2011

Norwegian People's Aid Annual Report 2011

Norwegian People's Aid

NPA

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This is Norwegian People’s Aid

a fearless organisation with strong opinions
result-oriented and solution-focussed
standpoints based on knowledge and experience
challenging power and injustice in collaboration with vulnerable groups
undertaking solidarity in practice – not charity

Our vision
Solidarity in practice is the vision of Norwegian People's Aid. Our efforts are based on collaboration between equal partners – not charity.

Our fundament
Norwegian People's Aid is the labour movement's humanitarian organisation for solidarity.

Our task
We work both nationally and internationally to improve the living conditions of vulnerable groups and to contribute to a fairer society. We support people so that they may protect and promote their own interests.

Our reach
Norwegian People's Aid is active in 39 countries and is one of the world's largest humanitarian cluster munitions- and mine-clearance organisations. In Norway we work with refugee and integration issues, and our health and rescue teams make an important contribution to voluntary national preparedness.
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Good supporters produce results

Collaboration with old and new supporters in 2011 was very productive for Norwegian People’s Aid. It has not only brought in important income for our work both at home and abroad but has also given our work greater impact and weight. We look forward to continued collaboration with our supporters in the time to come.

Employ a mine dog

“Employ a mine dog” was launched in 2011. Businesses follow their own mine dog over several years, from puppyhood to professional, hard-working mine dog. The project helps generate interest among employees as well as support an excellent, important cause.

People’s Aiders change the world – Be part of it!

Our regular donors are our most important supporters and most stay with us for many years. In 2011 we had net growth of 13%, and this in a year when many also chose to give to the TV Appeal. Our People’s Aiders support people in changing their daily lives. Read more at www.folkehjelper.no

Coop

Coop is a key, long-term supporter and increased its annual contribution to Norwegian People’s Aid projects to 1.5 million kroner in 2011 from 850,000 kroner in 2010. Customers can choose to give deposits returned on bottles and cans to the Coop Solidarity Fund. Norwegian People’s Aid is given a high profile on the bottle return machines and receives monies towards its work from the Solidarity Fund.

The City Run

Norwegian People’s Aid is the City Run’s humanitarian partner. The City Run is a 10 km fun run which takes place in Oslo every spring. In 2011, over 8,000 participants ran through the streets, many taking the opportunity to make a contribution to NPA mine work. Coop was also involved, running on behalf of NPA mine work during the race.
Collection for Emergency Relief
In 2011, Norwegian People’s Aid staff worked with our partners to prevent the famine in the Horn of Africa from spreading to northern Somalia. Thanks to considerable support from our donors, we were able to transport truck-loads of water to the hardest hit areas and construct durable water sources in Somalia. Monetary donations from Norway were also used to prevent the spread of diarrhoea and other water-borne illnesses.

Memorial CD for 22nd July
The memorial CD, Mitt Lille Land, sold tremendously well. Sales results show a profit of over 6 million kroner. In accordance with the initiators’ wishes, the money is to be used to build a new music arena on Utøya and on projects run by Amnesty International and Norwegian People’s Aid to strengthen the fight against racism and prejudice.

Collaboration with the labour movement
Collaboration with the labour movement has been excellent, both politically and financially. Funds received by Norwegian People’s Aid from the labour movement are largely used to finance the excesses that Norwegian People’s Aid has under the framework agreement with Norad.

- Under the long-term agreement with the Norwegian Union of Municipal and General Employees, collaboration entails work for joint political lobbying and activities to engage union members in international solidarity and international project support.

- The United Federation of Trade Unions and Norwegian People’s Aid signed a cooperation agreement in 2011 for the period 2012-15. The agreement concerns a joint project in South Africa and Zimbabwe and entails project support to the tune of two million kroner over the period.

Clearing for life
Norwegian People’s Aid was granted the NRK TV Appeal for 2011. It raised the second best sum of money ever, totalling 220 million kroner. All Norwegian People’s Aid chapters took part in the appeal, collectively organising over 230 local activities. Funds raised by the TV Appeal will be used to bolster mine-clearance activities in six countries (South Sudan, Laos, Vietnam, Lebanon, Bosnia-Herzegovina and Tajikistan) as well as the mine-dog centre in Sarajevo. A small percentage of the collected funds has also been put to one side to initiate new projects.

1st May 2011
The annual fundraiser for Norwegian People’s Aid and the entire Labour movement takes place on the 1st of May each year. The cause for 2011 was the plight of Palestinian refugees living in Lebanon, Gaza and the West Bank. Almost 1.4 million kroner was raised by means of many different activities.
It was with great eagerness, pride and humility that I took over as Secretary General for Norwegian People’s Aid in September 2011 and took up the post as leader of an organisation full of activity, determination and burning commitment – both in Norway and internationally.

Just then, the aftershocks of 22nd July were still strong. The event had taken a terrible toll, with consequences on several levels for both staff and volunteers as well as in terms of prioritisation of the organisation’s many tasks. At the same time, we were to manage the work involved with the world’s largest fund-raiser – the NRK TV Appeal – which was to take place on 23rd October.

22nd July underlined the relevance of our work against racism and for social inclusion and the building of democracy. Starting with the need to take a closer look at the attitudes of the majority population, and with particular focus on working life, Norwegian People’s Aid collaborates with the labour movement to bring increased attention to the work with “racism-free zones”, which were originally developed between the Norwegian Confederation of Trade Unions (LO) and Norwegian People’s Aid. Additionally, great efforts continue to be made in relation to asylum policy and social inclusion work.

Clearing for life
The 2011 NRK TV Appeal was dedicated in its entirety to Norwegian People’s Aid work of clearing mines and cluster munitions. The appeal was a great success both in terms of funds raised and, not least, in the massive mobilisation of our entire members’ apparatus. The whole organisation, alongside the labour movement and thousands of other volunteers, ensured that the appeal brought us considerable resources for strengthening the important work we undertake abroad and for increasing the organisation’s visibility to large new groups here at home.
In 2012, Norwegian People's Aid passes the 20-year mark for humanitarian explosives clearance. Looking forward, our main focus will remain on the land mine- and cluster munitions conventions. We enjoy an important role as watch-dog and lobbyist, and work actively to put pressure on world powers to ratify the agreements. We also assist signatory countries with advice and guidance, and ensure that they attain the objectives within the agreements. Not least, as one of the world’s largest mine- and explosives-clearance organisations, we undertake explosives clearance work on the ground. Against this background, and as a new strategic area for our efforts, we will be eyeing the possibilities of doing something about other types of weapons in the future – explosive weapons, nuclear weapons or other types of weapons considered to be inhumane.

