and private donors supporting our work and the wider public. NPA's most important stakeholders are the population we seek to support, as captured in NPA's principle of Solidarity in Action and we are committed to ensuring that accountability to these stakeholders underpins all of our programming. MEAL systems shall, at a minimum, include feedback mechanisms to capture the opinions of the supported populations, partners and relevant stakeholders on our interventions and a system to inform the same about results of the programmes to enable adaptation and continual improvement.

## 4.4 LEARNING (AND SHARING)

Continuous improvement requires room for reflection and sharing of knowledge. Learning activities shall be planned and implemented in all programmes, including following up learning outcomes. Learning is highlighted as a separate activity together with adaptation (of the programme). Adaptation means to adjust the programme to make it relevant in the given context.



*NPA reinforces complaint and feedback mechanism during UN-FOA's Main Season Response, South Sudan.  
Photo: Norwegian People's Aid*

*Years of mine clearance experience in NPA continuously improve methods and training. Here, training on clearance of improvised mines in Iraq.  
Photo: Norwegian People's Aid*



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## PRINCIPLES

All MEAL activities shall follow certain principles, based on NPA's values and sound MEAL architecture. These are:

### 5.1 GOVERNANCE

The MEAL architecture requires sound governance by NPA senior management in order to ensure sufficient integrity and objectivity. DHC and DMAD management teams have a key role in terms of establishing the MEAL framework, maintaining oversight and follow-up. Governance also means that NPA staff and relevant stakeholders participate and take ownership of the quality of MEAL activities and that roles and mandates in MEAL activities are clearly defined and are articulated in annual plans.

### 5.2 TRANSPARENCY

Subject to any legal obligations and/or the need to protect confidentiality, NPA should strive to be as transparent as possible to ensure accountability – internally and externally. NPA commits to sharing result information to the groups we are accountable to, the related publication of evaluations and using public channels for other result information.

### 5.3 QUALITY

In order to maintain confidence in the MEAL architecture, high standards of quality are required. NPA's methods for data collection and analysis shall be known to the NPA programme staff and possible to track internally in NPA. The methods shall be appropriate for the purpose and to the greatest degree possible be based on developed and tested methods. To minimise bias, the MEAL data and analysis

shall be representative and must reflect the reality of the different groups of stakeholders we are analysing to the greatest extent possible. In this regard, MEAL activities should follow the UN principles of leaving no one behind. It is also vital to include objective methods of data collection and analysis, such as external evaluations, feedback mechanisms, designated MEAL staff, and stakeholder analyses.

### 5.4 UTILITY

MEAL activities should be focused on the 'user' of the information, such as NPA staff, supported populations, partners, donors, and institutions, and be easily understood by all relevant stakeholders.

### 5.5 ETHICS

The underlying principle of 'do-no-harm' applies to all MEAL activities. One shall, for instance, make sure that MEAL activities are not a risk to partners nor the population we support.

### 5.6 CONTINUAL IMPROVEMENT

The MEAL architecture should reinforce an organisational culture of continual improvement, by establishing processes to inform a culture of internal reflection, learning and adaptive response.

### 5.7 CONFIDENTIALITY

All stakeholders that have taken part in NPA's MEAL activities shall be secure that the data is not traceable to the individual, and that data is stored safely.

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## RESOURCES

In order to implement the policy, NPA commits to:

- Develop planned monitoring, evaluation, accountability and learning activities and systems in all operationalisation of strategies and policies, including delineation of roles within MEAL systems and activities;
- Develop tools and guidelines to enable staff to implement MEAL activities and improve their ability to implement them;
- All country or regional offices must allocate sufficient resources for dedicated staff to plan and implement MEAL systems and activities, in collaboration with programme staff and partners if any, in line with the NPA MEAL policy.
- MEAL activities must be an integral part of all staff, from monitoring staff to management positions' job descriptions.





