

# Norwegian Church Aid's Accountability framework

Norwegian Church Aid's Accountability framework states our commitments to rights-holders, host communities, partners and other stakeholders. The framework also outlines the management processes we use to implement our commitments. By stating our commitments, Norwegian Church Aid encourages our stakeholders to view and monitor our work, and to hold us accountable if we fall short of our commitments.

## Introduction

Norwegian Church Aid is an **ecumenical, diaconal, humanitarian and non-profit** organisation **mandated by churches and Christian organisations** in Norway<sup>1</sup> to work for **global justice**, by empowering the poor and challenging the wealthy and powerful. Together with our constituency and our partners, NCA commits itself to the **vision: Together for a just world**.

Our work is guided by the following **values**: Integrity of Creation, human dignity, global justice, inclusive communities and compassion.

We are rooted in **faith** and believe that religion can be a power for positive change when people, **across religious boundaries**, identify and strengthen those forces within their own religion that affirm justice and protect the oppressed and destitute.

Our assistance is provided **unconditionally** and without any intention of influencing people's religious affiliation. We do not support proselytising activities and confront biases based on religion. We support all humanity irrespective of culture, gender, sexual orientation, age, functional abilities, ethnicity and political persuasion.

Translating visions into strategies and action, NCA is working on the following five **Global Strategic Priorities**; The right to Peace and Security, Gender Justice, Economic Justice, Climate Justice and The right to Water and Health.

Our three working methods; long-term development, emergency preparedness and response and advocacy are interlinked. Combining and handling them under one management system is what we in Norwegian Church Aid understand as an **integrated approach** to social change.

## Commitments

In the Principles NCA has identified five standards that we are committed to translate into practice:

1. A commitment to rights
2. Women's rights and gender equity
3. Protection of the environment
4. Peace and reconciliation
5. Accountability

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<sup>1</sup> Church of Norway, the Pentecostal Movement in Norway, the Evangelical Lutheran Free Church of Norway, the Free Evangelical Congregations, the Baptist Union of Norway, the Mission Covenant Church of Norway, the Salvation Army, the United Methodist Church in Norway, the Norwegian Sami Mission, the Domestic Seamen's mission, the Norwegian Universities and Schools Christian Fellowship, Norwegian YWCA-YMCA. Observer organisations: Global Aid Network, the Norwegian Council for Mission and Evangelism (NORME), Christian Council of Norway.

**A Rights-Based Approach** is at the base of all Norwegian Church Aid's work. As a duty-bearer, Norwegian Church Aid is committed to the principles of accountability, transparency, non-discrimination, equality and respect for all people.

Norwegian Church Aid strives for **open and honest communication** about our activities, where and how we carry out our mission and how financial and human resources are utilized. Publishing our global plans and reports, we aim to communicate openly with the public both at home and abroad, donors and authorities, our constituency, partners, individuals and groups that become involved and engaged in our work.

## Standards

Norwegian Church Aid is committed to key standards for our work. They are defined as obligatory standards.

*Our affiliation to ACT Alliance implies obligations towards standards and policies developed by the alliance as well as standards shared with other organisations and alliances.*

*Our compliance to standards is verifiable.*

*When working in particularly challenging situations Norwegian Church Aid might be unable to comply with all our standards. In such situations, Norwegian Church Aid has routines for justifying and deciding on exoneration and these are regularly flowed up.*

## Norwegian Church Aid's standards:

### A) International and Global standards

- HAP standards for accountability and quality management<sup>2</sup>: [http://www.hapinternational.org/projects/standard/hap\\_2010\\_standard.aspx](http://www.hapinternational.org/projects/standard/hap_2010_standard.aspx)
- Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and Non-Governmental Organisations in Disaster Relief <http://www.ifrc.org/en/publications-and-reports/code-of-conduct/>The Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response, the Sphere Project. <http://www.sphereproject.org/>
- Do no Harm- and Local Capacities for Peace Projects, guide our interventions in conflict sensitive areas <http://www.hapinternational.org/resources/category.aspx?catid=654>

