The first seven years are a long time for any new institution. Over these years, our work has touched many a theme, from Report Cards and Budget Analysis, to Electoral Transparency and Civic Clubs. Every one of these initiatives has been driven by our founding mission, of “supporting civil society in its interaction with the state”. Much of what we achieved came through the success of our friends and partners - it is now time to celebrate these initiatives that shared our dream and played their part in making us succeed in our mission.

Giving strength to the voice of citizens is the foundation of PAC’s work. Report Cards on Public Services were a strategic tool to make this happen. Two Report Cards on Bangalore were an important part of the backdrop for the Chief Minister to set up the Bangalore Agenda Task Force. The BATF, while pursuing its mandate, continues to draw upon feedback from corporate and lay citizens to set the agenda and monitor performance of public services in the city. We probably could not have asked for more as a first step from the CM.

Our city was not only a laboratory for citizen action initiatives but also a commitment to action. A very early priority was to help develop SWABHIMANA as a city level forum to enable civil society to interact with city government. PAC was a catalyst in its creation. The forum today is the Centre’s foremost partner for city advocacy, and for Bangalore, a very highly regarded civil society institution. Several Resident Groups work together with SWABHIMANA, on a continuing basis, for a better Bangalore.

The character of our democratic government is driven by the quality of people we elect. And elections are our means to decisively influence this process. The Centre’s methodologies for improving transparency in elections, are now being discussed and applied by citizen groups in different parts of Karnataka such as Hubli, Shimoga and Mysore, as well as different parts of India such as Hyderabad, Chennai and Mumbai.

Public expenditure is another facet of government which is often well outside the view of the citizen. The Centre’s initiatives, in the form of comparative analysis of Municipal Budgets and assessment of the MPs Local Area Development Scheme, are now part of a larger effort with initiatives such as that of DISHA, Ahmedabad and the Centre for Budget & Policy Studies, Bangalore. Tools to help citizens assess quality of roads are now providing support for major initiatives in other states, such as that of Lok Satta in Andhra Pradesh.

Internal processes in expenditure management by local governments have contributed to making their interface with citizens, opaque and confusing. PAC’s initiative with Fund Based Accounting Systems in Tumkur was a useful starting point for a similar effort by the BATF with the BMP. The information base generated by the FBAS in tandem with the tools for monitoring quality of roads, gave Janagraha, a new civil society initiative in Bangalore, strong support to embark on the massive city level programme for participatory budgeting.

Each day brings forth a new opportunity to act, a call for a new initiative, in Bangalore and elsewhere. We temper the urge to respond to each call with the faith that there are others who share our passion, and that many issues are best served when local institutions lead the work. We are always with them, and to lend support and linkages as they move ahead.

The groundswell of civil society action is rising. This swell, like a rising water table, reflects more than one initiative or the other. To the Centre, this cumulation of and synergy are a source of inspiration and pride. And reason to celebrate as a thousand flowers bloom.

Suresh Balakrishnan
Executive Director
Public Affairs Centre

March 2002
RESEARCH

WARP: STRENGTHENING LOCAL ACCOUNTABILITY MECHANISMS

Public Affairs Centre, Bangalore and Apnalaya, Mumbai conducted an interesting study called Watch Your Ward Programme (WARP) in the slums of Mumbai. The study comprised a survey of 400 households to quantify and highlight the extent of users' satisfaction with select public services, namely, drinking water, ration shops, health, education, garbage disposal, public toilets and domestic power supply, in 10 electoral wards of Mumbai.

Purpose of the Study

Mumbai, with all its distinctions that make it a fascinating city, is also distinguished for its teeming population of slum-dwellers, a vast majority of whom can be termed as poor people. The eradication of urban poverty and the provision of public services to the poor have been high on the government's development agenda for many years. Several programs have been taken up at all levels to meet these objectives. It is thus widely recognized that the provision of civic services and infrastructure can improve the well being and productivity of the poor. What is more important, however, is to ensure that these services are available to the poor and are delivered satisfactorily to them. Government's own reporting focuses on the funds invested for this purpose and on the facilities created thereby. But one seldom comes across information on the outputs and impacts of these investments; in one word, their effectiveness.

The study in question tries to gather precisely such information, in the setting of one of the major wards in Mumbai – M (East). A similar study, comparing the quality of basic services in the slums of 5 major Indian cities has been conducted in recent past by PAC.

