

## **Volunteer Evaluation Programme: Audit Report Form & Notes**

### **What is the Volunteer Evaluation Programme?**

The Volunteer Evaluation Programme (VEP) is designed to help GlobalGiving UK understand selected partners in as much detail as possible. This is done through an in-depth organisational assessment carried out by trained, skilled individuals. In doing so a comprehensive audit report is produced which highlights areas of the organisation's existing strengths as well as key areas for potential improvements. This enables GlobalGiving UK to strengthen the relationship with their partners and learn how to best support them in the future. GlobalGiving UK is able to provide partners with access to expert training on an extensive range of topics through various platforms, which include GlobalGivingTime, GlobalGiving's Peer Learning Network and the VEP itself. GlobalGiving UK also uses VEP reports alongside other information in making recommendations to foundations and companies when new funding opportunities emerge for its partners.

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<b>Organisation Name &amp; ID</b>	<b>Apne App Women's Collective #16739</b>
<b>Relevant Project Names &amp; IDs</b>	<b>Empower 100 girls in Asia's largest red light area #15473</b>
<b>Visit Dates</b>	<b>14<sup>st</sup> to 17<sup>th</sup> July 2014</b>
<b>Report Date</b>	<b>18<sup>th</sup> July 2014</b>

## 1. Executive Summary

It was a privilege to be involved with Apne Aap Women's Collective (AAWC). They are a truly excellent organisation, whose mission is to ensure a better life for women and children in red light areas. We would feel very confident recommending Apne Aap to anyone, and feel many NGOs could learn a great deal from the impressive example AAWC sets. Their work has had an incredibly positive impact on the community, largely due to the exceptional strengths of the organisation in feedback and development. Apne Aap are always proactively monitoring and evaluating the impact their work is having, by encouraging staff, volunteers, beneficiaries and outsiders to share their comments and suggestions. In this way Apne Aap remains strongly mission focused and has been able to develop extremely innovative programmes. One major challenge Apne Aap faces is staff retention. Despite having a very robust system of staff training and support, many employees are unable to deal with the emotional difficulties associated with working in a red light district. It appears that the problem is inherent to the field, and as such there seems to be little that Apne Aap could do to overcome this, which they haven't already attempted. From our visit we have four main recommendations for Apne Aap's future development. (Please also see section 13 'Summary of Key Recommendations')

- **The first is to develop a comprehensive development strategy, to guide the future growth of Apne Aap in a sustainable way.**
- **The second is to create a fundraising strategy, to help generate the monetary resources required to implement the strategic plan.**
- **Thirdly, we would suggest they improve their database, making it more detailed, as this should help improve the effectiveness of communications and fundraising efforts.**
- **Finally, we would recommend that Apne Aap take greater advantage of social media, which should enable them to increase their networks, reach and influence, hopefully leading to greater support and funds.**

By implementing these four changes Apne Aap should be able to maximise the positive impact they are making, both now and sustainably for the future.

## 2. The Organisation's Story

Apne Aap Women's Collective was founded in 1998 with the aim of helping the vulnerable women of Kamathipura, Mumbai (Asia's largest and oldest red light area). Through their work they recognised the difficulties of helping women who already had strong ties to prostitution, and often debts and addictions. Apne Aap realised that the daughters of prostitutes were at extreme risk of following in their mother's footsteps, and thus launched both their Udaan (girls aged 5-18) and Umang (children aged 2½-5) projects, to break the intergenerational cycle of prostitution and trafficking. The Umeed programme works with adult women working as prostitutes in the red light area. All three programmes run at each of their two centres and are supported by dedicated outreach workers. The Umeed programme gives women employed in the red light industry access to services such as bank accounts, food rations and identity documents, as well as psychological support. Adult literacy classes in both Hindi and English and vocational skills training such as tailoring and computer classes are also available. The girls in the Udaan programme are given after-school tuition and personal skills development opportunities such as computer literacy and art. The toddlers in the Umang programme have a full educational programme including fun e-learning, and receive nutritious food. A night shelter also operates for Umang and Udaan girls who would otherwise be at especially high risk at home. The beneficiaries in all the programmes are also given medical care, including monthly checkups. Apne Aap are constantly listening to feedback from their beneficiaries to fully understand the complexity of the issues faced in the community so that their programmes can best address them. Their extensive data collection, and recent appointment of a research officer, proves their dedication to achieving this. To date they have helped over 2,500 women and children, by providing them with the tools they need to build a better life for themselves and their children. Apne Aap alumni have entered respected professions in society such as accounting, dance, cuisine, nursing, teaching and social work. At Apne Aap the door is always open to past members to help them in any way possible, ranging from college admissions to job placements and career advice. This success is largely due to their incredibly committed and talented team of staff and volunteers who all strive to go above and beyond to achieve Apne Aap's overriding mission of improving the lives of women and children in red light areas.

