MONITORING, EVALUATION AND LEARNING POLICY

The Salvation Army The Netherlands, International Development Services (IDS)
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COLOPHON
This document has been made possible in collaboration with our staff and partners


TEXT
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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Introduction</strong></td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Background</strong></td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>About this Policy</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intended users</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Section 1: Definitions of Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning</strong></td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>M&amp;E Versus Other Oversight Activities</strong></td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Section 2: Norms and Standards of Monitoring and Evaluation</strong></td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norm 1: Commitment and adherence to internationally agreed upon principles, goals and targets of development</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norm 2: Application of the OECD/Development Assistance Committee (DAC) criteria for evaluating Development Assistance</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norm 3: Adherence to Ethical Principles</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norm 4: Maintaining Independence</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norm 5: Applying Transparent Processes</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standard 5.1 Stakeholder Participation</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standard 5.2 Open Data and Disclosure Policy</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norm 6: Commitment to utilise evaluation findings for learning</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standard 6.1 Development of a Learning Agenda</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standard 6.2 Management response</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standard 6.3 Evaluation report</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standard 6.4 Plan of Action for Disseminating Evaluation Findings</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standard 6.5 Budget Allocation for Monitoring and Evaluation</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norm 7: Attention to Cross-Cutting issues such as Sustainability and Social Inclusion in evaluations</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norm 8: Quality Assurance</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standard 8.1 Qualifications of staff and consultants</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standard 8.2 Onsite Monitoring Visits</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standard 8.3 Use of Mixed Methods</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standard 8.4 Data Collection</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standard 8.5 External evaluation</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standard 8.6 Tracking of implementation</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standard 8.7 Evaluability Assessment</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standard 8.8 Terms of Reference for evaluations</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standard 8.9 Standardised indicators</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standard 8.10 Internal Reference Group</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standard 8.11 Revision of the Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Policy (MEAL)</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Section 3: Measurement of the sustainable development goals (sdgs)</strong></td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Section 4: Measuring results in emergencies and humanitarian interventions</strong></td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flow charts Preferred flow emergency services planning phase including M&amp;E tools</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preferred flow emergency services implementation phase including M&amp;E tools</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preferred flow emergency services closure phase including M&amp;E tools</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning standards assure quality in our development interventions.
Since 1865 The Salvation Army has done outstanding work in looking after marginalised communities. Not only have they fed the poor, provided shelter for the homeless and educated children, they have also been among the first to respond with humanitarian aid after natural disasters. Across all corners of the globe, The Salvation Army has used a holistic approach and at times implemented Community Development projects that are compelled by the love of God to bring hope to many. However, nowadays there is an increasing call from our stakeholders and partners to go beyond reporting on the number of schools and hospitals that we built. Although important, these statistics do not tell us how a program significantly contributes to -for example- improving the health and wellbeing of a community.

In other words, there is an interest to know whether our work actually makes a lasting difference in people’s lives. This is what is meant by ‘impact’. Impact is what happens long after the schools are built, after the children graduate and even what happens after these children become adults.

A formal definition of impact is ‘the positive and negative, primary and secondary long-term effects produced by a development intervention, directly or indirectly, intended or unintended’ (OECD, 2010). While impact measurement is ‘a process involving tools used to measure the difference a programme makes on a specific person, group of people or specific location.’

Throughout the period of 2013-2016 a process was started to report more on the impact of our interventions, strengthen accountability and improve quality at all levels of The Salvation Army.

In 2013, two initiatives for strengthening measurement and accountability were started - the One Army Impact Initiative and the One Army Accountability Review. In January 2015, the General’s Consultative Council considered both initiatives and decided to launch an integrated Accountability Movement with four main pillars (Governance, Impact Measurement, Finance and Child Protection).

See Figure 1.

Nowadays there is an increasing call from our stakeholders and partners to go beyond reporting on the number of schools and hospitals that we built.”

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This Policy document contributes to the Impact Measurement pillar. The International One Army Impact Initiative had the mandate to answer the following questions ‘What is the impact that we seek to achieve as One Army?’ ‘How do we measure this impact in order to learn and improve our quality over time?’

As a result of these questions, a Mission Accountability Framework (MAF)³ was developed. This Framework poses questions that help TSA become more accountable to God and each other.

As depicted in Figure 2 below, the key questions for accountability are explained in six dimensions; People, Passion and Spirit, Purpose, Plan, Progress, and Procedures and Systems.