More People’s Aiders
Work to acquire income was prioritised during the period from the last National Assembly and it will remain a high priority. In this respect, the tremendous amount of work which has already been done is beginning to produce results. The regular donor concept “People’s Aider” will be prioritised at all levels of the organisation and institutional donors will receive greater attention.

Shoulder to shoulder with the labour movement
2011 was a record year for membership growth in Norwegian People’s Aid. The 2011 National Assembly resolved to put great efforts into recruitment over the entire new period, with a net growth of 20% as the target for 2012. Collaboration with the labour movement has also been strengthened over recent years and cooperation with the trade unions will be an even greater priority in the time to come. Agreements with the trade unions place emphasis on political cooperation on individual issues, organisational collaboration and financial support to Norwegian People's Aid projects. The future for collaboration with the labour movement looks bright indeed with close dialogue, shared goals in relation to international solidarity and the recognition that mutual usefulness affords greater strength to both parties.

An ambitious organisation in great demand
With increased demand for our efforts, increased interest among members, strengthened collaboration with the labour movement and a new organisation at head office, we are entering an exciting year. With that serving as the background, I am greatly looking forward to leading the organisation in the time to come.

Liv Tørrøe, Secretary General to Norwegian People’s Aid.

Development and distribution policy
Democratic development, participation and organisational building, as the raw materials for robust democracies, comprise a highly prioritised area for Norwegian People’s Aid. We will continue to lobby Norwegian authorities to conduct a development policy that contributes to democratisation and which closely examines the extent to which developing countries maintain policies that foster economic and social equalisation. Fair distribution must become a larger item on the international agenda as an important step in creating sustainable development. Sound distributive policy is, as we are aware from the domestic front, closely linked to strong democratic governance and powerful organisations which function both as cooperative partners and watch-dogs in relation to the authorities.

With the adoption of a new programme of principles by the National Assembly and the approval of a new international strategy by the Board, the framework is laid for our long-term development work for the coming four-year period. The new cooperation agreement with NORAD for 2012-2015 secures the financial basis for our development work and we will be working systematically and purposefully to acquire additional funding from other international donors.
Norwegian People’s Aid undertakes practical solidarity work around the world in collaboration with local partners. Our standpoints are based on the experiences we gain from our daily work, whether they are from refugee reception centres, mine-fields, rescue operations or the Gaza Strip. To take our experiences in the field into our political lobbying work is a conscious strategy and means that Norwegian People’s Aid contributes to important political changes the world over. Our members and supporters make us a potent organisation that gets listened to both at home and abroad.
The Right to:
PROTECTION

In 2011, it was 60 years since the UN convention on refugees was adopted. Today, 42 million people live as refugees. Seeking protection is a basic human right. Norwegian People’s Aid believes that people driven to flight must be decently welcomed.
Increasing numbers of children are growing up in Norway as ‘paperless’ persons, facing an uncertain future. Alongside a raft of other organisations and individual voices, Norwegian People’s Aid is calling for a responsible solution for these children so that they may enjoy security in their daily lives.
Asylum seekers, refugees and ethnic minorities in Norway record the lowest scores on living conditions indices, encounter discrimination in many areas of society and lack rights to which they are entitled. This makes them a key target for Norwegian people’s Aid responsibility and commitment.

Social integration and diversity
Norwegian People’s Aid has a unique role and unique competence within asylum issues and work with refugees. We undertake very many activities, large and small, around the country to encourage social integration and diversity. These activities also allow us to come closer to the fate of individuals and give us direct knowledge of the concrete consequences of national policy. Moreover, our international operations mean that we have considerable knowledge concerning many of the countries that people are fleeing from.

We make good use of these experiences in our political lobbying work, including getting politicians and decision-makers to understand that asylum seekers looking for protection in Norway must be treated in accordance with the relevant international standards. Refugee reception centres must be decent, safe places to live, with security guaranteed to vulnerable groups. Unaccompanied asylum-seeking children have especial needs for security and predictability, care in line with Norwegian children and qualified guardians from day one.

Need for guardians
Norwegian People’s Aid is the only humanitarian organisation to run refugee reception centres. In 2011, we were running 11 such centres. We have also been commissioned by the Directorate of Immigration (UDI) to ensure that unaccompanied asylum-seeking children who arrive in this country are given a guardian. Our guardian pool contains around 100 guardians, who collectively looked after the affairs of the 1000 or so young asylum seekers between 15 and 18 in 2011. Guardians’ duties include assistance with police registration and arrival- and asylum interviews at UDI. We give guardians training and make sure they are properly equipped to look after the interests of the unaccompanied children.

In 2011, we also helped spotlight the plight of paperless refugees, particularly children, in Norway. The No people are illegal campaign calls upon the government to draw up regulations that make it clear that the interests of the child take precedence over immigration policy considerations and requests that children who have been living in Norway for a long time be given residence permits with their accompanying family.

Increased electoral participation
With the support of the Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development, Norwegian People’s Aid mobilised women from minority backgrounds to vote in the local government elections of 2011. We held 16 electoral meetings with a total of over 900 participants in Bergen, Fredrikstad, Hamar, Stange and several districts of Oslo. Men were also invited to a number of the meetings. Subsequent evaluation revealed that there was increased electoral participation among people with minority backgrounds in the places where the electoral meetings had been held.
Imagine that you are 15, 16 years of age. You are alone, you have left your home country and find yourself in a foreign country in another continent. You can’t speak the language, you don’t understand the culture, you don’t know how the system works.

In 2011, Norwegian People’s Aid found guardians for 1000 asylum seekers aged between 15 and 18. Guardians get thorough training and attend police registration and the arrival- and asylum interviews at UDI.

This is reality for countless young people in Europe today. They come from countries in Africa, from Afghanistan, Iraq and many other countries where life is so difficult they are prepared to leave everything behind to seek a better, safer future.