## 3. Governance & Accountability

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The governance and accountability of Apne Aap is excellent and reflects their constant desire to improve their practices. The clear organizational structure includes 7 board members, 5 of whom are extremely active in the day to day running of the organisation and in all important decisions. The President of the board, Ashika, visits every 2-3 days, and both

Sudarshan (the founder) and Girish visit weekly. Meetings are held by the board approximately every 2 months (more than required by law), where they receive an update from Manju (the CEO) and discuss key challenges and future plans. All decisions are passed by majority ruling, though this is generally an informal process rather than a vote. Sometimes other staff are invited to board meetings if they are discussing an issue pertaining to their work. The board is also actively involved in Apne Aap's success by setting annual targets to help lead its development. These targets are formally reviewed bi-annually, though progress is constantly assessed through more regular informal reviews. It is clear that the vision of the board and executive are aligned and that all members are united.

Board members historically have been appointed on an ad hoc basis, through friends and past volunteers, but recently they have sought board members to bring in specific skills needed. For example, Girish is a chartered accountant, and other board members have extensive expertise in business and in running NGOs. Each board member is specifically responsible for one area (HR, fundraising, accounts etc), which allows them to give specific help to areas of the organisation where their skills lie. Due to the level of devotion trustees are expected to give to Apne Aap, recruiting new trustees with the required skills and the necessary time and passion has proved a challenge. This is why trustees have so far been recruited through personal and professional connections of the CEO and board. Recognising the value of skilled trustee members as advisors to Apne Aap, they are currently trying to source a lawyer and medic to share their expertise, which we agree would be valuable additions to the board. Legally the term of trustees is set at three years, although in practice most serve much longer terms, until they retire due to ill health or old age. The presidency generally rotates every 3 years.

One major strength of Apne Aap is that they are constantly striving to improve and willing to learn. This is demonstrated by the ongoing review of their HR policies, which most notably is trying to make power more decentralized and allow greater access of all staff to the board. Informally the staff and beneficiaries have access to board members on their weekly visits to the centre, and the relationship between staff and trustees appears to be very open. As an extension of this, under the new HR policy, all staff members may confidentially report any concerns or questions directly to the president of the board, without any other staff involvement, and this will be acted upon by the board. Ashika informed us that they are one of only 6 Indian NGOs with a whistleblower policy, and this demonstrates Apne Aap's desire to be completely transparent in all of their work. It also shows the confidence they have in their staff at all levels of the organisation. The board recognizes that staff working on the ground will often have the best insights into the work they do, and therefore their input is extremely valued. The decentralization of power is also impressive as it allows all staff to feel ownership of their work. All staff are empowered to make decisions directly related to their own role without everything passing through senior management, but then transparent reporting of all decisions made occurs in weekly and monthly staff meetings where key challenges and achievements are discussed.

Overall the governance and accountability of Apne Aap is excellent, and a fantastic example of how NGOs can integrate the board with staff and beneficiaries, and utilize their skills to their full potential. In particular, their desire to constantly evaluate and improve their work is very impressive. One recommendation we have is for AAWC to extend this openness and transparency to the AGM (or a separate similar annual meeting), by making this open to all staff and beneficiaries so that Apne Aap can once again show its members how much they value their feedback. The only other area in which improvement could be made is recruitment of new trustees from a wider circle, meaning that increased board turnover could be achieved and new skills brought in to help Apne Aap further their goals. This could be achieved by advertising these roles on their website and in their newsletter, and by formally appointing positions following a year's membership to ensure the dedication of potential new trustees, so that the board remains an active contingent.