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RELATIONAL OUTCOMES

‘We remember before our God and Father your work produced by faith, your labour prompted by love and your endurance inspired by hope in our Lord Jesus Christ.’
(1 Thess. 1:3)

The dimension of the Mission Accountability Framework (MAF) which refers to having a Plan, assesses the contextual and relational factors of people’s lives. The following outcomes were then derived.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FAITH &amp; TRUST</th>
<th>Completeness</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Faith in God is the foundation of trust. Trust blinds us in fellowship with God and others as we seek transformation in our lives and communities.</td>
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<tr>
<td>John 15:9</td>
<td>Acceptance</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Self worth</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Transparency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Honesty</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>HOPE</th>
<th>Persistence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>God is our source of hope for the future. This hope gives us strength, energy, inspiration, and joy for the journey.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Romans 8:24, Romans 5:5, Acts 26:6</td>
<td>Courage</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Resilience</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Faithful struggle</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Inner strength</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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<tr>
<th>LOVE</th>
<th>Compassion</th>
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<tr>
<td>Love is a gift from God. This love is the foundation of all relationships, restoration, reconciliation, and redemption.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Proverb 3:5, Corinthians 13</td>
<td>Acceptance</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Forgiveness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Graciousness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Humility</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CONTEXTUAL OUTCOMES

SAFETY / PROTECTION
To be free from abuse, discrimination, hunger, homelessness, and fear.

WELL-BEING / HEALTH
Our holistic understanding of health is a state of physical, mental, social and spiritual well-being in which we are in harmony with God, with each other and all creation.

SERVICE / WORK
Whether in the home, the factory, the office, the field, the church or the community, work/service is the central means through which people can use vocations and gifts to contribute to their families, communities, and personal fulfilment. John 9:4-5

FORMATION / EDUCATION
Children and adults need to develop into compassionate people of integrity and character with the relevant skills, knowledge and understanding to achieve their full God-given potential.
STANDARD 5.1

Stakeholder Participation

Evaluations should ensure the participation of all relevant stakeholders and partners, including men, women, disabled, youth, hard-to-reach, marginalised groups and ethnic minorities in every stage of the evaluation.

The core of TSA’s work is grounded on the concepts of Integrated Mission (Care, Community, Change, Hope, Leadership)\(^4\). These concepts are reflected in the application of Faith Based Facilitation (FBF)\(^5\). FBF not only encourages community engagement but also mainstreams monitoring, evaluation, reflection and learning within an intervention.

The thrust towards more accountability resulted in several reporting templates where standardised and harmonised practices were agreed upon for use throughout The Salvation Army. Some of these standardised templates can be accessed through www.legerdesheils.nl/ids.

This document reflects the growing trend in the development sector for improved monitoring and evaluation systems.

### ABOUT THIS POLICY

This document sets out the norms and standards which should govern the practices surrounding monitoring and evaluation within The Salvation Army The Netherlands, International Development Services (IDS) department. The Policy was first published in 2017 and is revised in 2019 to reflect the current realities in the development sector. Two new chapters have been added to discuss how TSA measures its contribution towards the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as well as how the IDS conducts its monitoring and evaluation activities during emergency situations.

Only through continuous learning and improvement will the Salvation Army (TSA) be able to achieve the objectives set forth in various strategy documents. It is vital, therefore, that resources, both financial and human, are prioritised for evaluation activities, and that decisions are based on evidence drawn from evaluation findings.

As TSA The Netherlands is a part of various alliances and collaborates with different development partners, there will be occasions where there are other monitoring, evaluation and learning (MEL) policies and guidelines in place. It is up to the discretion of the respective managements to choose the appropriate policies that are to be observed.

With this being said, it is anticipated that for projects and programmes approved by The Salvation Army The Netherlands Project Board, directly funded and implemented by TSA The Netherlands, this policy will be the leading and guiding principle.

The document is divided into two main sections as follows: **SECTION 1** describes the basics of monitoring and evaluation. We have included simple definitions of monitoring, evaluation and learning and explained their purpose in making informed strategic decisions. We also discuss the differences between monitoring and evaluation and other oversight activities such as audits, inspections, reviews and research.

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\(^4\) More information on Integrated Mission accessible here
http://www.affirmfacilitators.org/docs/MissionInCommunity.pdf
http://www.salvationarmy.org/ihq/FA7C2C99F594734380256F0E006118AF

\(^5\) Description of FBF and the 5 steps of the process may be viewed here http://www.salvationarmy.org/fbf/home
SECTION 2 highlights the norms and quality standards with respect to monitoring and evaluating development interventions within The Salvation Army The Netherlands International Development Office. Here we highlight the necessity of having a monitoring and evaluation plan, harmonised indicators, external evaluations, determining baselines, target setting and the general procedures surrounding data collection, reporting and utilising monitoring and evaluation findings.

