PARTNER ASSESSMENT

WHAT TO EXPECT AND HOW TO PREPARE

A short guide for organisations

1

SHARE YOUR DOCUMENTS

Strategy, policies, manuals and sample reports

2

MEET THE EVALUATORS

Interviews with your board, management and staff

3

VELORA SCORES EACH TOPIC

The evaluators agree each rating together

4

VELORA REVIEWS THE RESULT

A summary report, then approval within Velora

5

PLAN TOGETHER

A Capacity Strengthening Plan, if approved

6 areas of your work

35 topics, each rated separately

14 documents you must provide

VELORA AID

Based on the Velora Aid Partner Assessment Tool for NGOs, December 2024

HOW THE ASSESSMENT WORKS

The assessment is how Velora gets to know an organisation before working together: how it is run, how it delivers programmes, and how it looks after people, money and supplies.

	WHAT HAPPENS	YOUR PART
1	**Share your documents** Velora reviews your strategy, policies, manuals and sample reports before speaking to you.	**Gather the documents on page 8. Fourteen of them are required.**
2	**Meet the evaluators** Velora's programme and finance and admin evaluators interview your board, management and staff. They may look at your premises and vehicles, and ask previous donors for references.	**Make people available and bring real examples. Pages 5 to 7 show what will be asked.**
3	**Velora scores each topic** The evaluators take notes during the conversations, then agree each rating together afterwards, back at the office.	No action needed from you.
4	**Velora reviews the result** The evaluators write a brief summary report and send the partner proposal for approval within Velora.	No action needed from you.
5	**Plan together** If the partnership is approved, you and Velora develop a Capacity Strengthening Plan that prioritises the main gaps.	**Say what you want to strengthen, and what Velora could learn from you.**

Who takes part

From Velora

- Programme evaluator
- Finance and admin evaluators, covering logistics and HR

From your organisation

- Board members
- Management team
- Finance staff
- Other staff

Worth keeping in mind

- **Most questions are open.** "How do you…?" comes up throughout, and you may be asked for examples.
- **A gap does not automatically end the conversation.** Almost every topic links weaknesses to capacity strengthening.
- **It runs both ways.** Velora is asked to include areas where you could strengthen Velora.

WHAT VELORA LOOKS AT

The assessment covers six areas and 35 topics. The numbers below match the topic-by-topic pages that follow.

A Organisational structure, principles and procedures
7 topics

- 1 Mission & Vision
- 2 Board
- 3 Legal Status
- 4 Organisational Structure
- 5 Human Resources
- 6 Risk Management
- 7 Security Management

B Programming and implementation capacity
9 topics

- 8 Emergency Preparedness and Response
- 9 Technical Expertise
- 10 Do No Harm
- 11 Rights Holders' Participation
- 12 Collaboration with Duty Bearers
- 13 Coordination and Complementarity
- 14 Gender Equality and Social Inclusion
- 15 Climate, Environment and Resilience
- 16 Distribution

C Project cycle management
4 topics

- 17 Project Planning
- 18 Project Monitoring
- 19 Project Reporting
- 20 Learning Organisation

D Accountability mechanisms
5 topics

- 21 Code of Conduct and Policies
- 22 General Standards and Frameworks
- 23 Complaints Mechanism
- 24 Accountability
- 25 Anti-Money Laundering / CFT

E Finance
6 topics

- 26 Financial Status
- 27 External Statutory Audit
- 28 Internal Control
- 29 Financial Accounting System
- 30 Financial Reporting
- 31 Cost Sharing