The approach adopted in this study is rather unique in the sense that the source of information is the user of the service. The evaluation criterion used here is the satisfaction of the user with a service. Given that the poor are dependent on public monopolies for the most part for the services under review, it can be argued that user satisfaction should play a major role in judging the quality, adequacy and responsiveness of these service providers. This is no doubt a partial approach, but one that fills an important gap since other choices are not available to those at the receiving end of public services.

The focus in this study was on the degree of users' satisfaction with public services, responsiveness of the service providers, and the extent of the prevalence of the speed money phenomenon. The aim is not only to highlight the responsibility of the service providers towards the urban poor by assessing their performance, but also to focus on the accountability of the authorities concerned.

WARP - DESIGN

- Mobilization and awareness building
- Creating a database & designing monitoring systems
- Designing interactive forums

Survey Methodology

The study was spread across 10 municipal wards (181-190) lying within Ward M-East. Though, at the beginning of the survey, a quota of 40 respondents had been fixed for each ward (with a total targeted sample size of 400), the interviewers could manage to get very few from certain wards (e.g., 184), but made up by covering more households from wards like 182, 183 and 189.

The instrument for data collection was an elaborate Interview Schedule, which contained the following sections: (a) Demographics (including the socio-economic profile of the
household, and a brief profile of each household member), (b) a section on each selected service (i.e., drinking water, ration shops, health, education, garbage disposal, public toilets and domestic power supply), (c) a section exploring the interest of the respondent in NGO efforts/meetings convened by the service providers, (d) a section on the respondents’ opinion of their ward representatives, (e) an open-ended section on suggestions, expectations and demands of respondents with respect to the services, and (f) a structured section on grievance redress.

The investigators were residents of the slums of the ten wards covered in the survey. They were imparted special training to carry out the interviews. Given the large number of questions in the schedule, the investigators had the option to fill up the schedule selectively, i.e., interview a respondent only for those services about which he seems most willing to talk or with which he has had the most frequent interactions.

**Respondent Profile:**

Eighty-six per cent of the respondents have been living in slums that are more than 20 years old.

The male-female ratio in the sample was 77:23. The interviewers mainly met the Chief Wage Earner: 70% of the respondents were the main bread winners for their households. Seventy-four per cent of the respondents have been living at the present address for 15 years or more. When asked about the type of the family, 62% respondents replied that they were living in a ‘stem’ family, while 33% had joint families. Large households were rare, as 83% of the respondents have 6 or less members in the family.

Interestingly, 249 respondents answered the question about caste category, more than twice the number of people who clearly told their caste. Apparently, the respondents had fewer inhibitions in indicating the broad category they belonged to than the specific caste.

**Survey Findings**

For drinking water, 68% depend on BMC connections, which they use for all purposes, including drinking. Those who have opted for private sources of water have done so more because they find BMC water inadequate and not so much because its quality is bad. Public taps are seen as regular and easily accessible sources giving clean water. However, in monsoons, water quality reportedly worsens.

Drinking water, and to some extent ration shops, are the two services reported by respondents to be the most problem ridden. At least a third of the financial losses/expenses due to all service-related problems have occurred in the case of drinking water alone (e.g., in terms of installing alternative water sources).

Free public toilets are widely accessible, though 54% of the respondents report inadequacy of the same. Ninety-one percent of the households use toilets regularly. However, sixty per cent are not satisfied with their quality, which deteriorates badly during monsoons, according to about 200 respondents.

Power connections are mostly legal (88%) and used for multiple purposes (52%). Seventy per cent are satisfied with the quality of power.

BMC’s garbage disposal system is widely used (75%), yet is seen as of poor quality by 54% respondents and inadequate by 63%. Like in the case of water and toilets, these sites also go bad during rainy season (81%).

Most households (88%), mainly those from low income group, own a ration card. Major delays have not been reported in receipt of ration cards by about 73% respondents. Most of the users (85%) are frequent consumers of the PDS every month. Ration shops are generally seen as easily accessible (72%). Those who are unhappy with the quality of items, mainly point out adulteration as a problem (82%). Sixty-six per cent have commented negatively on the fairness of the shopkeeper.

**WARP - EXPECTED OUTPUTS**

- A decentralised database at the ward level
- Empower the community to demand better services and benchmark progress
- Explore innovative mechanisms to resolve problems at the local level
- Facilitate a multi stakeholder forum to evolve sustainable solutions
- Enhance capacity of the NGO and partner CBOs.
Of all respondents, 66% prefer a private doctor/clinic to a government hospital. The parameters on which the public health facilities attracted worst ratings were staff’s knowledge of their job and availability of medicines at the dispensary.