SECTION 3 discusses how TSA measures its contribution to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) while Section 4 highlights the monitoring and evaluation of emergency and humanitarian projects.

There are other useful documents that supplement this Policy. These are:
- Project Review and Evaluation Report Template
- Project Visit Report
- Terms of Reference (TOR) for an evaluation
- Quarterly Progress Report
- Project Proposal Checklist
- Concept Note Checklist
- Global Learning Clients/Beneficiary’s Satisfaction with the project
- Logical Framework
- Management Response Template
- Overview of Standardised Indicators
- M&E Plan

All the above documents may be accessed online at www.legerdesheils.nl/ids.

INTENDED USERS

The policy is designed to support all persons with a role in the Monitoring and Evaluating (M&E) of Mission and Development projects funded by the Dutch Salvation Army international development office.

The primary intended users of this document are project officers and staff tasked with designing, implementing and evaluating programmes and projects. Other users include volunteers, our partners and other stakeholders who wish to have a deeper understanding of our M&E guidelines, standards and practices.

On a pragmatic level, the policy provides support to staff who are committed to increasing effectiveness, evidence-based decision making and improving accountability through monitoring and evaluation.
SECTION 1
DEFINITIONS OF MONITORING, EVALUATION AND LEARNING

The OECD (2010) defines monitoring and evaluation as follows:

**Monitoring** is a continuous function that uses the systematic collection of data on specified indicators to provide management and the main stakeholders of an ongoing development intervention with indications of the extent of progress and achievement of objectives and progress in the use of allocated funds.

Monitoring helps to answer questions such as:
- How well are we doing?
- Are we doing the activities we planned to do?
- Are we following the designated timeline?
- Are we over/under-spending?
- What are the strengths and weaknesses in the project?

As a routine activity, monitoring enables those responsible for the project to identify strengths and weaknesses, to review progress being made and to make necessary adjustments. Monitoring keeps the project on track and provides the information necessary to make key decisions at the right time. Systematically generated monitoring data are also required to support project evaluations.

**Evaluation** is the systematic and objective assessment of an on-going or completed project, programme or policy, including its design, implementation and results. The aim is to determine the relevance and fulfilment of objectives, development efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability. An evaluation should provide information that is credible and useful, enabling the incorporation of lessons learnt into the decision-making process of both recipients and donors.

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**M&E**

Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) is NOT the same as an inspection, audit, review and research. Though these are oversight activities, they each have a distinct focus and role and should not be confused with M&E.

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6 View the complete OECD glossary of key terms in evaluation and results-based management here https://www.oecd.org/dac/evaluation/2754804.pdf
Evaluation helps to answer questions such as:

- How relevant was our work in relation to the primary stakeholders and partners and beneficiaries?
- To what extent were the project objectives achieved?
- What contributed to and/or hindered these achievements?
- Were the available resources (human, financial) utilised as planned and used in an effective way?
- What are the key results, including intended and unintended results?
- What evidence is there that the project has changed the lives of individuals and communities?
- What is the potential for sustainability, expansion and replication of similar interventions?
- What are the lessons learnt from the intervention?
- How should those lessons be utilised in future planning and decision making?

**Learning** is the process of creating, retaining and transferring knowledge within an organisation and/or programme. An organisation improves over time as it gains experience. From this experience, it is able to create knowledge. If the information provided by monitoring and evaluation is not used, then the exercise is essentially a waste of time and effort. One of the most important tasks of any project manager or evaluator is to ensure that the information is presented in a way that makes it accessible to those who need it to make decisions. Both monitoring and evaluation will be ineffective if they do not lead to learning at all levels.

### M&E VERSUS OTHER OVERSIGHT ACTIVITIES

**Inspection** is a general examination of an organisational unit, issue or practice to ascertain the extent it adheres to normative standards, good practices and to make recommendations for improvement or corrective action. It is often performed when there is a perceived risk of non-compliance.

**Audit** is an assessment of the adequacy of management controls to ensure the economical and efficient use of resources; the safeguarding of assets; the reliability of financial and other information; the compliance with regulations, rules and established policies; the effectiveness of risk management; and the adequacy of organisational structures, systems and processes. Evaluation is more closely linked to learning and development while audit focuses on compliance.

**Reviews** are distinct from evaluation and more closely associated with monitoring. They are periodic or ad hoc, often light assessments of the performance of an initiative and do not apply the due process of evaluation or rigor in methodology. Reviews tend to emphasise operational issues. Unlike evaluations conducted by independent evaluators, reviews are often conducted by those internal to the subject or the commissioning organisation.