Karen Lüdermann has met many of them. For three years, she has been guardian to unaccompanied minors who arrive in this country, looking after the interests of 60-70 young people during the period.

Many of them had to leave Norway again. This was often the result of the so-called Dublin II Regulation which says that asylum is to be sought in the first safe country one arrives in. But how safe in reality is Italy for an unaccompanied African boy of 16?

In 2011, Karen became guardian for such a boy – let us call him Daniel. He had been in Norway for 11 months when he was sent back to Italy as this was the first place he was registered. His Norwegian guardian at the time assured him he would be taken care of when he arrived. But Italy had nothing to offer him.

– He was put on the street and all his property was taken from him. Presents he had got from friends at the reception centre when he left; they even took away his dictionary, Karen recalls.

How he managed to get back to Norway remains unclear, but having done so, he wound up at Hvalstad refugee reception centre.

Another boy at the centre for whom she is guardian then tells Karen of a friend who has no guardian of his own. The friend turns out to be Daniel, and the meeting with Karen is a turning point. Karen goes through Dublin II in detail, talks with the head of the centre, with lawyers and with the Immigration Appeals Board (UNE), but most of all she talks with Daniel. She visits him, rings him, maintains contact with him on Facebook.

She finally finds out that Daniel cannot be returned to Italy because the Italian authorities did not respond to Norway’s application to send him back. The deadline has expired and the case has become too old. Norway and UNE have to assume responsibility.

– When he was told that he was to be granted an interview, his feelings exploded. He was finally able to hope, Karen remembers.

As Daniel’s guardian, Karen was present during the interview. And it went well. In November 2011, Daniel was granted residence in Norway. In 2012, he was assigned to a local municipality and given a place to live. Now he can feel safe, go to school, hang out with friends, train, have a good time. In other words, do what most young people do.

– Last time I called him, he barely had time to talk to me as he was so busy with the move, laughs Karen, then adding:

– He’s a fantastic lad. Smart, sensible and purposeful. I think he’s going to do really well.

Text: Ellen Heggestad
The Right to:
ORGANISATION AND PARTICIPATION

In 2011 Norwegian People’s Aid turned the spotlight on how foreign investment influences the distribution of power and resources in many of the countries where we have a presence. Our many efficient partner organisations mobilised people to fight for their rights to land and water and to make their voices heard where resource management and distribution were concerned.
The election in Sudan in 2010 was an important step towards self-government for South Sudan. On 9th January 2011, the South Sudanese were finally able to go to the ballot boxes and decide their country’s future. The majority voted for secession from Sudan and the world got a new country: The Republic of South Sudan.
In 2011, Norwegian People's Aid collaborated with around 200 local organisations in more than 20 countries. These organisations represent farmers, indigenous peoples, women, youth, human rights activists and volunteers.

**Fair distribution**
Top of the organisations’ agenda is to help people acquire the opportunity to organise themselves in order to promote and protect their own interests. They work for rights to land and for natural resources to be of benefit to the whole population. Human rights, equality and a fair distribution of power and resources between women and men are also top priorities.

Here at home, Norwegian People's Aid speaks out about issues arising from our partners' struggle in their respective countries. We work for Norwegian development policy to concentrate more on fair distribution of power and resources. We do this by means of participation in public debate and by influencing the political milieu through actions of our own or in collaboration with others on both the national and international stage.

In 2011, together with our partners, we turned the spotlight on how foreign investment influences the distribution of power and resources and, not least, how this affects the living conditions of ordinary people in the countries where we have a presence.

**Land-grabbing**
The purchase of enormous areas of land for commercial purposes is occurring to an ever greater extent in many countries on the African continent. Newly independent South Sudan is no exception. A study undertaken on commission from Norwegian People's Aid in 2011 shows that, between 2007 and 2010, 28 foreign or national interests within agriculture, forestry and bio-fuels began the process or signed deals to take over vast tracts of land. Although such investments may provide good income or opportunities for development, there is also the risk that they will undermine the livelihoods of people living in the area.

Norwegian People's Aid partners in South Sudan were significant contributors to the study. With our support they will continue to push for the country's resources to be managed in a democratic and open fashion.

**It works**
Our collaboration with partners fighting for codetermination where the use of land and natural resources is concerned extends to other countries in Africa, to Latin America and to Asia. In Honduras, our partners took part in a number of actions to prevent the issuing of water concessions. These actions effectively put a stop to a large damming project. In Myanmar, our partners have successfully lobbied to influence work with land rights in the country and, in Cambodia, our partners have mobilised local communities to put a stop to logging by private companies.
Collaboration between Norwegian People’s Aid and UAWC has secured 500,000 sq. metres of agricultural land in the border areas to the north and east of the Gaza Strip. Farmer Ashraf Helles is finally able to cultivate his own land again.

Ashraf Helles is 43 years old and father of ten (three daughters and seven sons). He lives in al-Shujaiyeh, just east of the border to the Gaza Strip. Ashraf and his brothers own 30,000 sq. metres of land just 400 metres from an Israeli watchtower.

Fifteen years ago, Israeli tanks and bulldozer came and uprooted all the olive trees growing on the land belonging to Ashraf and his brothers. The brothers tried to take back their land on numerous occasions but were met with gunfire from the nearby watchtower. Since 1996, they have had no access to their land.

– We were scared to enter our fields. Whenever we came close, the firing started. Our neighbour was killed while tending his fields, Ashraf tells us.

Norwegian People’s Aid is engaged in a long-term project in collaboration with the Union of Agricultural Work Committees (UAWC): “Defending Our Open Right to Survive – DOORS”. The purpose of the project is to increase farmers’ and fishermen’s capacity to defend their own rights, resources and the freedom of movement to gain access to their means of livelihood.

As one part of the project, UAWC began helping farmers close to the border areas by encouraging them to gain access to, and renew cultivating, their own land. UAWC donated tractors for ploughing and levelling the fields and for sowing seed. The farmers chose wheat since, growing no higher than one metre, it minimised the probability of its being destroyed by Israeli forces.

Ashraf and his brothers, with support from UAWC employees and farmers’ committees, returned to their land and resumed levelling, sowing and planting.

– I am on my land planting again and can hardly believe it. You’ve brought a smile back to our hearts, Ashraf says.