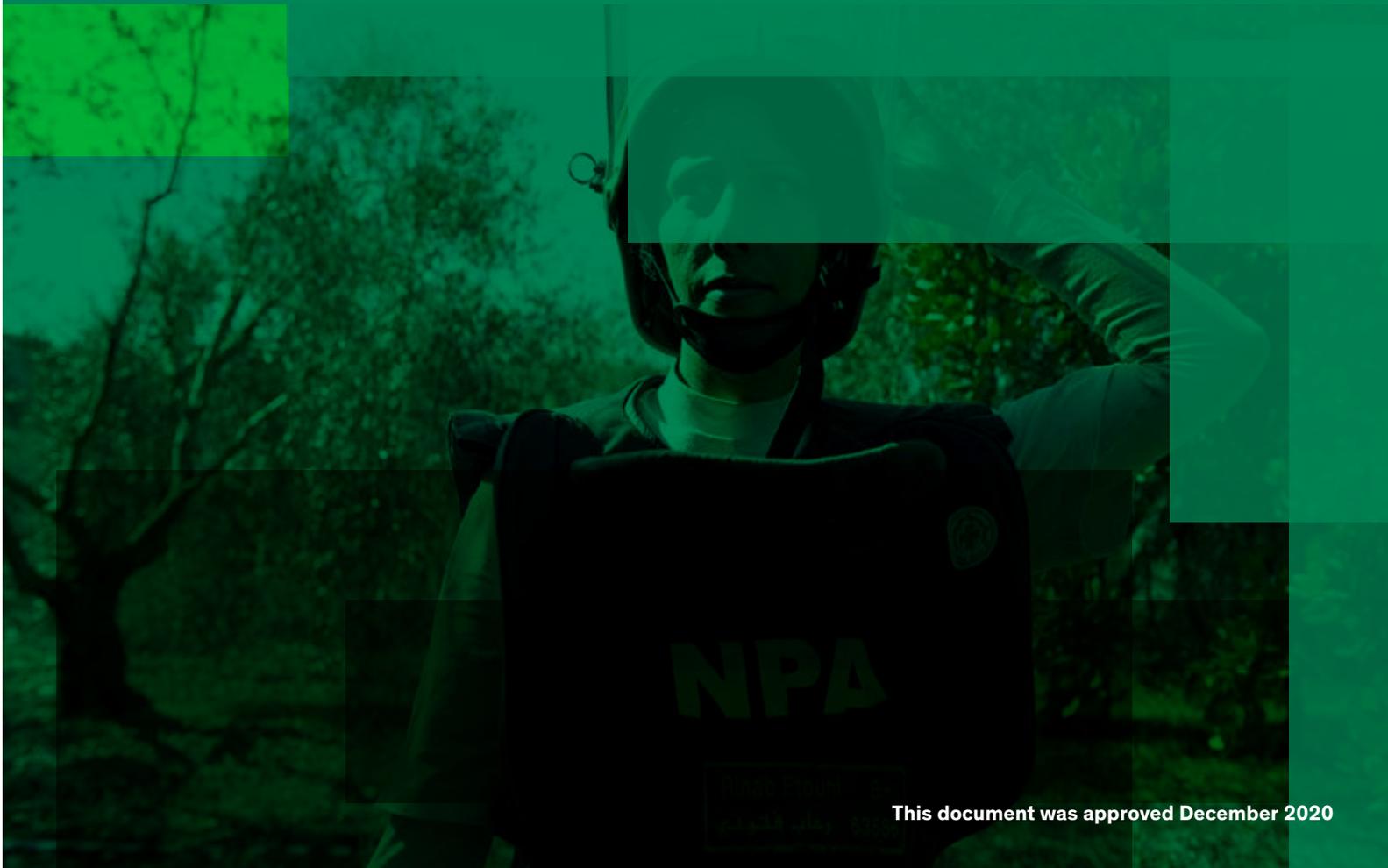
*Visiting NPA partner activities  
in Bolivia. Farmers and indigenous  
people mobilise.  
Photo: Norwegian People's Aid*



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