### B) NCA -specific standards

- NCA Security policy and standard. <http://www.kirkensnodhjelp.no/en/About-NCA/About-NCA/Accountability-Commitments/>
- NCA's Principles for information and communications in order to improve transparency and accountability. <http://www.kirkensnodhjelp.no/en/About-NCA/About-NCA/Accountability-Commitments/>
- As a member of the Ethical Trade Initiative Norway (ETI-Norway) Norwegian Church Aid and our suppliers are obliged to comply with ETI-Norway's Ethical Trade Principles (CoC) [IEH's Ethical Trade Principles \(CoC\)](#)
- Norwegian accounting standards and International Financial Reporting Standards.
- In our fundraising work we apply the standards given by The Norwegian Control Committee for fundraising.
- Norwegian Church Aid adheres to the national laws and regulations for employees.
- Norwegian Church Aid has a global work place policy on HIV and Aids.

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<sup>2</sup> Regarding the Principle for Humanitarian Action Neutrality included in HAPs standards, Norwegian Church Aid will in certain contexts reserve the right to give political support to resistance with legitimate means against illegitimate regimes. This is in line with our mission as stated in Norwegian Church Aid's policy document

### **C) Mandatory Standards and commitments related to ACT Alliance affiliation:**

*From: ACT Alliance Quality and Accountability –framework :*

*The ACT Alliance "Founding Document", February 2009 ....outlines ACT's vision, mission, objectives and member commitments. .... It is complemented by the ACT Alliance Statutes and By-Laws. Based on these documents, there are a number of overarching ACT standards and commitments to which all ACT members are obliged to adhere irrespective of their areas of work, namely:*

- *Membership agreement*
- *Code of Good Practice*
- *Code of Conduct for the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse, fraud and corruption and abuse of power*
- *Procedure for funding the ACT Alliance*
- *ACT emergency response mechanism policy, guidelines and tools*
- *National and regional forums policy and guidelines*
- *Advocacy policy*
- *Co-branding policy*
- *Anti- fraud and corruption*
- *Complaints policy*
- *Membership disciplinary policy*
- *Public Information Disclosure Policy*
- *Communications Policy (to be approved 2013)*

*In addition, six international standards have been formally adopted, endorsed or committed to by ACT governance.*

*For details see: [Act-quality-accountability-framework](#)*

*All Standards and Commitments, with relevant hyper-links are listed in the Annex I: NCA Standards and Commitments*

### **Implementing mechanisms**

Implementation of our work is guided by policies and guidelines. Norwegian Church Aid has developed a handbook - Routines & Guidelines (R&G), to contribute to securing that our work is in compliance with our standards. The R&G includes documentation pertaining to Norwegian Church Aid's governance, risk management, planning and budgeting, financial management, human resource areas, monitoring and reporting. The R&G is an authoritative point of reference for applicable rules, guidelines and templates relevant to every day work. Norwegian Church Aid undertakes continual improvement of its Routines & Guidelines and strives to keep the content as updated as possible.

### **Partnership**

Norwegian Church Aid works with partners. Rather than impose our accountability standards on our partners, we aim to share our standards and to facilitate support to partners who share our commitment of good practice and improvement. We focus on improving the quality of our partnerships and together with our partners, develop good accountability mechanisms towards the rights-holders.

Norwegian Church Aid includes accountability in our capacity development and organizational support to our partners, and in monitoring our partners' work.

## **Declarations of interests**

We cooperate with ecumenical organizations such as the World Council of Churches and the Lutheran World Federation. Norwegian Church Aid is a member of the ACT Alliance and we take part in several ecumenical networks with our sister organizations.

We are a member of networks among non-governmental organizations and faith-based organizations in Norway and take part in professional working groups. We also take part in working groups with the Norwegian government.

Norwegian Church Aid gets funding and resources from the Norwegian Government, other governments' agencies, our sister organizations, the United Nations and other agencies and private donors.

See Annex II : NCA's Affiliations.

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