The project has helped secure access to around 500,000 sq. metres of agricultural land in the border areas to the north and east of the Gaza Strip. In December 2011, 500,000 sq. metres of wheat was planted for 211 farmers.

– We won’t be scared off again and will come back to our land for harvesting, Ashraf says.
The Right to: SAFETY

Norwegian People’s Aid Health and Rescue Service works to bring about commitment, presence and safety at the local level. Behind this lies Solidarity in Practice: Norwegian People’s Aid brings safety through clear attitudes and concrete operations.
Voluntary crews from Norwegian People’s Aid are called out increasingly often by the police or health service to help with rescue operations. In 2011, Norwegian People’s Aid Health and Rescue Service took part in a total of 210 search and rescue operations, a significant increase on the previous year’s 159.
Norwegian People's Aid is both large and important in relation to the Norwegian Rescue Service. With 60 health and rescue groups and around 2000 operative crews, we represent a significant voluntary resource. In 2011, we took part in 210 rescue operations, a 32% increase on 2010. The type of operation most called for is searching for missing persons.

Volunteer crews from Norwegian People's Aid Health and Rescue Service work alongside the police, the ambulance service, rescue helicopters and lifeboats. When the weather, terrain or conditions underfoot put a stop to the professionals' equipment, volunteer crews are able to keep going to save people in need.

Focus on quality
Our overriding goal is to provide a rapid, suitable response to the person or persons in difficulties. Continuous education, training and a focus on quality mean that our crews are well prepared for action under most conditions.

Tailored preparedness
Long distances, unpredictable weather and the need for location-specific knowledge mean that local resources have to do the job when someone has gone missing or got injured. Preparedness is tailored to local needs. In mountainous areas, for example, avalanches and lengthy operations are given focus; in areas close to the sea, it is important to be prepared for searching from the water. Over the last few years we have also seen a tendency towards more operations related to so-called extreme weather. We also experience increased expectations of the competence Norwegian People's Aid has to offer from the general public and the professional services.

Operations occasionally make great demands of our skills, equipment and motivation. Groups often have to obtain money themselves to buy in necessary but expensive equipment. We very much hope that the financial situation may be improved so that groups can spend more time on training to be as well prepared as possible.

Rescue operations on 22nd July
On Friday, 22nd July, Norway was hit by an act that not even the most extreme training scenarios had prepared for. Norwegian People's Aid Health and Rescue Services took part in the rescue operations both in Oslo and at Utøya, while our crews were themselves grievously affected by the attack. Norwegian People's Aid Hadeland were in attendance at Utøya and experienced the terror at first hand. One of the eight volunteers present, Hanne Anette Balch Fjalestad, was killed while attempting to shield young people from the killer.

22nd July shows how important it is to have good cooperation between public services and the voluntary apparatus. The events of that day clearly revealed that a country such as Norway, with a population widespread over long distances, is absolutely dependent on having a voluntary rescue service.
Immediately after half past three, the first news breaks in the media. “There has been an explosion in the centre of Oslo.” Shortly afterwards, the first pictures from the scene begin appearing on the Internet and in TV broadcasts. The pictures leave little doubt that there has been a powerful explosion and that many people may be injured. There is as yet no confirmation that the explosion is the result of terrorism but it is clear that the situation is very serious.

In 2006, Norwegian People’s Aid took part in a large-scale training exercise, the scenario of which was based on terrorism and several bomb blasts.

– That exercise gave us some important experiences that we were able to make use of on Friday, 22nd July. We knew straight away that the police and ambulance switchboards would be hectically busy and that calling us out might not be given immediate priority. We therefore decided to start mobilisation without waiting for the call, recalls the Head of NPA Health and Rescue Service, Jon Halvorsen, who also took part in the rescue operation itself.

The second thing that participants in the exercise in 2006 had learnt was that one attack might well be followed by others. Unfortunately, this turned out to be the case this time too. At 05.26 pm, Norwegian People’s Aid staff and volunteers start getting messages and calls from colleagues on first aid duty at Utøya. They have taken cover in a building and there is shooting going on.

Talking to the ambulance switchboard in Buskerud, the message received is crystal clear: “We don’t have an overview; come with everything you’ve got!”

– We immediately packed a vehicle with woollen blankets, bubble wrap and first aid equipment and set off for Utøya, primarily with the idea of helping our crews who were already out there, says Halvorsen. At that time, the extent of what was happening was still unclear.

What happens at Utøya over the next few hours can barely be described with words. The eight volunteers from Norwegian People’s Aid Hadeland on first aid duty are in the middle of a nightmare. Six of them hide out in the schoolroom with 47 others. They succeed in saving them all, but lose one of their own, 43 year-old Hanne Fjalestad. She is shot while trying to shield young people from the killer.

The crews from Norwegian People’s Aid are no longer just rescue workers; they have themselves been grievously affected.

– 22nd July will remain one as one of the most demanding days that Norwegian People’s Aid has ever been through. There’s still a large amount of important work to be done in following up those involved and learning from their experiences. As an organisation, we must stand together and make the best of the situation, says Jon Halvorsen.
The Right to:
A MINE-FREE LIFE

By clearing mines and cluster munitions, Norwegian People’s Aid makes people’s local environment safe – safe for playing, living, reconstruction and development.
In 2011, Norwegian People’s Aid was able to liberate land amounting to around 132,500 sq. km, equivalent to 13,000 football pitches. Now people are safely able to use these areas for cultivation, building houses and schools or making playgrounds for their children.
Innocent people are every day killed and maimed by mines and cluster munitions left behind after war or conflict. This is unacceptable and wholly unnecessary.

Mines and cluster munitions stand in the way of development in more than 70 countries. Norwegian People’s Aid carries out large-scale, complex mine-clearance programmes in countries that are badly affected by mines and explosives. In 2011, this involved 17 countries; in 2012 the number will be 25.

**International ban on weapons**

Norwegian People’s Aid started clearing mines in 1992. Parallel to our clearance activities, we have also helped establish two important international bans: The Land Mine Convention, from 1999, which forbids all use, production, stockpiling and trade in anti-personnel mines, and the Cluster Munitions Convention, which came into force on 1st. August 2010.