F Procurement and logistics
4 topics

- 32 Procurement
- 33 Assets
- 34 Stocks & Warehousing
- 35 Fleet

First, your organisation's profile

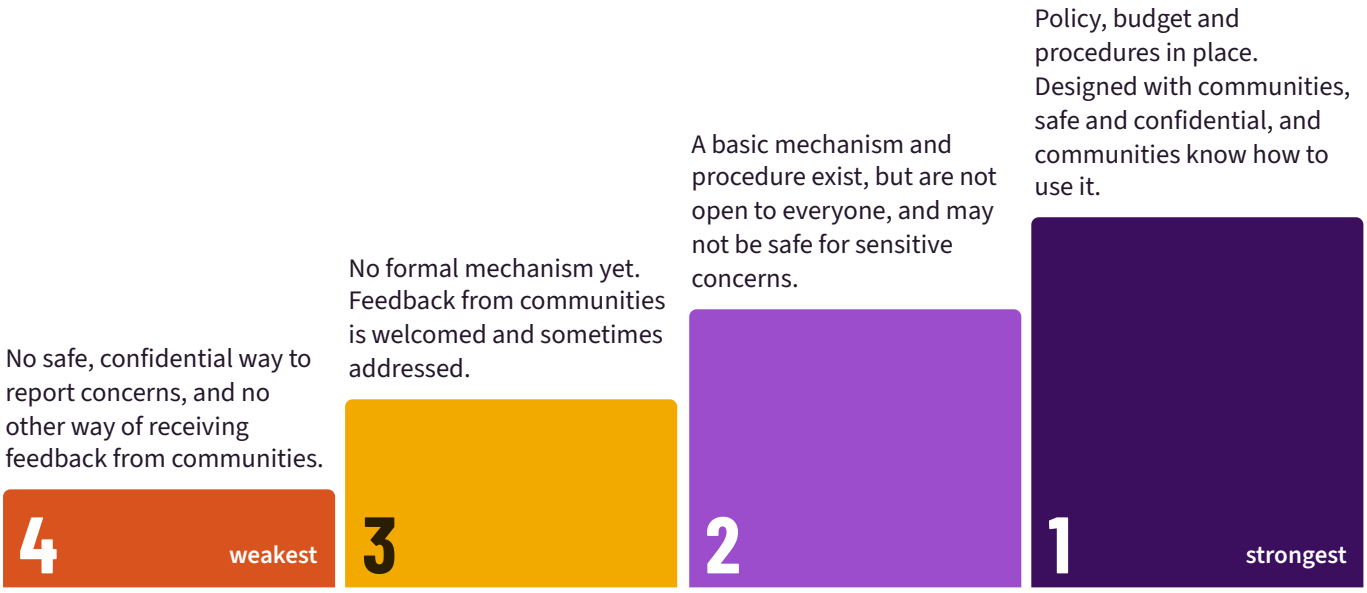
This part is not rated. Having the details to hand saves time on the day.

- Type of organisation, such as national or local NGO, INGO, CBO or network
- Registration date, address, website or Facebook page
- Main focus, humanitarian or development, and themes
- Number of full-time staff, by gender
- Main donors of the past three years
- Board composition and chair: gender balance, elections, meetings, independence from management
- Names of the director and the finance, programme and administration managers

HOW RATINGS WORK

Velora rates each topic against written criteria. Unlike a school mark, **the lower the number, the stronger the rating**: 1 is the strongest.

Example: what each rating means for a complaints mechanism



25 topics use the full 1 to 4 scale and **10 topics** use 1 to 3. Many can be marked N/A when they do not apply to you. Procurement and logistics topics start from points instead (page 7).

Having it is not the same as using it

The difference between a 2 and a 1 is often whether something is actually used, not whether it exists.

	2 It exists	1 It is used
Cost sharing	Procedures are documented, but not known to staff or not followed consistently.	Procedures are complete, documented, and staff adhere to them.
Accountability	Some policies exist, but are not fully put into practice.	Key policies and mechanisms are actively implemented.
External audit	Audits happen periodically, but recommendations are not systematically applied.	Accredited auditors report every year, and recommendations are acted on.

Three things to settle first

Many gaps can be worked on during a partnership, though serious ones can still stand in the way of one. Velora treats these three as firm conditions.

Legal registration and compliance

Velora requires both as a prerequisite: registration, and meeting local reporting, tax and labour requirements.

Code of Conduct and policies

If you have no Code of Conduct or policies on fraud, corruption, SEAH and child abuse, you need to agree to Velora's.

AML/CFT screening

You need to agree to adopt a screening process across all your activities, and provide information for screening.

ORGANISATION AND PROGRAMMING

The questions behind each rating, in short form, with the evidence Velora refers to.