Fifty-two per cent respondents have their children going to school. In schools, health care doesn’t seem to be a commonly offered benefit. Those who are not benefiting from the promotion-to-education schemes run by the government are missing out mainly because of low awareness (91%).

The respondents don’t seem well organized along cultural or political lines (only 74 memberships out of a total of 371 responses). Their interaction with their elected representatives too is very low (68% say they haven’t met their representatives). However, what is encouraging is that they seem willing to attend any meeting called to solve their problems with regard to these services.

On questions pertaining to speed money/bribe or problems in dealing with the officials, response rate has been abysmal (5-6 responses only). However, this issue could be explored further through participatory techniques like Focus Group Discussions.

Respondents’ Awareness and Interest in NGO/Corporation Efforts

Respondents were probed to know the level of their willingness to be part of any collective effort of citizens-NGOs-BMC to improve the quality of services. The existing ground for the development of any such efforts seems fairly limited since 79% of the respondents are not members of any voluntary association/citizen group, whether political or socio-cultural. Seventy-four out of the 371 respondents have named one or the other kind of organization they are members of, especially the youth and women’s groups.

However, what is encouraging is that the respondents generally seem willing to attend any meeting called by the service-providing agency/BMC (70%) or an NGO/citizen group (66%) to solve their problems. Fifty have agreed to participate, provided the timings of the meetings are convenient for them. Those who have shown no such interest are mainly the people who don’t think that their problems are serious enough (44% and 47% of the uninterested respondents offer this reason for not attending an agency meeting and an NGO meeting respectively).

Opinion about the Performance of Ward Representatives

Sixty-eight percent of the respondents have never met their ward representative. Of those who haven’t met their representatives, 42% say that they don’t believe that a meeting can be useful, while 34% say that their problems were not big enough to warrant the attention of the ward representative.

Observations

(a) The only services where a significant number of people (>20%) have said that they faced a service-related problem, are drinking water and ration shops. Education (5%) emerges as the least dissatisfying service. However, in none of the services does the problem seem to be very frequent.

(b) Of those who have lodged a complaint, almost everyone knew whom to complain to or what was the correct procedure to follow.

(c) Only in the case of drinking water, we see a substantial number of respondents (27%) complaining of monetary losses due to these problems. These ‘losses’ are presumably the investments made in digging private bore wells, payments made to private water vendors/tankers, losses due to health hazards caused by bad quality water, etc.

(d) Only six respondents have been eloquent on issues like problems faced while dealing with the officials and speed money. This gives the impression that the respondents have not felt free to confide in the interviewers on these issues.

Overview

(a) As mentioned earlier, 68% respondents have never met their ward representative and only 7% have found the representatives fairly accessible. This opens up another area of intervention for organizations like SSSH and Apnalaya. These groups can act as catalysts to improve interaction between the residents and their representatives, by organizing their periodic meetings. Regardless of whether there are problems to be tackled urgently, such
An information kit was prepared to help with the following:

- details about process of verification
- procedure for inclusion of names and
deletion of the names of persons who have
moved away or deceased from the list
- correction of the details about oneself and
- where to go and which forms to use

This was prepared and sent to more than 200 organizations in Bangalore. On 17th Aug 2001, PAC and Swabhiman organized a press meet where this information was disseminated along with PAC's plan of action. The newspapers and the TV channels carried this information and encouraged the public to verify the list and find their names. A one-day Hotline was set up on 18th Aug 2001 between 11.00 am and 5.00 p.m. at PAC office to receive complaints from citizens facing any difficulty in verifying the list, and to record their complaints. More than 150 queries were received and the complaints were brought to the notice of DC Administration; DC Development; Assistant Commissioner-Election Branch BMP; Commissioner, BMP; and also the State Election Commission. Most of the complaints received during the campaign pertained to non-issue or acceptance of Form 6 in ARO offices. PAC and Swabhiman communicated to all the AROs that not allowing eligible citizens to include their names in the electoral rolls till the official last date would be a violation of the statutory provisions. Subsequently, the BMP officials met the State Election Commission and ordered all the ARO offices to issue Form 6.