In 2011, the USA stirred up a rematch regarding cluster munitions and lost. The attempt to weaken the ban ended with its being strengthened instead. If the proposal had been adopted, it may have led to serious consequences for the development of international humanitarian law. If a weaker standard than that in existence had been accepted, it may have created a precedent for watering down other agreements too. What would have been next? A new law allowing the use of land mines produced after 1980?

Norway and Norwegian People’s Aid led the way in a group of 50 countries which totally rejected the attempt to press through a law which would have allowed the use of cluster munitions. After the 25th November 2011, the international ban on cluster munitions and the stigma concerning this type of weapon both stand stronger than ever.

**Explosive weapons**

Norwegian People’s Aid now wishes to turn the spotlight on another problem, namely the types of weapons contained under the term “explosive weapons”. In 2011, we were involved in the setting up of the International Network on Explosive Weapons (INEW). The network aims to bring an end to the humanitarian suffering caused by the use of explosive weapons in densely populated areas. Other organisations involved in the network include Handicap International, Human Rights Watch and Oxfam.

**Clearing mines brings development**

We believe that our work in the field and our political work mutually strengthen each other and contribute to real change. Every single land mine or cluster munitions bomblet which is removed from the ground by our mine-clearance workers improves the living conditions of the population living in the affected area. At the same time, it is equally important that we continue working for the promotion and development of new international humanitarian legislation to prevent or reduce the use of land mines, cluster munitions and other explosive weapons, and to get national states to respect and implement these laws.
In 2011, the whole of Guinea Bissau was declared free of mines, including Ricardo Barai’s property. He can now once again harvest the cashew nuts from his many large trees and take care of his family. He gets a good price for the nuts and makes wine from the fruit.

A lucrative harvest from mine-free land

Ricardo Barai (34) picks up a cashew nut from the ground. It is just one of the 1,700 kilos he has harvested since his land was declared free of mines.

Norwegian People’s Aid began operations in Guinea Bissau in 2009 at the request of the country’s government and the UN. The target was for Guinea Bissau to be declared free of mines within the deadline set by the Mine Convention, 1st January 2012.

– A wholly African team which had just finished work in Zambia and Malawi mapped the entire country from provincial and municipal level right down to small rural communities, Per Nergaard, Head of the Norwegian People’s Aid mine division, tells us.

By using the so-called Land Release method, the team ensured that Guinea Bissau was able to deploy all its clearance resources in areas that were actually affected by mines. The result was that the country was able to declare itself free of mines within the deadline.

– I feel safe using my own land now and my life has improved enormously. With cashews, we can sell the nuts, make wine of the fruits and use what is left over as fuel, says a satisfied Ricardo Barai, strolling between his profitable trees.

Ricardo Barai lives with his wife and four children in the rural community of Djegue, Guinea Bissau, just a few metres from the border with Senegal. While people in this area feared mines laid by Senegalese rebels, the rest of the country was affected by mines left behind after the war of independence from 1963-1974 and the civil war of 1998.

– I had to leave my land unused for several years because I was worried about mines. Representatives from the authorities visited our village and taught us about mines and to keep away and not touch any suspect objects. It was a very difficult time. I couldn’t harvest my cashews or do any other work on my land so I had to take on various casual work for others, he tells us.
Liv Tørres, Secretary General to Norwegian People’s Aid, was overwhelmed by the result:
- We are extremely grateful for the unbelievably good response to the TV Appeal and to all the volunteers who gave of their time and resources so this enormous community task could be carried out. Not least, we must send a big thank you to all the real heroes who perform a vital job every day out in the mine-fields, said Torres, immediately following the close of the appeal.

Money well spent
Norwegian People’s Aid has now cleared several million square metres of land in local communities where civilians live. A great need for mine- and explosives clearance remains, however, and clearing up after war is both extremely costly and dangerous. The excellent result from the TV Appeal is now helping Norwegian People’s Aid to clear mines, cluster munitions and other unexploded ordnance left behind by war and conflict in even more countries.

The funds from the TV Appeal are being used to strengthen mine-clearance activities in six countries – South Sudan, Laos, Vietnam, Lebanon, Bosnia-Herzegovina and Tajikistan – as well as the mine-dog training centre in Sarajevo. A small percentage of the funds collected has been earmarked for starting new programmes.

Broad involvement among members
The TV Appeal otherwise encouraged broad involvement and a great deal of activity across the entire country. All Norwegian People’s Aid chapters took part in the appeal, many using the opportunity to raise the profile of their own group and activities. Over 230 events and activities run by local chapters were registered.

Valuable experience
The TV Appeal has also given the organisation valuable experience which can be employed in campaigns and fundraisers, as well as increased visibility and awareness among the Norwegian public of Norwegian People’s Aid mine- and cluster munitions work. Feedback also shows a considerable increase in members’ knowledge of, and interest in, our international work against mines and cluster munitions.
2011 was a National Assembly year and Norwegian People's Aid Youth worked hard to introduce a new structure better suited to the various capabilities and age levels of younger members. This resulted in the National Assembly's adoption of a division of youth work into two areas: NPA Youth Health and Rescue and NPA Youth for Solidarity.

Chairman Finn Erik Thoresen describes the National Assembly resolution as nothing short of a "youth revolution". The step now taken gives committed youth members even greater motivation and willingness to make a difference. The new organisation cultivates their specific interests. Thus young people who are passionate about first aid, rescue services and outdoor activities can give this their 100% focus while those who want to work with issues such as international solidarity and anti-racism can fully commit themselves to this means of getting involved.

Relevant fora
This way of organising matters is more appropriate to youth needs. Members get to choose their own leaders within the two structures and they are involved in fora which are specific to their own interests. This has already lead to a marked increase in participation at courses and meetings.

Increased membership figures
In addition to an increased level of activity, we see that members from both youth structures have been recruiting more purposefully subsequent to the change, and that this has led to increased membership figures for both. The sharpening of focus has made Norwegian People's Aid Youth activities more visible in the public eye and further resulted in increased media coverage.

Focused and forceful
Both NPA Youth Health and Rescue and NPA Youth for Solidarity have received new impetus. Youth Health and Rescue now has every opportunity to undertake more practical, competence-related activities and training towards becoming skilled rescue crews, while Youth for Solidarity is in a position to develop into a more politically forceful youth movement with greater influence than it had prior to the reorganisation.

