

From: Chitta Behera <chittabehera1@yahoo.co.in>
To: oregs-watch@googlegroups.com
Sent: Wed, 19 September, 2007 8:08:03 PM
Subject: [OREGS Watch] Re: Rules and Manuals of Social Audit

Dear Raju,

I saw the attachment to your mail that contained inter alia MKSS design of social audit forum. The part of it dealing with social audit forum is almost completely a reproduction from the Chapter-11 of Operational Guidelines for NREGA published long before by the Ministry of Rural Development. Of course, there is one difference between the two, while the Guidelines prescribe both social audit as a continuous process and half-yearly social audit forum, the MKSS document leaves out the social audit process and focusses on social audit forum only, and that too downsizing its original version in the Guidelines. But as you know, both social audit process and social audit forum are important. One runs all through the year, while the other is a half-yearly event only.

My second concern- while never bilittling the importance of MKSS document, we must understand that Operational Guidelines is a legal document enforceable and acceptable by every official, while the MKSS document is not. One can take to task any official for the violation of the Guidelines but not for that of the MKSS document. The latter therefore may serve as a brief reading material for the campaign activists, but it can't serve as a substitute for the Operational Guidelines in the matter of setting aright things where they have gone wrong.

Above all, the 4 key chapters of Operational Guidelines including the Chapter 10 (Public Vigilance) and Chapter 11(Social Audit) have already been translated into Oriya and a compilation of them published by Orissa Shram Adhikar Abhijan. It can work as an authoritative handbook not only for the campaign activists but also for the officials who are willing to implement the Act as per the letter of the law.

This is just a suggestion from me in response to your mail.

Regards,
Chitta Behera