Verification of the Electoral roll – a random survey by resident groups

A quick random survey was undertaken by the associations with the help of PAC to see the extent of bogus voting. Only a few groups could carry out the survey in time. They reported many discrepancies in the rolls that could contribute to the bogus voting:

- inclusion of names of deceased persons
- inclusion of names of those who had moved away

In the preparation of the electoral roll, there were many instances of the names of children being included who were yet to be born. The verification of the electoral roll was commenced.

Verification of the voters list

Preparations for this campaign began when the Bangalore Mahanagara Palike (BMP) announced, in August 2001, that the voters lists would be on display. The main focus of the campaign was to inform the public about the verification process and give them more information on how to participate in the effort. In order to achieve this, PAC devised a campaign, which used newspapers, mass e-mails, announcements on Radiocity - a popular FM radio channel - and cable TV networks.

A VOTE FOR A BETTER BANGALORE

Public Affairs Centre (PAC) and Swabhiman have been working for the past several years to promote greater transparency and citizen participation in the electoral processes. Since 1996, several voter motivation and awareness programs and voter enrollment campaigns have been carried out in Bangalore and other parts of Karnataka. In the recently held elections to Bangalore Mahanagara Palike, PAC and Swabhiman organized a campaign called “Vote for Clean, Green and Safe Bangalore”. The main elements of the campaign were:

- Verification of the voters list
- Appeal to major political parties to field capable, upright and responsive candidates
- Voter motivation and awareness campaign
- Choose the Right Councillor programme

Verification of the voters List

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Our Votes for Responsive, Capable and Upright Candidates

The second phase of the campaign focussed on the crucial role of Councillors in the development of Bangalore and the need to ensure a responsive, efficient and non-corrupt administration. PAC and Swabhimanam along with their RWA network, appealed to the major parties to select only those persons as CANDIDATES WHO:

✓ Do not have criminal background of any sorts (it was reported that 15% of the candidates who contested the 1996 BMP elections had a criminal background!). The study in these 18 wards showed that 4.2% had police records.

✓ Are registered electors and residents of the respective wards in which they would be contesting for BMP elections. Our study shows that 81% of the candidates were residents of their wards.

✓ Are neither close relatives nor friends of contractors directly executing public works or other services for Bangalore Mahanagara Palike.

✓ Have at least passed matriculation. 86% of the candidates were matriculates.

✓ Are committed to make Bangalore a cleaner, greener and safer place to live.

These circulars were mailed to over 150 organizations to be sent to major political parties. Emails were also sent to the Chief Minister and responses were obtained.

The third phase of the campaign consisted of:

a) Voter motivation, awareness and communication programme

This programme aimed to increase the voter turnout at the BMP elections and create awareness about the need to defeat bogus votes. Various media were used to send across the messages for which brand comm, an advertising agency volunteered to provide creative inputs. The media used were: hoardings, rear panels of BMTCL buses, slides on cable and in cinema halls, posters at educational institutions and busy locations, letter campaigns at schools, recorded telephone messages, and announcements on radio city.

b) “Choose the Right Councillor Programme”

- information campaign on the candidates

Twenty-seven resident welfare associations collaborated with PAC and Swabhimanam in this effort covering 18 wards. Candidates contesting in each of these wards were interviewed by the members of the association on their background – whether they are tax payers, do they reside in the ward from which they are contesting and criminal record; level of awareness of civic issues; commitments and priorities for the ward; past achievements; and willingness to abide by the electoral code of conduct etc. The information thus collected was widely disseminated through leaflets and posters. Candidates were asked to certify that they have voluntarily disclosed the information. Names of the candidates refusing to be interviewed were published in the leaflets and posters.

ICE TV - a local cable television network, collaborated with PAC and Swabhimanam by recording the interviews of candidates and airing the same. Though the logistics were set for the task, candidate response was poor and only about 12 candidates dared to reveal themselves in front of the camera. The print media has been a constant source of support for the campaign during these elections by reaching out to thousands of people whom we could not have otherwise reached.

In comparison to eight wards during the 1996 BMP elections, scaling up to 18 wards in 2001 was an encouraging growth of awareness and concerns of citizens to bring to naught the abuse of money and muscle power in the electoral processes.