By the end of 2011, it was clear that the National Assembly had made an important move. Everything points to there being a youth revolution under way in Norwegian People's Aid and we look forward to seeing what they will achieve in the future.
Norwegian People’s Aid Youth Health and Rescue makes sure participants enjoy a healthy, active time, focusing on outdoor pursuits as well as learning how to help in situations that threaten life or health.

The target group is from 13 to 21 years of age. From the age of 18, having passed the training, members can then join the operative crews of the Health and Rescue groups.

One of the purposes behind the organisational change in 2011, was for Youth Health and Rescue to be more clearly defined and attractive for active young people interested in outdoor pursuits. The new profile and the popular new profiled kit has helped make this a success.

2011 saw the establishment of a number of new youth health and rescue groups, while many existing groups noted sound growth and a great deal of activity. A youth leader course was held in Levanger, including tuition in first aid, rescue work and outdoor activities. Planning a trip was also an important part of the course, with all participants required to arrange a trip locally on returning home. At the autumn camp in Lysebotn, participants got to experience abseiling and sleeping in a tepee, as well as practice in radio communication, first aid and the use of map, compass and GPS.

Young people need good content and like to learn. This can be demanding but health and rescue groups who prioritise youth work will later be rewarded with excellent crews when their members become old enough. Many can hardly wait to be called out on their first search and rescue mission.

Norwegian People’s Aid Youth Health and Rescue

Life-saving leisure time – First aid – Rescue services – Outdoor pursuits is the new profile of Norwegian People’s Aid Youth Health and Rescue.
The vision of Norwegian People's Aid Youth for Solidarity is that “People change the world through struggling for a free, inclusive society, where power and resources are fairly distributed, human dignity is at the core and prejudice is confronted”. Youth for Solidarity activities include international solidarity work, refugee and social inclusion policy and youth power. Youth for Solidarity work is based on its own political platform and is led by a five-member board.

Core activities in 2011
In 2011, 50 young people took part in the solidarity conference in Asker where they learned about Palestine and how to be a good leader for meetings, gained insight into arranging good themed fora and, not least, received tuition to do with landmine issues.

Norwegian People's Aid Youth for Solidarity ran a stand and gave mine demonstrations at the Hove festival, held a welcome speech at the AUF summer camp at Utaya and started a Facebook campaign against organised racism in schools. Five articles concerning Palestine and racism were produced during the autumn and the Youth for Solidarity leader was interviewed about refugees on TV for NRK Super.

Norwegian People's Aid Youth for Solidarity spent a great deal of time working with the rights of paperless persons in 2011. The year started with the arrest of paperless student Maria Amelie, which sparked demonstrations for paperless persons' rights across the country. The leader of Youth for Solidarity appealed on behalf of refugees and paperless persons at the University Square in connection with “Nansen Year” and called for a solution for persons whose life situation remained unclear. Youth for Solidarity also maintained a strong focus on Palestine in 2011, both in keeping with the 1st May campaign issue and on the occasion of the Palestinians’ applying for membership of the UN as an independent state. A number of appellant courses for young people were held, including one for AUF members in Levanger, North Trøndelag, who then later held an appeal on behalf on Norwegian People's Aid and Palestine on 1st May.

In relation to the TV Appeal, Youth for Solidarity groups travelled around the country demonstrating mine clearance work at schools, trade union meetings, outside shops and at many other arenas. Special efforts were made in Trondheim where the student-run UKA, Norway's biggest cultural festival, undertook joint operations with Norwegian People's Aid. This resulted in greater visibility at NTNU and themed meetings at the Student Union building during the autumn.

Youth for Solidarity has worked closely with a number of trade union youth associations to ensure close collaboration on political issues, particularly in relation to paperless persons. Workshops have been run at a number of these associations, including Industry and Energy Youth and the Railways Union Youth.

Main focus and challenges to come:
- In the wake of 22nd July, the fight against racism will be a major issue for collaboration between the political parties’ youth movements
- Youth for Solidarity will work closely with the trade union movement in order to highlight the plight of paperless persons
- Following the National Assembly’s endorsement of the new youth groups structure, it will be important for the youth board to ensure good tuition in organisational skills for all Youth for Solidarity members
- Youth for Solidarity will place great emphasis on recruitment and use the coming year to ensure strong growth in membership with as many active members as possible
Corruption in the aid sector is high on the agenda in the Norwegian aid milieu, including at Norwegian People’s Aid. Greater openness about the issue over the last few years has sparked increased debate and shared learning between organisations in relation to preventive measures and how to deal with cases that arise.

In 2011, Norwegian People’s Aid had a turnover of over 800 million kroner and worked with long-term development and humanitarian mine clearance in collaboration with local partners all over the world. A number of the countries where we are present are high on the list of the most corrupt and conflict-filled countries in the world. This is something we have to relate to on a daily basis. We recognise the problems but we do not accept them. Norwegian People’s Aid has zero tolerance for all kinds of corruption. We work for a unified attitude and shared understanding across the entire organisation in relation to corruption and strive for full openness around the issue, both when it happens and in our anti-corruption work.

There is no simple explanation as to why corruption occurs. Deficient systems or culture often sow the seeds of corrupt behaviour; all too often, poverty and low incomes may be the triggers. Whatever the reasons, those at the bottom of the pecking order face the greatest problems.

Openness and neutralisation
Corruption can emerge in many forms but all are linked to disloyal, criminal behaviour. Corruption has thus become a taboo issue and it requires both courage and awareness to acknowledge that this is a problem that we have too. It is for this reason that Norwegian People’s Aid is so concerned about creating openness and neutralising the issue of corruption within the organisation, thereby gaining information and learning from previous cases.

Notification routines
In 2008, Norwegian People’s Aid adopted a set of guidelines for anti-corruption work and separate notification routines were drawn up in 2009. Work to improve anti-corruption policy, guidelines and notification routines began in 2011 and is due to be completed by summer 2012.

Norwegian People’s Aid anti-corruption policy involves Head Office in Oslo maintaining a system to receive and manage notification of undesirable actions and situations wherever these might arise in the organisation. We also wish to include an evaluation of the risk of corruption in relevant work-tools and processes within administration and project work both nationally and globally. Our work with internal control has also been strengthened and a full-time internal auditor for Norwegian People’s Aid was appointed at the beginning of 2012.