A Organisational structure, principles and procedures

topics 1–7

TOPIC		WHAT VELORA ASKS	HAVE READY
1	**Mission & Vision**	Do your vision and mission guide your current work, and do they fit with Velora's values and approach?	Strategy, programme documents
2	**Board**	Is there a board or independent body? How are members elected, how often do they meet, and who is represented?	Organigram, board minutes, board terms of reference
3	**Legal Status**	Are you legally registered? Do you meet all tax, labour and NGO law requirements?	Registration documents, audit management letters
4	**Organisational Structure**	Is your organogram up to date, with clear responsibilities and lines of authority?	Organisation chart, manuals showing segregation of duties
5	**Human Resources**	How do you recruit and develop staff? Does everyone have a job description? What can your key staff do?	Recruitment guidelines, HR manual, staff policy, HR files
6	**Risk Management**	How do you assess and act on risks, including risks your work could cause to communities?	Risk management tools
7	**Security Management**	How do you keep staff and premises safe? Are staff trained and insured?	Security plan, procedures, SOPs; premises and vehicles may be observed

B Programming and implementation capacity

topics 8–16

TOPIC		WHAT VELORA ASKS	HAVE READY
8	**Emergency Preparedness and Response**	What emergency experience do you have, in which sectors, and what procedures do you follow?	Emergency preparedness plan; previous donors may be asked for references
9	**Technical Expertise**	Which sectors are you strong in? Which standards or frameworks do you use?	Staff expertise; standards used, such as Sphere, INEE, LEGS or CaLP
10	**Do No Harm**	Are staff familiar with Do No Harm? How do you assess and manage unintended harm to communities?	Strategy, programme and project documents
11	**Rights Holders' Participation**	How do rights holders shape planning, delivery and evaluation? How are the most vulnerable identified?	Planning guidelines, project documents, reports
12	**Collaboration with Duty Bearers**	How do you involve government agencies? Which policies matter to you? What do you advocate for?	Programme and project documents, evaluation reports
13	**Coordination and Complementarity**	Which coordination meetings do you attend? How do you coordinate with other actors?	Examples of meetings and joint work
14	**Gender Equality and Social Inclusion**	Do you have a gender policy? Is your work based on gender analysis?	Gender policy, gender analysis, disaggregated data
15	**Climate, Environment and Resilience**	How do you build climate action and environmental sustainability into programmes? How do you strengthen community resilience?	Climate or environment policy, if you have one; project examples
16	**Distribution**	What experience do you have of organising distributions, and which procedures do you follow?	Distribution procedures, stock control systems

PROJECTS, ACCOUNTABILITY AND FINANCE

C Project cycle management

topics 17–20

TOPIC	WHAT VELORA ASKS	HAVE READY
17 **Project Planning**	How do you plan projects? Which assessments do you carry out? How are communities, including women and children, involved?	A funded proposal, PME guideline, needs assessment, baseline survey
18 **Project Monitoring**	How do you monitor projects? How is data recorded, analysed and used to make changes?	Monitoring report, PME guidelines, data collection formats
19 **Project Reporting**	How do you report results? Do you report only when donors ask?	A final project report; previous donors may be asked for references
20 **Learning Organisation**	How do you use and share what you learn from monitoring and evaluation? What has changed as a result?	An evaluation report, examples of changes made

D Accountability mechanisms

topics 21–25

TOPIC	WHAT VELORA ASKS	HAVE READY
21 **Code of Conduct and Policies**	Do you have a Code of Conduct? What does it cover? Have all staff signed it and been trained?	Code of Conduct, HR files with signed copies
22 **General Standards and Frameworks**	Do you follow international humanitarian law, principles and standards? How do you promote the SDGs?	Strategy, project plans and reports
23 **Complaints Mechanism**	How are complaints handled? Are there safe, confidential channels for SEAH? Do you have focal points?	Complaints policy, handling procedure, complaints logbook
24 **Accountability**	How do you practise accountability to affected people? Do you know the Core Humanitarian Standard?	Safeguarding and PSEAH policies, community feedback practices
25 **Anti-Money Laundering / CFT**	Do you have a policy and SOPs? What do you do to make sure funds do not reach designated terrorist groups?	AML/CFT policy and SOPs

E Finance

topics 26–31

TOPIC	WHAT VELORA ASKS	HAVE READY
26 **Financial Status**	What is your current financial situation? Do you have unrestricted funds?	Budget, annual financial statements, audits; usually scored from documents
27 **External Statutory Audit**	How often do you have audits, of what type, and how do you apply the recommendations?	External audit reports
28 **Internal Control**	Which controls reduce financial risk, such as cash counts and reconciliations? Are reports reviewed and approved?	Financial manual, signatory policy
29 **Financial Accounting System**	How are transactions recorded? Which standards do you apply?	Your finance staff, who will be interviewed
30 **Financial Reporting**	What type of financial reporting system do you use?	An example of a financial report
31 **Cost Sharing**	If you have several donors, how do you divide costs among them?	Grant agreements and budgets, cost-sharing plan and procedures

TOPIC BY TOPIC

PROCUREMENT AND LOGISTICS

These four topics work differently. Velora checks a list of practical points, worth up to 100 points per topic, and turns the result into a rating. Each bar shows where the points sit.