Our partners in the campaign

- 26 resident welfare associations directly participated in the campaign
- Brand Comm, an advertising company provided creative support for the entire campaign
- Bangalore Telecom came forward to play recorded messages to its subscribers on the day of polling
- Britannia Industries sponsored the printing of 15,000 letters to school children
- Prime Publicity provided the hoarding space at concession rates
- Radio City FM 91 provided free air time to broadcast messages
- Sansera Engineering, RCS Technologies and Gangarams lent support to the campaign through financial contributions
- ICE TV carried out interviews of the candidates, aired voter motivation messages.

(For further information on the campaign, please contact Ms. Poornima at PAC)
SPECIAL FEATURE

MEASURING WHAT MATTERS IN NONPROFITS

Most nonprofits track their performance by metrics such as money raised, membership growth, number of visitors, people served, and overhead costs. These metrics are important, but they do not measure the success of an organization in achieving its mission. Of course, nonprofit missions are lofty and vague. CARE USA exists “to affirm the dignity and worth of individuals and families living in some of the world’s poorest communities.” Try to measure that. Though nonprofits can not measure their success in purely economic terms, there are approaches to quantifying success, even for nonprofit groups with ambitious and abstract goals.

The Nature Conservancy has had a clear mission: to preserve the diversity of plants and animals by protecting the habitats of rare species. Thus it would simply add up the amount of annual donations it received and the number of acres that it was protecting. Its membership and revenue has been on the increase. Despite this apparent success the Conservancy managers realized that their goal was not to buy land or raise money; it is to preserve the diversity of life on the planet. It had its successes but the extinction of species continued to spiral out of control. It turned out that species were affected by activities outside the protected areas. Therefore the organization began to work on larger ecosystems.

The Conservancy began to develop a way of measuring success that was not based on land and cash increase, known as “family of measure.” Every organization needs three kinds of performance metrics— to measure its success in mobilizing its resources, its staff effectiveness, and its progress in fulfilling its mission. The metrics used to assess its performance will differ. An environmental organization will rate the performance of its staff by whether clean air or water legislation was adopted, a museum by counting the number of visitors. Metrics for the mobilization of resources could include fundraising performance, membership growth, and market share, metrics for staff performance, number of people served by a program, and the number of completed projects. The third metric—measuring the success of an organization in achieving its mission—is more difficult but also the most crucial.

Research has found that despite the difficulties, nonprofits can measure their success in achieving their mission. They have three options. First, a nonprofit group can narrowly define its mission so that progress can be measured directly. The mission of Goodwill Industries, for example, is to raise people out of poverty through work: “A hand up, not a hand out.” Goodwill can therefore measure its success simply by counting the number of people participating in its training programs and then placed in jobs. By contrast World Vision and Catholic Charities have broader antipoverty missions that are impossible to quantify directly.

But while narrowly defining their mission nonprofit groups must avoid the trap of oversimplifying it. Until recently the mission of America’s Second Harvest was to feed the hungry, and it could easily quantify its success by counting the amount of food it collected and distributed. The organizers have now decided to address the underlying problem and have adopted a more ambitious mission: ending hunger in the United States. Advocacy and public efforts have become a larger part of the charity’s agenda, and the organization’s success will be judged by not only statistics on hunger but also by changes in public attitudes as expressed in opinion surveys.

A second option is to invest in research to determine whether the organization’s activities actually do help to mitigate the problems or to promote the benefits that the mission involves. JumpStart Coalition dedicated to improving the educational outcomes of poor children is a good example of this approach. A major problem of one of the federal education programs is that children leave at age
five still unprepared for school. Jump$tart developed a program to help the lowest achievers, at age four, improve their basic literacy skills. Statistical studies have clearly shown that Jump$tart graduates enter kindergarten better prepared than similar children who didn’t participate in the program, and also that its graduates have better educational outcomes throughout primary school. With the link between the organization’s program and mission firmly established, Jump$tart can now measure its success by the number of children in its programs.

The mission of the Girl Scouts is to help young girls reach their full potential as citizens. The Girl Scouts commissioned a large-scale study concluding that its members so indeed become more successful, responsible citizens than do women who hadn’t been Girl Scouts. The study defined “responsible citizens” by using proxies such as professional success, divorce rates, participation in civic life, as well as self-reported measures of satisfaction. It did not however control for the problem of selection bias: girls who signed up for Girl Scouts might have been successful even if they had not done so because of other reasons. It measures its success in achieving its mission by the number of children (particularly from historically underrepresented demographic groups) in its programs.