Incident reporting
During 2012, a report function is to be introduced to Norwegian People’s Aid for all incidents that may involve non-compliance, so-called incident reporting. Responsibility to report incidents is to lie with the various programmes, both at home and abroad, with a monthly report being made to Head Office. The system is to have a wide embrace, including HSE issues, other occurrences of non-compliance and incidents that may not necessarily indicate corruption but lie within a grey zone. This will create greater ownership of anti-corruption work within the various programmes and make it easier to get to grips with issues that are not initially regarded as non-compliance with acceptable routines and incidents.

Norwegian People’s Aid will ensure through contract negotiations that all our partners establish guidelines and procedures in their own organisations. We undertake assessments of our partners’ administrative and control routines and are clear about our zero tolerance policy. At the same time, we recognise that many of our partners lack the necessary capacity to manage these challenges. Where we discover this to be the case, we either introduce the necessary training into our collaboration or offer our partners external support.
Incidents in 2011
In 2011, Norwegian People's Aid investigated eight instances of suspected corruption or corrupt behaviour. Some cases began in 2010 and some will continue to be investigated in 2012. Only two cases were reported in 2010 so it is easy to gain the impression that corruption has been on the increase in Norwegian People's Aid projects. This is not the case. Increased reporting is a consequence of zero tolerance and increased information and follow-up in relation to anti-corruption work. In other words, it shows that our efforts are working! It is also worth noting the great differences in the cases reported, from relatively small misappropriations to nepotism, improper pressure on partners, embezzlement and sophisticated systems manipulation.

Southern Africa
As early as 2010, there came reports from partner organisations and our own staff at one of our offices in Africa that a Norwegian People's Aid employee was behaving improperly. An internal investigation of the alleged situation gave reason to suspect a breach of guidelines with possible economic consequences. The employee was suspended and an accountancy company was brought in to undertake an investigatory audit. This revealed the existence of improper pressure on partner organisations, nepotism and manipulation of the regulations but was unable to establish proof of financial irregularity. The employee's contract expired while the investigation was going on and was not renewed. The partner organisations affected were asked to give notice of any possible consequences to their work and Norwegian People's Aid committed itself to covering any additional costs or losses incurred that could be documented. Donors were kept fully up to date throughout and the case was closed in 2011.

In another Norwegian People's Aid cooperation country in Southern Africa, reports of possible irregularities at one of our partners emerged in autumn 2011. An extended audit was undertaken alongside a police investigation into a break-in at the same organisation prior to the audit. The audit reported a lack of documentation for a small sum but misappropriation or any other illegal activity could not be documented. Cooperation with the partner has been put on hold until further notice. The donor has been informed.

In many countries, Norwegian People's Aid does not work just through local partners but with a separate operative programme involving offices in a number of towns and cities and a great many employees. At the end of 2011, it was discovered that an employee in one of the larger countries had knowingly accepted overpayments over an extended period of time. The person in question has been dismissed but has agreed to pay back the amount concerned. The donor has been informed of the case.

Middle East
One Norwegian People's Aid partner reported possible misappropriation of funds in spring 2011. The case was followed up by the Norwegian People's Aid area office. It was concluded that lack of accounting skills was primarily to blame and the loss was made good by the partner organisation itself.

In another of the Middle Eastern countries, Norwegian People's Aid works towards democracy building through its local partners. In 2010/2011, there were two instances of "whistle-blowing" where notification/accusations of malpractice at partner organisations were received.

In 2010, there came reports of malpractice at a partner organisation in the form of kick-backs related to certain purchases. Examination of the matter confirmed this to be true and the case was reported to donors in 2011 following thorough investigation.

The second incidence of whistle-blowing, from May 2011, turned out to be groundless. After an investigation involving the local auditor, the case was closed with no action being taken against any party.

East Africa
The largest Norwegian People's Aid country programme is in South Sudan, with a turnover of around 130 million kroner in 2011. When dealing with a new democracy in a phase of reconstruction after lengthy conflict, where infrastructure development has to cope with great distances and the education level is low, good administrative routines and systems which can ensure the safe control of funds are not just extremely important but very challenging. Norwegian People's Aid has had to deal with a number of difficult cases in South Sudan in recent years from simple theft and attempted corruption in relation to purchase orders to sophisticated embezzlement involving banking routines. Two cases of corruption reported in 2011 are still undergoing investigations in 2012. The relevant donors have been informed.

It is worth mentioning that this type of case does not necessarily involve significant financial consequences but that the social aspect of cases involving employees makes them tough to deal with and they feel particularly burdensome to those involved. Nevertheless, the zero tolerance policy means that these relatively small cases are dealt with seriously. The signal effect is also an important factor.
In 2011, Norwegian People’s Aid had a turnover of over 800 million kroner. The accounts for 2011 reflected continued consolidation after several years of economic growth in the organisation. A more detailed description of the annual accounts for 2011 may be downloaded as a pdf-file from www.folkehjelp.no.

Activity accounts as of 31.12.2011 (figures in thousands)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Amount (in thousands)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Individual membership subscriptions</td>
<td>1 492</td>
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<tr>
<td>Collective membership subscriptions</td>
<td>3 625</td>
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<td>Sum income from members</td>
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<tr>
<td>Public donors</td>
<td>574 898</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other donors</td>
<td>19 607</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sum donors</td>
<td>594 505</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gaming and lotteries</td>
<td>14 292</td>
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<tr>
<td>Donors</td>
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<tr>
<td>TV Appeal funds raised</td>
<td>34 843</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total collected funds</td>
<td>101 908</td>
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<tr>
<td>Refugee reception centres and other operating units in Norway</td>
<td>109 805</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sales of advertising space in APPELL</td>
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<td>Product sales</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mine dogs</td>
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<td>Total accrued funds from operational activities</td>
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<tr>
<td>Net finance posts</td>
<td>-2 443</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other income</td>
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<tr>
<td>TOTAL ACQUIRED FUNDS</td>
<td>816 292</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gaming and lotteries</td>
<td>10 159</td>
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<tr>
<td>Donors</td>
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<tr>
<td>Product sales</td>
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<tr>
<td>TV Appeal 2011</td>
<td>34 671</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total expenses to acquisition of funds</td>
<td>63 093</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mine clearance</td>
<td>210 054</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reconstruction, food and emergency relief</td>
<td>44 938</td>
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<td>Long-term development</td>
<td>279 945</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hospital operations and other health work</td>
<td>35 388</td>
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<tr>
<td>Attitude-changing and anti-racist activities</td>
<td>7 474</td>
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<tr>
<td>Refugee reception centres and other operating units in Norway</td>
<td>108 712</td>
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<td>Members’ organisation</td>
<td>20 595</td>
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<tr>
<td>Information work in Norway</td>
<td>8 096</td>
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<tr>
<td>Project follow-up at Head Office</td>
<td>25 279</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VAT payments</td>
<td>-2 262</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total expenses to objectives</td>
<td>738 218</td>
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<tr>
<td>Administration</td>
<td>23 608</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administration</td>
<td>23 608</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL USED FUNDS</td>
<td>824 920</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

