

## **JAN SUNWAYI: TOWARDS ENSURING TRANSPARENCY**

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The Grantee organization should be open to social audit of their performance by the target beneficiaries. The social audit would take into account the working ethics of the organization, how the sanctioned money was spent, what were the expenditure patterns, how closely did the expenditure conform to budgeted guidelines and, most important, what was the real social benefit of the expenditure incurred.

The following is a suggested form of social audit or Jan Sunwayi:

The Public Hearing should be open to the entire village community and all efforts should be made to make it informal and thus ensure maximum presence and effective participation.

### **WHY**

- To bring the community closer to the voluntary agencies and lessen misunderstandings due to communication gaps
- To establish credibility by showing who the funds have been received from and how they have been spent

### **HOW**

- A public hearing should be held in an accessible village in the agency's area of operation preferably in the local school with several rooms for display of documents and a courtyard where the public can sit.
- Seat an independent panel in the middle, with the elected representatives on one side and the regional press on the other. The rural community can sit in front of the independent panel.
- A full list of documents should be available in a press kit in Hindi, English and /or local language.
- All documents should be numbered and detail books displayed for public perusal

Begin by introducing panelists and senior staff members. Provide a history of the organization and details (physical achievements and financial expenditure) of each Project, preferably by the member of staff responsible for implementing the projects

After receipt of funds for a specific project, to hold a community mobilization program and explain to the prospective beneficiary group about the Grant and its objective, as also how and when this money is being spent. Encourage/ensure comments/questions/criticism by the village community.

The more vigorous, open, fearless the debate, the greater the credibility.

## WHAT

To share and display, for example

- All balance sheets, expenditure statements, grants received (separately for each source) for at least the last five years
- Original salary registers – as a sample for scrutiny
- List of assets of the organization (5 years ago – and now)
- List of Bank Accounts / Fixed Deposits
- Organisational Profile, show particularly the proportion of expenditure on administration
- Lowest Paid vs Highest Paid
- Salary details and perks provided to different functionaries

## WHO

- The Panels should consist of persons known for their integrity and honesty, not connected with the organization in any way (but aware of its work). It could draw upon a retired judge, police officer, auditor, social worker, retired bureaucrat, journalist or mass communicator. The presence of some local elected representative: MLA, Sarpanch, Panchayat Samiti Member, Zila Pramukh is essential.
- Invitations must personally be extended to the Press, Government officials and panchayat members well in advance
- All senior management staff of the organization must be present to provide needed clarifications. This includes the banker, the chartered accountant and the internal auditor.

## **POINTS OF CAUTION**

- *After the Public Hearing, a room has to be allocated in the organisation where copies of all the documents previously on public display are freely available – on written request.*
- *The entire Public Hearing should be recorded on audio tape and on video if possible – for other voluntary agencies to learn from the experience.*
- *The Director or Chief Functionary of the organisation must not conduct or monopolise the proceedings, to show how decentralized the organization is, and how it favours recruitment of local/village staff, allowing them positions of responsibility. Information on the detailed projects must be shared by staff members with the rural community.*

**Note: These Guidelines were shared by Barefoot College (Mr Bunker Roy is a Member of The Coca-Cola India Foundation Advisory Board) for adoption by the Foundation.**