**Research** is a systematic examination completed to develop or contribute to knowledge of a particular topic. Research can often feed information into evaluations and other assessments.

## The Differences Between Monitoring and Evaluation

**Monitoring**
- Ongoing throughout the project cycle
- Keeps track, reviews and reflects on progress (or lack thereof) in relation to project objectives
- Usually an internal organisational process carried out by project staff
- Monitoring does not usually have value judgements on the performance of a project
- Let you know what activities were implemented and what results were achieved
- Alerts project managers to problems and provides options for corrective actions

**Evaluation**
- Periodic: before, at the midterm and/or after the project has ended
- In-depth analysis to compare planned with actual achievements in relation to project objectives and expected outcomes
- Can be an internal and/or external process conducted by staff or an independent party
- Evaluations have value judgement statements which give an ‘opinion’ of the performance of the project. E.g. recommendations for improvement or on the impact of the project
- Evaluations let you know the same things as Monitoring, but also let you know how the results were achieved
- Evaluation goes a step further than alerting project managers and contributes to building theories and models for change; provides project managers with strategy and policy options; increases accountability to project beneficiaries, donors and other partners
Projects need to be evaluated for their environment and financial sustainability.
SECTION 2
NORMS AND STANDARDS OF MONITORING AND EVALUATION

→ NORM 1
COMMITMENT AND ADHERENCE TO INTERNATIONALLY AGREED PRINCIPLES, GOALS AND TARGETS OF DEVELOPMENT

All of TSA The Netherlands monitoring and evaluation of development initiatives should be cognisant of the goals and targets set out in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

→ NORM 2
APPLICATION OF THE OECD/DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE COMMITTEE (DAC) CRITERIA FOR EVALUATING DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE

Every impact evaluation conducted by the Dutch office should apply the DAC criteria for evaluating development assistance: relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability. The application of these and any additional criteria depends on the evaluation questions and the objectives of the evaluation. If a particular criterion is not applied and/or any additional criteria added, this is to be explained in the evaluation report. All criteria applied are to be defined in unambiguous terms.

Please note that these criteria focus on the outcome and impact levels. This means that they are applied either at the end of an intervention or after the intervention has been implemented for a determined period of time. That is, long enough for detectable results to manifest.

Relevance
This refers to the extent to which the intervention aid activity is suited to the priorities and policies of the partners, donors and other stakeholders. In evaluating the relevance of a programme or a project, it is useful to consider the following questions:

- To what extent are the objectives of the project or the programme still valid?
- Are the activities and outputs of the project or the programme consistent with the overall goal and the attainment of its objectives?
- Are the activities and outputs of the programme consistent with the intended impacts and effects?
- Are the chosen project locations suitable?

Effectiveness
This is a measure of the extent to which an aid activity attains its objectives. In evaluating the effectiveness of a programme or a project, it is useful to consider the following questions:
• To what extent were the goals and objectives of the project or the programme achieved / are likely to be achieved?
• What were the major factors influencing the achievement or non-achievement of the objectives?

Efficiency
Efficiency measures the outputs - qualitative and quantitative - in relation to the inputs (funds, expertise, time, etc.). It is an economic term used to assess the extent to which aid uses the least costly resources possible to achieve the desired results.

This generally requires comparing alternative approaches to achieving the same outputs, to see whether the most efficient process has been adopted. When evaluating the efficiency of a programme or a project, it is useful to consider the following questions:
• Were activities cost-efficient?
• Were objectives achieved on time?
• Was the programme or project implemented in the most efficient way compared to alternatives?
• Was the organisational structure conducive to the implementation of a successful project or programme?
• Were overall results roughly commensurate with the overall programme cost?

Impact
The positive and negative changes produced by a development intervention, directly or indirectly, intended or unintended. This involves the main effects resulting from the activity on the local social, economic, environmental and other development indicators.

The examination should be concerned with both intended and unintended results and must also include the positive and negative impact of external factors, such as changes in terms of trade and financial conditions.

When evaluating the impact of a programme or a project, it is useful to consider the following questions:
• What has happened as a result of the programme or project and why?
• What real difference has the activity made to the beneficiaries?
• What are the changes that could be attributed to the project/programme rather than to external factors?
• What aspects of donor support, besides funding was most helpful in achieving programme objectives?

Sustainability
Sustainability is concerned with measuring whether the benefits of an activity are likely to continue after donor funding has been withdrawn. Projects need to be environmentally as well as financially sustainable.