## 4. Finance & Administration

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Apne Aap has very strong financial practices overall. They use the latest version of Tally Accounting Software, ERP 9, and have a dedicated full time accountant and a Chartered Accountant trustee who is actively involved in Apne Aap, visiting at least once per week. AAWC was very open about their finances and willing to show us any documentation we requested without hesitation; such as audited annual accounts, budgets and examples of individual recorded expenditure receipts. This transparency extends to the public, with the previous year's audited accounts displayed on their website. They avoid making cash payments, but where necessary all petty cash purchases, no matter what their value, are all diligently recorded and filed with receipts.

Budgeting responsibilities are delegated, with each programme manager being responsible for their own costs, meaning they can make any modifications from the last period's budget as necessary. The overall budget is then approved; first by the CEO and then by the board, who sign it. Finances are reviewed on a monthly basis through the Management Information System. This occurs via a three-tier process, with the initial review being completed by Apne Aap's

accountant, then by the CEO then by the trustees. In this way Apne Aap ensures expenditure stays in line with the budget.

For the financial year ending 31<sup>st</sup> March 2013 Apne Aap's income was 4,430,046 rupees and their expenditure was 4,099,908 rupees. 18% of income was generated from interest payments (interest rates were around 8.5-9%) and the remainder was from donations. 66% of these donations were from trusts, 26% were from individuals and 8% were from corporates. No single source of funding accounted for greater than 13% of total donations. In terms of expenditure, 15% of costs were establishment or operating expenses, 79% were programme costs and the remaining 6% was largely due to depreciation.

Given the highly vulnerable situation their beneficiaries are in, Apne Aap views their financial stability as of upmost importance, so that they can continue to provide the services they offer for the community they support. They guarantee financial sustainability using a variety of methods. Firstly, they ensure their incomings are greater than their outgoings each year in line with their surplus policy. Secondly, their income increases year on year as they actively seek new fundraising opportunities. Thirdly, no funding source makes up more than 13% of their overall income, meaning they do not rely too heavily on any individual source. Lastly they only consider scaling up their operations (by starting new programmes, opening new centers or making other investments) if additional funding had been secured in advance. As a result, Apne Aap have two years operating reserves, safeguarding the sustainability of their life-changing work for the future.

Until a month ago the CEO and Chair of the board of directors were in charge of fundraising. However, recognising how fundamentally important fundraising is, they have recently appointed a dedicated fundraising and communications officer. Apne Aap have wanted such an employee for the last three years, but until this year did not have the financial capacity to appoint one.

An area in which Apne Aap are keen to develop is creating a detailed fundraising strategy as a matter of priority. This will outline the key fundraising targets for the coming years, and what specific activities will be planned throughout the year to achieve these targets. This coordinated approach to fundraising will help them to further increase their income and diversity their funding sources. In particular, we strongly feel that Apne Aap have the organizational capacity to successfully manage larger funds, so we would suggest that they try to increase their corporate funding. One way in which this can be achieved is to take advantage of the new CSR law in India, by thoroughly researching and approaching organisations whose values align with those of Apne Aap, and turning their staff into volunteers and long term advocates of their cause. Apne Aap are also keen to increase their income from international individual donors. We discussed strategies to achieve this; such as tying in campaigns with GG bonus and match days, and wider events like #GivingTuesday or End Child Slavery Week, as well as engaging in Peer-to-Peer fundraising (which Apne Aap already successfully do locally through the Mumbai Marathon). This comprehensive fundraising strategy could help Apne Aap better plan for the future and ensure financial growth and sustainability. This could allow their excellent programmes to be developed yet further, new programmes to be added or money to be saved towards the purchase of premises, which would ensure long term security for their beneficiaries. It would be advantageous to formally agree on the relative importance of future funding priorities, so that if their financial capacity increases there will be consistent thinking on the best allocation of such funds. Apne Aap have excellent ideas for the future (such as mobile vans to provide existing services to the increasingly scattered red light community, and nutrition programmes to tackle maternal and infant malnourishment), so it could be helpful to determine in advance which goals will be given priority, and which funding sources they aim to target to achieve these goals. Additionally, we would suggest that Apne Aap create a formal operating reserves policy.