Nonprofits have a third option for measuring their success in achieving their mission: they can develop microlevel goals that, if achieved, would imply success on a grander scale. The Nature Conservancy can’t measure global diversity, but it can closely examine biodiversity in the areas it manages. So it has chosen to determine its success by gauging the success of its biodiversity health and threat-abatement efforts in the areas it protects. Both are easy to measure.

But what about organizations with more ambiguous and ambitious social goals? Preventing cancer and reducing the anguish and deaths from it are more difficult tasks. How can the American Cancer Society learn about its impact? The ACS reasoned that it does not matter who deserves credit for any decline in cancer rates. What does matter is that ACS should use its own resources in the most effective way. It has thus set specific goals: reducing cancer mortality rates by 50 per cent and the overall incidence of cancer by 25 percent as of 2015. Because empirical research shows that prevention, screening, and educational programs are highly effective in reducing both incidence and mortality from cancer, ACS has moved away from research and toward prevention and awareness programs.

With creativity and perseverance, nonprofit organizations can measure their success in achieving their mission — by defining the mission to make it quantifiable, by investing in research to show that specific methods work, or by developing concrete microlevel goals that imply success on larger scale.


WIDE ANGLE

ACCOUNTABILITY THROUGH TECHNOLOGY

Accountability in government became a catchphrase in public policy discourse and an issue on the public agenda in the early 1990s. The term raised expectations about government performance and consequently created interest in new automated management systems. CompStat – an abbreviation of Computer Statistics – is a computerized problem analysis and management program first developed by the New York Police Department in 1998. Originally designed to track crime-related data, the program appears broadly applicable to other organizations and processes.

The report, “Using Performance Data for Accountability,” by Paul E. O’Connell, shows the impact of daily performance data on the management and operations of the New York City Police Department and six other city agencies that include the City of Baltimore and the New Rochelle, New York, Police Department. This report describes NYPD’s daily precinct, borough, and city-wide data collection and distribution and details how the data motivates precincts to move from a focus on “writing tickets” to preventing crime. The report is aimed at helping government leaders better incorporate
performance and results-oriented data into their daily operations.

Although many organizations have developed performance data, all too often this information has not been effectively used by managers to improve and manage the performance of their organization. This report aims at providing organizations with action steps to move from thinking about results to producing results. Performance measurement isn’t a paper exercise; it’s a way to manage an organization to produce results and improve performance.

Methodology

Essentially, CompStat systematically collects, analyzes, and maps data as well as other essential performance indicators. These statistical measures then serve as a basis for evaluating management performance and assessing accountability, and for determining where and when resources should be deployed. CompStat facilitates four basic processes: producing accurate and timely intelligence; using indicators to identify problems and issues, and to shape effective strategies and tactics; determining where and when personnel and resources should be deployed; and providing measures for following-up on and assessing performance.

The program generates data maps that display data comparatively, showing an earlier and current period as well as trends over time. Decision-makers can then use the information to assess the impact and effectiveness of their strategies. Beyond the NYPD, CompStat has also been successfully implemented in other NYC government agencies, such as the Department of Corrections (TEAMS), Department of Parks and Recreation (ParkStat), and Human Resources Administration (JobStat).

Adapting the System to City Government

Baltimore is the first city to adopt CompStat, adapting and expanding it in a program dubbed “CitiStat.” The program is used to develop strategies and generate indicators weekly for measuring management performance and assessing accountability. The relatively short time frame-frame is intended to stimulate a more dynamic and proactive problem-solving approach. In Baltimore, agency and bureau heads have regular CitiStat meetings with high City officials. Prior to meetings, each agency submits data for an earlier period to a CitiStat team. The team analyzes the data and compares them to previous statistics; this enables the team to highlight potential problems and issues and offer possible explanations, and create presentations and reports. To verify data validity, the team employs critical analysis, and performs field investigations and random testing.

The Bottom Line

Modern technology and high-speed computers allow organizations to leverage data: to use statistical package programs like these to convert data into policy-oriented information. They make it possible to compile, sort, and analyze vast amounts of data, and display the results almost instantly. Nonetheless, these software programs are a tool, not a solution. They provide organizations interested in changing their accountability methods with an instrument for handling more data in different ways.

The report “Using Performance Data for Accountability” includes management advice on the development and implementation of cost-cutting performance plans and the development of performance measurement data.