When evaluating the sustainability of a programme or a project, it is useful to consider the following questions:
• To what extent did the benefits of a programme or project continue after donor funding ceased?
• What were the major factors which influenced the achievement or non-achievement of sustainability of the programme or project?
• What kind of support or mechanisms are in place to help ensure programme impacts continue after the programme has been completed? This includes descriptions of organisational support, as well as support from government bodies (at national, provincial and local level), local communities and other organisations.
NORM 3
ADHERENCE TO ETHICAL PRINCIPLES

Evaluations will be conducted with the guiding principle of ‘Do No Harm’ with utmost respect for the beliefs, culture and customs of local, social and cultural environments as well as for the rights of institutions and individuals to provide information in confidence. There should also be a commitment to observe child protection policies and practice. Evaluations should not reflect personal or sectoral interests and evaluators must have professional integrity and the competence to execute M&E tasks.

NORM 4
MAINTAINING INDEPENDENCE

Management must not impose restrictions on the scope, content, comments and recommendations of evaluation reports. Evaluators must be free of conflict of interest. Evaluators must not be directly involved in policy-setting, design, implementation or management of the subject of the evaluation either before, during or after the evaluation.

NORM 5
APPLYING TRANSPARENT PROCESSES

All aspects of the monitoring and evaluation planning should be transparent with all relevant stakeholders having access to information (such as how the evaluators were selected, how the evaluation was conducted, use of the findings, etc.).

STANDARD 5.1
Stakeholder Participation

Participation of all relevant stakeholders and partners, including men, women, disabled, youth, hard-to-reach/marginalised groups and ethnic minorities in every stage of the evaluation (from the drafting of Terms of Reference (TOR) for the Evaluation, reviewing of draft Evaluation Report to the dissemination and follow up actions once the evaluation is concluded).

Meaningful involvement of the stakeholders is essential for the credibility and utility of the evaluation. Full information on evaluation design and methodology should be shared throughout the process to build confidence in the findings and understanding of their limitations in decision-making.
STANDARD 5.2
Open Data and Disclosure Policy
TSA should adhere to the Open Data Policy developed by International Headquarters (IHQ). Likewise, guidelines should be developed to inform how all the products surrounding an evaluation are disseminated and accessible to the public.

These evaluation products include not only the evaluation report itself, but also the Terms of Reference (TOR) for evaluations, project reports, evaluation plans, management responses, etc. While transparency and accountability are paramount, there may be cases where there is a need to safeguard sensitive and private information (e.g. Child Protection matters and personal data of stakeholders). An Open Data and Disclosure Policy would specify what constitutes ‘sensitive information’ and the conditions under which access to such data is restricted and/or inaccessible to the public.

→ NORM 6
COMMITMENT TO UTILISE EVALUATION FINDINGS FOR LEARNING

The aims of all the monitoring and evaluation activities are to improve service delivery, enhance organisational performance and the achievement of long-lasting development results. As far as possible, all the findings from an evaluation should provide information that is used for evidence-based decision-making.

STANDARD 6.1
Development of a Learning Agenda
A Learning Agenda should be developed on a periodical basis to capture key learning questions as well as how the Lessons Learnt from all evaluations will be incorporated in the future programme design and be used to inform policies.

STANDARD 6.2
Management response
A ‘Management Response’ should always be drafted to accompany a published evaluation report. This document should highlight the implementing organisation’s response to the findings/recommendations of the report and the actions which will be taken to incorporate the recommendations of the evaluation report. The organisation can either ‘Agree/Accept’, ‘Partially Agree/Accept’ or ‘Not Agree/ Accept’ the recommendations from the evaluation.

The recommended process for producing the Management Response is as follows:

- Each evaluation report should be discussed with the Head of Programmes/Head of Department
- After which the report is brought into the Project Board (in case of large multi-stakeholder project/programmes)

The ‘Management response is then sent through international channels and leadership of the implementing and supporting territories.’ A Management Response template may be accessed at www.legerdesheils.nl/ids.

STANDARD 6.3
Evaluation report
The final evaluation report should be logically structured and contain evidence-based findings, conclusions and recommendations. The products emanating from evaluations should be designed to the needs of its intended users. The evaluation report should be presented in a way that allows intended readers to access relevant information in the clearest and simplest manner. It should not be overloaded with information that is not directly relevant to the overall analysis. Evaluation readers should be able to understand:

- What was evaluated and why (purpose and scope);
- How the evaluation was designed and conducted (evaluation questions, methodology and limitations);
- What was found and on what evidence it was based (findings and evidences);
- What was concluded from the findings in relation to main evaluation questions asked, and how such conclusions were drawn (conclusions);
• What was recommended (recommendations); and
• What could be learnt from the evaluation if any (lessons learnt).