## 5. Use of technology

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Apne Aap are using technology to enhance their work in many ways. Staff are given intensive, week-long training on the use of the relevant software and systems that Apne Aap uses. These include, Microsoft Office 7, Tally ERP 9, Mailchimp and Google Drive. They also have a few email accounts, such as finances@aawc.in, that forward mail onto all relevant employees, ensuring everyone is kept in the loop. A new system for reports and newsletters, whereby all project leaders submit their sections to a shared Google Drive, has made the process much more efficient. They also recognize the importance of technology in the lives of their beneficiaries, by offering computer literacy classes to both Umeed and Udaan participants. Technology is also incorporated into the Umang programme by using Muktangan's e-learning programme as part of their educational syllabus. As part of this collaboration Muktangan, also a local NGO, provides a new series every six months, and tests children on the last one, as well as training teachers, all free of charge. Apne Aap also uses Google Ad Grants, Google Alerts and Google Groups.

The use of technology is an area in which Apne Aap are keen to improve. In particular we discussed the ways in which their database could be developed by adding more information about donors and past volunteers, to allow them to tailor their communications, and therefore fundraising efforts, more effectively to the relevant groups. This can be complemented by making use of Google analytics to understand, for example, what proportion of their views come from each country, and how viewer profiles differ shortly after each campaign or newsletter. We also discussed the importance of using social media (particularly Facebook, Twitter and Linked In) to their full potential to further spread the word of the excellent work Apne Aap is doing. In addition, we ran a training session on GlobalGiving's system, with particular emphasis on the analytics section, for the Chair of the Board, CEO, Fundraising and Communications Officer and the Programmes Manager.

## 6. Communications

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Apne Aap's communications are excellent, both internally and externally. Their website, managed pro bono by a company linked to an Apne Aap trustee, is very informative, up to date and user friendly. Importantly, it is also consistent in style and message with other modes of communication, and visually appealing. The website makes clear the ways in which people can get involved; from donating (with easy links to donating through GlobalGiving and GGUK), to volunteering or running for them in the Mumbai Marathon or partnering with them as an NGO or corporate. We were particularly impressed with the clear infographics that form part of their quarterly newsletters and annual reports, as these present a lot of statistical information in attractive and easily-understandable ways. Their project page on GlobalGiving is another example of their strong communication: it clearly presents the problems their community faces and specifically how Apne Aap is working to address this. We discussed ways in which the project page could be made stronger, in particular by reducing the number of donation options and photographs, and were impressed that these changes were made overnight. This not only demonstrates Apne Aap's commitment to raising more funds from individual international donors, but also how they always strive to take on feedback to improve as an organisation. Despite not being able to show the faces of any beneficiaries, in order to protect their identities given the sensitive nature of their work, Apne Aap still uses photographs very effectively to tell the story of the work they do. We discussed strengthening their case studies even further by using photographs and first talking about the experiences of one girl, before zooming out to show how many other girls are in similar positions and what Apne Aap is doing to help them.

In order to extend the reach of their excellent communications we would suggest they take advantage of social media platforms, where they are currently less active, and incorporate them into their wider communications strategy. Apne Aap does currently use Facebook, but with the appointment of the new Fundraising and Communications Officer they should be able to utilise this platform more actively, as a means to reach out to both new and existing contacts to increase organizational awareness and fundraising efforts. In particular we discussed the benefit of becoming 'thought leaders' in their sector by posting research, new laws or major events pertaining to prostitution or trafficking, and interspersing this content with calls to action (whether volunteering, sharing or donating). Although the majority of this work will be done by the Fundraising and Communications officer, we would encourage all staff to share with her interesting content they read, and any small case studies or success stories they come across in their day to day work. This will make Apne Aap's Facebook page a regular destination for interested parties as content stays fresh, relevant and engaging. It is testament to their desire to improve in this area that some Facebook suggestions we made on day one were already being implemented by the time we left. As the Fundraising and Communications officer develops in her role we would strongly recommend also engaging on Twitter, as this will reach out to a different audience and allow Apne Aap to be involved with trending relevant hashtags such as #GivingTuesday, and to link tweets with other NGOs and GlobalGiving to reach out to their networks.