BIBLIO

A Guide to Budget Work for NGOs

Editor: Isaac Shapiro
Publishers: Center on Budget and Policy Priorities

A Guide to Budget Work for NGOs is the second guide to applied budget work brought out by the staff of International Budget Project and the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities. The International Budget Project first published A Guide to Budget Work in 1999. As they began to revise the guide in early 2001, the need for a thorough revision was felt that

March 2002
reflected the rapid growth in budget work by NGOs. In recent years, many NGOs all over the world have begun to engage in budget work. These groups are writing general reviews of government budgets, they are trying to advance budget literacy through budget training and other educational efforts; they are seeking to make budget systems more transparent; and have particular concern with policies that affect the poor. NGOs seem to have realized that their ability to combat poverty or to strengthen democratic practices will be enhanced if they can understand budget analysis.

This guide relies on available experiences and attempts to pull together helpful guidelines to budget work into one document. It offers an overview of the different aspects of effective budget analysis, with an emphasis on the activities and approaches a non-governmental organization might want to undertake. The guide is intended for groups or individuals that have a new or relatively new interest in budget work. But it could also be of interest to organizations that have been engaged in budget work for some time and are in a review of the basic principles of this work, examples of useful resources, and best practices.

For more information:
Center on Budget and Policy Priorities
820 First Street, NE, Suite 510
Washington, DC 20002
www.internationalbudget.org

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**New Release!!**

**Holding the state to account: Citizen monitoring in action**

*Author: SAMUEL PAUL*

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In most of the developing world, the State continues to be the dominant provider and regulator of the essential public services needed by the citizens. But if the State fails to deliver, can civil society do anything at all to improve its quality of governance? This book probes and explores this issue by narrating an account of a pioneering civil society initiative in Bangalore, a large city in India, that took up this challenge through the innovative citizen monitoring mechanism of “report cards on public services”. The citizen feedback thus generated became a powerful means to nudge the State to respond to the problems of the people. This experiment has found effective resonance among both civil society activists and administrators. The key lessons of this endeavour are relevant to citizens and governments everywhere.

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**Key issues addressed in the book**

- Why are India’s public services unsatisfactory?
- Why should civil society play a proactive role when the state remains unresponsive to its citizens?
- How can citizen feedback on public services be used to improve the quality of a country’s governance?

**New insights from the book**

- The Bangalore experiment shows that it is easier to improve public service efficiency than to control corruption in services. Corruption control will entail a long term struggle.
- The poor seems to pay a larger proportion of their income as bribes than the rest of the population.
- Monitoring of services by government tends to be a neglected function. Citizen monitoring can-in part-fill this gap and exert pressure for better governance.
- The Bangalore experiment demystifies the technology of surveys and citizen feedback and brings it within the reach of civil society institutions.
- “What is measured, gets done”. Though the impact of state-civil society dialogues is unpredictable, quantification and benchmarking of services through the use of
Combating Corruption in Asia Pacific

The third annual conference of the ADB/OECD Anti-Corruption Initiative for Asia-Pacific put in place a framework for effectively combating corruption by identifying appropriate political, institutional, and other reforms necessary for the various participating countries. At its conclusion, seventeen Asian and Pacific governments endorsed a regional Anti-Corruption Action Plan. The plan provides for a comprehensive set of actions which governments will take to develop effective and transparent systems for public service; strengthen anti-bribery actions and promote integrity in business operations; and support active public involvement. Efforts for such a regional action plan have their roots in the joint ADB/OECD initiative launched in 1999 to address bribery and other unethical behavior in Asia and the Pacific. Studies have shown that corruption can cost up to 17 percent of a country’s gross domestic product, robbing the population of resources for development work. Signatories included representatives from Bangladesh, the Cook Islands, Fiji, India, Indonesia, Japan, Korea, the Kyrgyz Republic, Malaysia, Mongolia, Nepal, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, the Philippines, Samoa, Singapore, and Vanuatu. Together with other international agencies, the private sector and civil society, ADB and OECD will support countries in the implementation of the action plan. Under the action plan, governments choose from a menu of anti-corruption actions that meet their particular needs. Possible actions to be taken include the adoption of public sector auditing practices and legislation with dissuasive sanctions against the bribery of public officials, the establishment of transparent procedures for public procurement that promote fair competition, the creation of public sector recruiting systems that assure openness, equity and efficiency, and the promotion of the recruitment of individuals of the highest levels of competence and integrity. The action plan foresees a prominent role for NGOs and the private sector in raising public awareness and encouraging reform in cooperation with governments.

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