See the Project Review and Evaluation Report Template and Guide (www.legerdesheils.nl/ids) for one possible template - depending on the target audience - that may be used to document evaluation findings.

**STANDARD 6.4**

**Plan of Action for Disseminating Evaluation Findings**

Depending on the purpose of evaluation and its intended readers, evaluation reports should take different styles and formats to suit the target audience. For example, the products could be composed of short, summarising reports for executive decision makers and general readers, complemented by studies containing evidence and analysis for those who wish to take a closer look. Supplementary products, such as briefs, workshop presentations, webinars, conference presentations, videos and web articles are also other options.

The above should be articulated in a Plan of Action or dissemination strategy document that defines the different target audiences and the different formats/medium for sharing the information.

**STANDARD 6.5**

**Budget Allocation for Monitoring and Evaluation**

In order to show a commitment to learning and accountability, a portion of the project budget should be earmarked for M&E activities.

**→ NORM 7**

**ATTENTION TO CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES SUCH AS SUSTAINABILITY AND SOCIAL INCLUSION IN EVALUATIONS**

The evaluation objectives are translated into relevant and specific evaluation questions. Evaluation questions are decided on early in the process with the answers informing the development of the methodology. The evaluation questions also address cross-cutting issues and TSA’s holistic approach, such as gender, women’s empowerment and human rights. Ensure that men, women, the youth, the disabled and traditionally marginalised groups are involved in the planning, monitoring and evaluation processes. For example, ask questions such as: “Does this problem or result as we have stated it reflect the interests, rights and concerns of men, women and marginalized groups?”; “Have we analysed this from the point of view of men, women and marginalized groups in terms of their roles, rights, needs and concerns?”; and “Do we have sufficiently disaggregated data for monitoring and evaluation?”

**→ NORM 8**

**QUALITY ASSURANCE**

**STANDARD 8.1**

**Qualifications of staff and consultants**

Those responsible for the design, conduct and management of evaluation are required to have core competencies related to:

- Knowledge of TSA’s principles, values, goals and approaches, including human rights, gender equality, cultural values, the Sustainable Development Goals and results-based management;
- Professional foundations (evaluation norms, standards and ethical guidelines);
- Specialised knowledge and competence in evaluation techniques and methodologies;
- The commitment to promote a culture of learning and continuous improvement.

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NORM 1

COMMITMENT AND ADHERENCE TO INTERNATIONALLY AGREED PRINCIPLES, GOALS AND TARGETS OF DEVELOPMENT

All of The Salvation Army The Netherlands monitoring and evaluation of development initiatives should be cognisant of the goals and targets set out in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.
STANDARD 8.2
Onsite Monitoring Visits
On-site monitoring visits should take place at least once a year for annual project budgets exceeding USD 100,000. The visits may be pre-determined or randomly selected depending on the requirements of and outcomes expected from the monitoring. The selection of projects to be visited on-site can be determined by the level of complexity and risk significance of the projects.

Project site visits can be performed by internal staff or external parties.
Once a monitoring visit has taken place, a report should be drafted using the Project Visit Report template (which may be accessed at www.legerdesheils.nl/ids).

STANDARD 8.3
Use of Mixed Methods
As much as possible evaluations should employ a mixed-method approach, with a combination of qualitative and quantitative techniques for triangulation purposes. For example, statistics and finances from a survey should as much as possible be accompanied by qualitative data that gives a richer and more in-depth narrative that goes beyond numbers.

STANDARD 8.4
Data Collection
As much as possible relevant data (qualitative and quantitative) should be collected on a periodic basis, e.g. before or at the start of an intervention (baseline), during the life of the programme or project and at the end of the project cycle.

At the very minimum, data should be always be collected on the direct and indirect beneficiaries of the intervention disaggregated by gender, the type of intervention.

Additionally, as much as possible data should be digitally stored in a secure location with adequate attention to national and international laws governing privacy and data protection.

STANDARD 8.5
External evaluation
External independent evaluations should always be conducted for annual project budgets that are above USD 100,000. Ideally, a mid-term and a final evaluation should also be conducted for these large projects.

STANDARD 8.6
Tracking of implementation
An M&E Plan should be developed for all projects that outline the outputs, outcomes, indicators, baseline targets, data collection methods, the timing of monitoring and evaluation activities and the roles and responsibilities of who does what. (A sample M&E Plan may be viewed at www.legerdesheils.nl/ids). This document should be developed as soon as the project proposal (or programme) is approved for funding and implementation by the Project Board.