Another strength of Apne Aap's communications is that they send thank yous to the vast majority of their donors, which helps to increase the number making repeat donations. Always striving to better themselves, Apne Aap are asking for help on GlobalGiving Time for how to embed videos into their thank you letters to ensure donors feel personally thanked and engaged with Apne Aap. As evidenced throughout this report, Apne Aap's internal communications are also excellent.

## 7. Innovation & Flexibility

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Innovation is at the heart of Apne Aap, and they are constantly striving to find new ways to help the community. An example of this is that all other NGOs in the red light area of Mumbai were working to help boys, but none were addressing the more challenging but pressing problems of the women working in brothels, which is why Apne Aap therefore chose to focus on this area. They never want to replicate a service that is being offered elsewhere to a good



standard. One example of their innovative thinking is that Apne Aap recognized the need for local police to better understand the problems facing young people in red light areas, and therefore offered training to police in handling cases with children from these communities. They also recognize the lack of up to date information on red light communities, and therefore plan to collaborate with an education institute to collect this data and disseminate it widely to be used by other NGOs.

Apne Aap has an incredibly flexible and responsive approach to their work, ensuring they continue to be mission led. New projects are decided based on beneficiary and staff feedback about the changing needs of the community. For example, Apne Aap was initially only working with women in brothels, but observed that the most vulnerable group was their young daughters who were in danger of being trapped into the intergenerational cycle of prostitution. It was based upon this that their Udaan project was developed. Programmes are never set in stone, and regular meetings allow the Udaan girls some control over developing their programme for the next month. In weekly staff meetings, staff are encouraged to put forward any ideas about how Apne Aap could be improving their programmes, and with such a dedicated and close-knit team changes can rapidly be made to accommodate these suggestions. Although flexibility in programme design is very important in allowing Apne Aap to adapt to the fast changing needs of the community, we also recommend that a more formal future development strategy in place. This would include the ways in which Apne Aap hopes to expand in the coming years, both in terms of existing and new projects. Future plans mentioned include the acquisition of a permanent base to ensure sustainability and the implementation of the mother and infant nutrition programme, as well as possibly mobile centres to respond to the increasing decentralization of red light areas in Mumbai. The formalization of these ideas in a strategy will ensure all staff and trustees are on the same page and working towards common future goals, and will demonstrate sustainability and clear development plans to potential donors. The development strategy should also predict costs for each future goal, which will help to inform the fundraising strategy and allow targeted fundraising campaigns to raise money for each item.

## **8. Networking & Collaboration**

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Collaboration with other NGOs is a central part of Apne Aap's strategy. This ethos is summarised by the view expressed by Manju that if they do not collaborate with other NGOs they are letting down their beneficiaries by not ensuring there is the strongest support network possible available to them. To this end Manju herself proactively provides free advice to other NGOs to ensure they have all the documentation required by law and 'best practice'. Apne Aap works closely with over 50 partners to ensure the health services, education and workshop opportunities Apne Aap provides are as beneficial as possible. In addition to this, Apne Aap also works with NGOs that support individuals outside the scope of their own work, for example, projects that help boys living in the slums, or that provide job placements and training for girls over 18. This ensures girls leaving Apne Aap's programmes continue to receive support from other NGOs. Apne Aap themselves also continue to do their utmost to support girls once they reach 18 and leave their formal Udaan programme by helping them with college applications and allowing them to use Apne Aap's centre's as a safe place to study. They also work with an extensive network of boarding homes to place children most at risk outside of the red light area. Before any child under Apne Aap's care is sent to a boarding home a thorough assessment of the NGO and a visit is undertaken, and then monthly visits are also made to check on the wellbeing of the child. It is particularly commendable that Apne Aap has such an open attitude towards collaboration considering they have experienced many other NGOs refusing to collaborate with (and at times actively sabotaging) them in Apne Aap's early days. The strong network Apne Aap has built makes their work even stronger, and helps them refer beneficiaries to other programmes when they are unable to help them themselves.