32 Procurement

100 points



- **15 Staffing**
  Dedicated procurement staff, enough of them to separate duties, and trained in procurement
- **35 Guidelines**
  Principles, segregation of duties, thresholds, committee set-up and a higher review committee
- **35 Procedures and process**
  PR tracker, templates, supplier list, supplier Code of Conduct, construction payment tracking, food quality control, framework agreements
- **15 Sample tenders**
  One tender dossier above 20K and one above 150K: notice, criteria, evaluation and contract

33 Assets

100 points



- **20 Asset guideline**
- **20 Asset register**: copy requested
- **10 Annual inventory count**: last year's report
- **10 Insurance**: especially vehicles
- **10 Written issue and approval**
- **10 Disposal in line with Velora**
- **20 Recycling at disposal**

34 Stocks & Warehousing

100 points



- **20 Stock guideline**
- **20 Monthly stock report**: copy from the last 12 months
- **15 Annual stock count**: last year's count
- **5 Bin cards**
- **5 Signed release requests**
- **5 Waybills**
- **10 Good warehouse practice**: safe storage, flood and fire prevention, FIFO
- **20 Recycling damaged goods**

35 Fleet

100 points



- **20 Fleet guidelines**
- **20 Logbook per vehicle**: sample page from the last year
- **20 Monthly fleet report**: fuel, maintenance, use per project
- **20 Charging actual use**: derived from logbooks
- **20 Sustainable fleet management**: service and monitoring

The environment counts

Recycling makes up 20 of 100 points for both assets and stocks, and sustainable management makes up 20 of 100 for fleet.

Using your own procurement guidelines

Velora will consider whether you can follow your own. If not, it will consider whether Velora should run the procurement or a tailored guideline should be developed.

DOCUMENT CHECKLIST

Tick these off as you gather them. The 14 marked REQUIRED are mandatory. If you cannot provide one, tell your Velora contact early, as the evaluators need to raise it within Velora.

Organisation

- [ ] Statutes
- [ ] **Code of Conduct** REQUIRED
- [ ] Accountability framework and related policies, such as complaints or safeguarding
- [ ] **Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy** REQUIRED
- [ ] Other relevant policies, such as a gender policy
- [ ] Strategy
- [ ] **Organogram** REQUIRED
- [ ] **HR policy or staff manual** REQUIRED
- [ ] **Registration documents** REQUIRED
- [ ] **Security plan or manual** REQUIRED

Earlier assessments, if you have them

- [ ] Capacity assessment or due diligence report by another donor
- [ ] CHS audit or self-assessment report
- [ ] Any other organisational capacity assessment

Project cycle

- [ ] One successfully funded proposal
- [ ] One monitoring report
- [ ] One final report
- [ ] One needs assessment report
- [ ] One evaluation report
- [ ] **PME or MEAL guidelines and tools** REQUIRED

Finance, administration and logistics

- [ ] VAT declaration or exemption
- [ ] **Tax clearance** REQUIRED
- [ ] Tax return
- [ ] **Audit reports from the past three years** REQUIRED
- [ ] **Procurement manual** REQUIRED
- [ ] Certificate of non-bankruptcy
- [ ] **Finance manual** REQUIRED
- [ ] **Risk management tools** REQUIRED
- [ ] **Annual financial statement** REQUIRED
- [ ] **Fixed asset register** REQUIRED
- [ ] AML/CFT policy

Also expect AML/CFT screening. Velora records whether screening has been completed and on what date, so be ready to provide the information it needs.

Your Velora contact

Name _____

Email or phone _____

Abbreviations

AML/CFT anti-money laundering and combating the financing of terrorism · **CBO** community-based organisation · **CHS** Core Humanitarian Standard · **FIFO** first in, first out · **INGO** international NGO · **MEAL** monitoring, evaluation, accountability and learning · **PME** planning, monitoring and evaluation · **PR** purchase request · **SEAH** sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment · **PSEAH** prevention of SEAH · **SOP** standard operating procedure

This guide summarises the Velora Aid Partner Assessment Tool for NGOs (December 2024). Velora's evaluators rate against the full criteria in that tool.