STANDARD 8.7
Evaluability Assessment
An assessment of evaluability should be undertaken as much as possible. This will reveal the ‘readiness’ of the project for an actual evaluation. For example, an evaluability assessment would ascertain if baseline data was collected or if targets for a project were set. If the answer is ‘no’, then that project is not in a state or readiness to be evaluated.

For evaluators, the evaluability assessment implies verifying if:
- There is clarity in the intent of the subject to be evaluated;
- Sufficient data are available or collectable at a reasonable cost; and
- There are no major factors that will hinder an impartial evaluation process.

If evaluability is not established, the evaluator must take measures to address the problem, such as reconstructing the theory of change, readjusting the evaluation scope, timing and/ or consulting the evaluation commissioner in order to revise the expectations. The evaluability assessment can also promote evaluation readiness among those managers whose activities will be the subject of evaluation.
STANDARD 8.8  
Terms of reference for evaluations

All external evaluations conducted by an independent evaluator will undergo a tender process with a Terms of Reference (TOR) for the evaluation developed. The TOR should include, inter alia:

- The evaluation context and purpose;
- A description and a clear definition of the subject to be evaluated;
- The scope of evaluation;
- The evaluation objectives with key evaluation questions and/or criteria;
- Evaluation methodology;
- Management arrangements;
- Expected deliverables; and
- The evaluation process and timetable.

Changes to the terms of reference during the conduct of the evaluation should be reviewed and, if agreeable, approved by the commissioning party. The clarity of purpose is important in ensuring the intentionality of evaluation. A sample TOR may be viewed at www.legerdesheils.nl/ids.

STANDARD 8.9  
Standardised indicators

TSA Project Officers are required to select from the list of standard indicators (for the respective sectors) that were mutually agreed upon by all the stakeholders. Please note that the standard indicators should only serve as the minimum ‘core indicators’ of a project or programme. Persons are actively encouraged to formulate their own indicators that are relevant to their specific programme and/or context to supplement the standard indicators.

However, it is mandatory that the cross-sectional indicators are included in a project or programme irrespective of the thematic focus of that particular intervention.

For example a Water, Access, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) and an Education project may have different standard indicators, but they will both have the same cross sectional indicators to measure the extent to which women, children and ethnic minorities benefited from the project or programme.

STANDARD 8.10  
Internal Reference Group

As a part of quality assurance, an Internal Reference Group (IRG) will be formed within TSA NL. The IRG has an advisory role and will be comprised of a cross-section of TSA staff from the Facilitating and Implementing territories.

The mandate of the IRG include (but is not limited) to reviewing Terms of Reference for evaluations, overseeing the recruitment of evaluators (with the appraisal of submitted proposals/bids), reviewing the draft evaluation report and giving input in the Management Response and follow up actions.

STANDARD 8.11  
Revision of the Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Policy (MEAL)

The MEAL policy (this document that is currently being read) should be revised and updated at least once every two years to ensure its continued relevance with current M&E industry practices, TSA’s policies and other contextual changes.
SECTION 3
MEASUREMENT OF THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS (SDGs)

Sustainable Development Goals
The IDS department actively measures its results in achievement towards the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). More specifically, contributing to the goal and targets of SDG 1, which is to ‘End Poverty in all its forms everywhere.’

Based on the department’s current thematic priorities, IDS’s interventions are closely linked to the SDGs (and targets) 3, 4, 8 and 11 which address health, education, income generation and disaster management respectively.

Additionally, IDS collaborates with other development organisations, knowledge networks and engages in capacity building. As such, these efforts contribute to the achievement of SDG 17 (Partnerships for the Goals).

Within the context of the wider Salvation Army, the Dutch support office aligns its operations with the overarching Global Results Framework (GRF).

The GRF is developed by The International Salvation Army Headquarters (IHQ) to monitor and measure the total impact of all community development initiatives, supported institutions, emergency services, etc., implemented by TSA offices, and documents the organisation’s contribution to the achievement of the SDGs globally.

This Framework is complemented by an Outputs and Outcomes manual. This manual measures similar best practice outcome and output indicators across different projects and contexts.

The outputs and outcomes manual clearly defines how each outcome and output indicator is supposed to be interpreted, monitored, measured and reported on with The Salvation Army.

As much as possible, all programmes and interventions that are designed and implemented by IDS and their partners will utilise the GRF. The outputs and outcomes manual will ensure that The Salvation Army collectively contributes towards the achievements of the SDGs.

9 IDS’s thematic choices are outlined in its Multi-Annual Strategy 2019 -2022
Monitoring and evaluating recovery efforts in emergencies and humanitarian contexts may seem daunting for several reasons. Firstly, after an emergency occurs the primary focus is usually on saving lives and catering to basic human needs such as the provision of food and shelter. If an emergency response and recovery plan was not in place beforehand, the tendency is then to mainly focus on giving this aid, without monitoring the effectiveness of the organisation’s response.