ANNUAL ACTIVITIES RESULT | -8 628
ALLOCATION OF ACTIVITIES RESULT |
Transferred to/
from Equity with externally imposed restrictions | -3 622 |
Transferred to/
from Equity with self-imposed restrictions | -5 519 |
Transferred to/from other Equity | 513 |
TOTAL ALLOCATION | -8 628

Of every 100 kroner of funds collected that comes in to Norwegian People’s Aid, 89 kroner goes towards work promoting democracy, the just distribution of power and resources, clearance of landmines and cluster munitions, asylum and integration work and rescue services.

Of the remaining 11 kroner, 8 go towards obtaining new funds and 3 to administration.
In 2011, thanks to the sterling recruitment efforts of our existing members, we were able to wish 3000 new members welcome. In addition, our efficient colleagues and partners at home and abroad returned good results in each of out four areas of activity.

The organisation’s annual survey among employees revealed that the working environment within Norwegian People’s Aid may be regarded as satisfactory and that there is a personnel policy that ensures equal rights and opportunities for all. In the autumn of 2011, the Norwegian People’s Aid head office was re-launched as a racism-free zone. This involves a raft of obligations requiring concrete measures and reflections as well as readjustment of practice if appropriate.

A few key figures:

- At the end of 2011, Norwegian People’s Aid had a total of 2,292 employees, comprising 115 at head office and the six regional offices, 102 at refugee reception centres, 69 on contract abroad and 2,006 employed locally on projects abroad.
- 58% of the employees at Head Office in Oslo are women and 42% men. The percentages of men and women in top and middle management are about equal. Wage ands working conditions are set up for both sexes equally.
- Of the 200 or so employees in Norway, around a quarter come from immigrant backgrounds. Two thirds of the management group’s members are women and one third men. The board has fairly equal representation between the sexes, with 7 women and 8 men.
- As 2011 came towards its close, Norwegian People’s Aid had 11,619 persons registered as members in 96 chapters.
- 2011 was a year of extensive recruitment work, resulting in membership growth of a full 19%.
- Through the affiliated LO associations, Norwegian People's Aid has almost 880,000 collective members.
- Norwegian People's Aid was awarded the NRK TV Appeal in 2011, which was devoted in its entirety to the work of clearing mines and cluster munitions. The appeal returned the second best result ever of around 220 million kroner.
- Norwegian People's Aid held their National Assembly in 2011. New resolutions and a new programme of principles for 2011-2015 were adopted. Organisational changes intended to adapt the organisation to future challenges were also approved.
- Norwegian People's Aid is the only humanitarian organisation to operate refugee reception centres: Ten centres with a total of 1,715 places at the end of 2011.
- Women Can courses focussing on participation at the local elections were held in 2011. More than 900 people and 100 politicians took part at 16 electoral meetings.
- Norwegian People’s Aid Health and Rescue service had a total of 60 groups at the end of 2011. The year returned growth both in the number of volunteers and the number of groups. The service took part in a record number of search and rescue missions in 2011, i.e. 210 as opposed to 159 in 2010.
- In 2011, Norwegian People’s Aid collaborated with around 200 local organisations in over 20 countries, representing famers, indigenous peoples, women, youth, human rights activists and volunteer groups. Organisation is important in order to mobilise people to participation and the dissemination of information and knowledge and to influence political decisions and public opinion.
- In Ecuador, the local population won the almost 20-year long court case against the Chevron oil company concerning compensation for damage caused by oil extraction in the 70s and 80s.
- In Mozambique, long-term support of organisational development enabled organised farmers to make demands on companies investing in land and other natural resources.
- In 2011, Norwegian People’s Aid actively cleared mines and cluster munitions in 17 countries and worked on technical development and policy in relation to the issue.
- In 2011, great efforts were made to ensure a good start to the implementation of the ban on cluster munitions which came into force in August 2010, with the rapid, efficient commencement of both clearance programmes and other measures laid down in the Convention on Cluster Munitions.
THANK YOU TO OUR PARTNERS IN 2011

- Brightpoint Norway AS
- Coop Norway SA
- EL & IT
- Farmers’ Youth Association
- Industry Energy
- NISO
- Norad
- Norwegian Civil Service Union
- Norwegian Engineers and Managers Association
- Norwegian Food and Allied Workers Union
- Norwegian Prison and Probation Officers Union
- Norwegian Transport Workers Union
- Norwegian Union of General Workers
- Norwegian Union of Municipal and General Employees
- Orchestrators behind the 22nd July memorial CD: Thomas Borgvang and Chris Collings
- Postkom
- Posten
- Statoil
- The Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- The European Commission
- The Extra Foundation for Health and Rehabilitation
- The Finnish Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- The Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining and Victim Assistance
- The Gjensidige Foundation
- The Government of Japan (Embassy of Japan in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan)
- The Norwegian Confederation of Trade Unions
- The Norwegian Directorate of Immigration
- The Norwegian Directorate of Integration and Diversity
- The Norwegian Labour Party
- The Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- The Swiss Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- The US Department of State
- UNDP
- Union of Employees in Commerce and Offices
- United Federation of Trade unions
- UNOPS

The Norwegian People’s Aid magazine, Appell comes out four times a year. Become a member and get the magazine sent by post!
Alia-al-Fakhir and the women’s committee try to bring security to children growing up in Jal al-Bahar in Lebanon

Translation: Neil Howard

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