Policy Summary

Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) Policy

June 2025

POLICY STATEMENT

FAITH (Aastha) places learning, accountability, and evidence-based decision-making at the core of its work, adopting a participatory and inclusive MEL approach that tracks progress, measures impact, and amplifies the voices of the communities it serves.

7 Guiding principles for MEL practice	**7** Core components of the M&E framework	**3–5%** Of each project budget allocated to MEL	**June 2025** Policy adopted

About this Policy

This MEL Policy establishes a clear, consistent, values-driven approach to track progress, assess effectiveness, and generate learning across all of FAITH's programs. It ensures that FAITH's work is evidence-based, participatory, and accountable to the communities it serves, as well as to donors, partners, and other stakeholders — operationalizing FAITH's mission by embedding robust MEL systems that foster transparency, drive program improvement, and demonstrate impact.

The policy applies to all of FAITH's projects, programs, and organizational interventions under its Strategic Action Plan (2024–2028), spanning gender justice and equality, sexual and reproductive health and rights, mental health and psychosocial well-being, climate action and environmental resilience, economic empowerment, and social enterprise development. It covers all staff, volunteers, consultants, and implementing partners, across all funding sources.

Guiding Principles

- **Feminist and Human Rights-Based Approach —** challenge power imbalances, center the lived experiences of women and girls, and drive systemic change.
- **Participatory and Inclusive —** co-create MEL processes with communities so their voices shape program learning, design, and outcomes.
- **Do No Harm —** design all MEL activities to avoid stigma, retraumatization, discrimination, or risks of surveillance or retaliation.
- **Ethical and Confidential —** uphold informed consent, confidentiality, data protection, privacy, psychological safety, and cultural sensitivity.
- **Context-Responsive —** adapt MEL tools to Nepal's diverse cultural, linguistic, gender, and geographical contexts.
- **Utilization-Focused —** generate actionable data that directly informs program design, implementation, advocacy, and scale-up.
- **Transparency and Accountability —** share MEL findings, positive or negative, with stakeholders in clear, respectful, and accessible ways.

M&E Framework

Component	Focus
Theory of Change & Log Frame	Co-designed with stakeholders to articulate pathways from inputs to long-term impact, including outputs, outcomes, indicators, and assumptions.

Component	Focus
SMART Indicators	Aligned with FAITH's strategic goals, donor requirements, and national/global frameworks; disaggregated by sex, age, geography, and caste/ethnicity where possible.
Data Collection & Tools	Mixed methods using digital tools (Google Forms, KoboToolbox) for baseline, midline, and endline surveys, digital storytelling, and case documentation.
Monitoring	Routine monthly data collection and participatory tools (community scorecards, feedback boxes) with monthly review meetings for adaptive planning.
Evaluation	Mid-term reviews and endline evaluations against OECD-DAC criteria, conducted internally or by independent third-party evaluators.
Learning	Periodic learning reviews and after-action reviews, documented through case studies and outcome harvesting, and shared via workshops and briefs.
Most Significant Change (MSC) Analysis	Collects and analyzes personal stories of change from beneficiaries to capture qualitative impact and inform strategy and advocacy.

Roles and Responsibilities

Role	Responsibility
Executive Director	Strategic decisions and oversight, learning champion, donor engagement, and MEL approval.
MEL Manager/Officer	Technical lead on framework design, tool development, quality assurance, data analysis, capacity building, reporting, and database maintenance.
Program Team	Implements MEL into program planning and daily operations, field data collection, reporting, reflection, and documentation.
Community Partners	Participatory monitoring, feedback, and co-learning.
Beneficiaries	Provide feedback and participate in learning.
External Consultants	Independent evaluations and capacity strengthening.

Data Management & Quality Assurance

- Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) standardize tool usage, data collection, entry, validation, analysis, storage, and reporting.
- All data is stored in secure, encrypted, cloud-based systems with daily backups and strictly role-based access.
- Data is analyzed through a gender-sensitive, equity-focused, and intersectional lens.
- Quarterly Data Quality Assessments (DQAs) assess accuracy, reliability, timeliness, and completeness.

Reporting & Learning

- Weekly staff meetings track ongoing activities and align team efforts.
- Structured monthly field reports and quarterly synthesis reports inform adaptive planning and resource allocation.
- Comprehensive annual reports are shared with donors, partners, and government stakeholders.

- Biannual learning reviews bring staff, partners, and community representatives together to reflect and co-create solutions.
- MEL results are shared through community dialogues, digital platforms, and accessible formats such as infographics and local-language summaries.

Use of MEL Findings

- Program adaptation and strategic decision-making — informing real-time adjustments, scale-up, and resource reallocation.
- Policy influence and strategic advocacy — synthesizing evidence to strengthen advocacy for marginalized groups.
- Community feedback and accountability — sharing data back with communities to strengthen transparency and trust.

Capacity Building

- Quarterly MEL training for staff and field partners covering M&E principles, tools, and digital literacy.
- Technical support for digital tools and community-led evidence generation, plus peer coaching and mentorship.
- MEL toolkits developed in local languages, with exchange visits and peer learning sessions.

Budget

A minimum of 3–5% of each project budget is specifically allocated for MEL activities and clearly itemized in project proposals, covering data systems, capacity building, field travel, evaluator fees, software licenses, learning and reflection events, donor compliance costs, and innovation costs such as piloting new MEL tools.

Review and Updates

This policy will be reviewed every three years, or earlier in response to new donor requirements, organizational learning from evaluations, emerging risks or technologies, or major strategic shifts in FAITH's theory of change.

Annexes

The full policy includes 11 supporting annexes: a MEL glossary of terms, a sample log frame template, an indicator reference sheet, data collection templates and tools, participation and inclusion guidelines, an ethical MEL checklist, a MEL risk register template, a learning agenda template, a MEL roles and competency matrix, a basic sample consent form, and ethical and safe guidelines for MEL practices — available in the full internal document on request.