

# Open information policy

## Preamble

1. ActionAid (AA) believes that timely free flow of information in accessible language, form and format is essential for ensuring accountability, learning, trust and good performance.
2. This policy is guided by AA's commitment to transparency and to sharing of information primarily with relevant stakeholders: beneficiaries, donors, partners, board, staff and host governments.
3. The purpose of this policy is to guide staff for open sharing of information. Another purpose is to inform people outside AA what they can expect or demand, in terms of information.
4. This policy describes how and what minimum information AA will share proactively with the general public.

## Information AA shares freely and openly

The following information will be shared freely, openly and proactively on the website (unless stated differently):

### **Fundamentals**

AA's vision, mission, values, goals and objectives, strategy, legal registration and status and registered office address.

### **Governance & Key Functionaries**

Names and brief biographies of members of the Board of Trustees and Executive Director.

### **Organizational policies**

Key decision making process, in terms of who makes the decision for Trustee appointment, strategies, plans and budget approval. Current organizational reviews, policies, procedures manuals/documents can be sent on request

### **Strategies:**

Strategies both of AA and ActionAid International, including financial information pertaining to key cost centres.

### **Performance**

Current account of lessons, achievements, success, failures, constraints, innovations, review reports and audit statements at least on an annual basis.

### **Staff**

Number of staff and gender.

### **Funds and finance**

Types, proportion and absolute figures of income; sources of income, expenditure by categories and heads; planned and actual cost ratio for staff cost, support cost, project cost, fundraising cost, administration cost; funding structure; types and location of fund investments; fundraising methods and products.

### **Relationships**

Key relationships in terms of people we work with, who our beneficiaries are, who our partners are, which networks, coalitions, and alliances we belong to and work with, who do we receive money from, where do we invest our money, who are our bankers, auditors.

### **Issue-based positions**

Our guiding thinking, positions and proposals on issues related to our mission, objectives and strategies, particularly those related to active advocacy work.

## **Grievances**

Guiding and decision making policies and procedures related to how we receive and deal with grievances and how we receive feedback and comments from within and outside.

## **Feedback**

A periodic presentation of our stakeholders' views of us and our performance through annual reports.

## **Ways and means of sharing information**

- All information shared will be timely. Information shared will be dated to indicate the timeliness.
- The AA website will be the main venue for sharing the information mentioned above proactively to wider range of audience. AA, within the limits of its resources, will also send information as requested (as per this policy) in electronic or printed form to an authentic address of the person or the organisation requesting information.
- Anonymous requests for information may not be responded to.

## **Confidentiality**

AA shall not disclose the following kinds of information:

- Personal details of staff: address, family details, income, property, sexual orientation, illness and similar information.
- Intellectual property or other information which has been disclosed or provided to AA under any obligation of confidentiality or which is subject to legal disclosure restrictions unless consent of such disclosure has been obtained from the owner of such intellectual property.
- Legal advice and matters in dispute or under negotiation including disciplinary and investigative information.
- Information dealing entirely with internal administration or operating systems which has no direct effect outside the organisation, or internal documents written by staff to their colleagues, supervisors or subordinates, unless those documents are intended for public circulation.
- Fundraising information, sharing of which will jeopardise AA's competitiveness in fundraising capacity.
- It is only in exceptional cases and circumstances that AA can temporarily suspend part or whole of this policy. Such suspension will require approval from the Executive Director.
- In unusual situations (e.g., war, insurgency) of insecurity, threat and vulnerability to the organisation, staff or partners. AA may choose not to share any or selected information for a specified period.

Update July 2011