Additionally, events unfold at such a rapid pace after an emergency that the landscape keeps changing with new developments every day that it becomes harder to track and report on results.

All of the foregoing makes M&E more challenging in emergency settings. However, it is not impossible.

As mentioned before, it is crucial that IDS has appropriate response and recovery protocols in place which includes the Disaster Management Policy and the Monitoring and Evaluation Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, Emergency Relief and Rehabilitation/Rebuilding.

Equally important is adherence to the process that has been developed by IDS and the International Emergency Services (IES) of The Salvation Army International Headquarters for responding to emergencies (see the ‘Monitoring and Evaluation Workflow for Emergencies’ depicted in this chapter).

All these in-house strategic documents will adhere to the Core Humanitarian Standard on Quality and Accountability (CHS) that sets out nine Commitments to which humanitarian actors can adhere to improve the quality of the assistance they provide (these were developed by the SPHERE Project in conjunction with HAP International, People In Aid, and the Groupe URD – these two latter organisations later become the CHS Alliance).

As much as possible, the IDS will also be guided by SPHERE’s minimum humanitarian standards in the four areas of response: Water supply, sanitation and hygiene promotion (WASH); Food security and nutrition; Shelter and settlement; and Health\(^2\).
It should be the standard practice for rapid assessments or **Real Time Evaluations (RTEs)** to be done after an emergency. This provides baseline data for further detailed assessments and evaluations several months or years after the emergency.

As the name suggests, a RTE provides immediate (real time) feedback to those planning and/or implementing a project or programme\(^{12}\). Feedback is usually provided during the evaluation field work, rather than afterwards. The RTE may focus on operational/administrative performance issues as much as is appropriate to the response. RTEs are generally carried out over short periods of time, such as 2-3 weeks.

The team may be internal, external or a combination (such as staff from the implementing partner, IES and/or the IDS departments) and the means of assessment should be more rapid, flexible and responsive than more traditional kinds of evaluation.

In a RTE there is often no baseline, and no need (or time) to use complex methodologies of data collection and analysis. RTEs tend to rely on qualitative methods such as interviews, focus group discussions and observation. Surveys or questionnaires may be difficult to implement because of the short timescales. By contrast, observation may be more important in RTEs than in other kinds of evaluation.\(^{13}\)

Simplified tools and templates have been developed to facilitate the quick capture of data in emergency contexts. In the case of non-emergency, non-humanitarian development projects, the more traditional monitoring and evaluation methods will apply. All these tools can be found in the HIVE’ and/or IDS’s website, and an indication of when they should be used is shown on the ‘Monitoring and Evaluation Workflow for Emergencies’

**Indicators**

IDS shall also maintain a list of indicators that measures Disaster Risk Reduction, Emergency Relief and Rehabilitation/Rebuilding across all the thematic areas (IDS’s website). These indicators can serve as a guide in conducting the rapid assessments and RTEs. This ensures that appropriate objectives and indicators for the emergency response have been established at the outset of the emergency response programme.

More specifically, these indicators will be incorporated in the log frame and the M&E Framework (please refer to the ‘Monitoring and Evaluation Workflow for Emergencies’ overleaf).

The respective programme manager at IDS can choose indicators from the list that are most relevant to the particular emergency. However, the following main guiding principles on early recovery that have been adopted from the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) are:

- Is the intervention/activity sustainable?
- Does it link to national plans and reflect government priorities?
- Does it promote national ownership?
- Is it based on an understanding of existing local capacities and response mechanisms?
- Does it reduce risk of future crises?
- Has it been developed with the participation of local communities?


- Does it empower communities and institutions?
- Does the intervention/activity reduce inequity and vulnerabilities?
- Does the design of the intervention/activity reflect an understanding of the different needs and capacities of women and men and other sectors of the population?
- Does it promote gender equality?
- Is the intervention/activity based on a thorough understanding of the context?
- Is the intervention/activity culturally sensitive?

- Will the intervention/activity build back better and contribute to long term resilience?
- How will the intervention/activity contribute to accountability for affected populations?
- Do the affected populations have access to safe and responsive mechanisms to handle complaints?

These questions form the basis for the development of IDS’s indicators on Risk reduction, Emergency Relief and Rehabilitation/Rebuilding.
Though M&E is sometimes more challenging in emergency settings, it is not impossible.
MONITORING, EVALUATION AND LEARNING POLICY

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