## **9. Development of staff and volunteers**

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Development of staff and volunteers is both one of the key strengths and key challenges of Apne Aap. Through extensive discussion it is clear that Apne Aap does everything possible to support its staff both emotionally and professionally, and develops their skills through extensive training. Most staff are graduates of social work degrees, actively recruited by Apne Aap from top colleges in Mumbai, and they undergo written tests and interviews, as well as having a 6 month probation period. During this period they are given 6 months of training, mainly from external parties, ranging from computer literacy to informal counselling to help process the emotional turmoil of working with vulnerable people. Through frequent support meetings, new and established staff are asked which training they wish to receive: an example of this is that staff recently requested to learn more about HIV (as this affects many of their beneficiaries), so next week an expert is coming to teach staff about the detection, symptoms and treatment of HIV and AIDS. All staff are given the HR policy and the programme manuals from all programmes, all of which they are subsequently tested on. This, along

with the extensive training and support ensures all staff are of very high quality and truly dedicated to achieving Apne Aap's mission, meaning all staff are united in making the programmes as impactful as possible.

All staff have clear roles and responsibilities and are encouraged to share their views with the whole team, both informally day to day and at the weekly and monthly staff meetings. At Apne Aap the opinions of staff and volunteers at all levels are valued and their ideas implemented, leading several to comment that they felt part of a 'family'. It was clear through conversations with the staff that they feel empowered and supported. The 'staff of the month' chart, present on the office wall, also shows that their contributions are clearly recognised. Apne Aap are always trying to improve their staff development practices, demonstrated by the current review of the HR policy. All staff receive formal biannual reviews, with targets determined together for the next six months. The CEO also receives these targets in a biannual review with the President of the board. In addition, informal reviews occur on a daily basis, due to the nature of Apne Aap's work.

Volunteers are recruited mainly internationally, but also from the Mumbai community. They used Atma to recruit volunteers for 3 years, but now only advertise positions through their website, as this generates sufficient applicants. Local volunteers volunteer a time period each week, generally to run sessions with the Udaan girls, such as art and dance. The girls love these sessions and really benefit from a strong network of volunteers. International volunteers similarly run sessions with the girls for continuous periods. Apne Aap encourages all volunteers to come for more than 3 months to make it worthwhile training volunteers fully. Flexibility exists however, so that Apne Aap can benefit from experts who are willing to volunteer but only able to devote smaller periods of time. In the past they have experienced resistance from volunteers to do any admin work in the office, but feel this could be extremely useful for the organisation. In future Apne Aap will try to attract international interns from Universities who are happy to volunteer their skills in communication and fundraising for at least a 3 month period. This will help to reduce the pressure on Saswithi, the fundraising and communications director. The major challenge with volunteers is that although, like staff, they have all read, signed and been tested on child protection and photography policies (as part of the wider HR policy) some have secretly attempted to violate these rules. Apne Aap has therefore been forced to immediately remove such individuals from working at the organisation, to rightly uphold their policies, but which has unfortunately meant wasted training time and a loss of skills.

A major challenge for Apne Aap is staff retention. Although asked to commit to 3 years, many staff leave within the 6 month training period, and most within a year of joining. In most cases staff receive a pay check and then disappear, without informing anyone of their resignation. This is extremely frustrating as resources are wasted on recruitment and training. The reasons for this stem from the stigma and emotional difficulty of working in a red light area. Many staff experience pressure to leave from friends and family worried about their safety or reputation, and others cannot cope with seeing the horrific conditions some of the beneficiaries are found in. Apne Aap have tried multiple strategies to improve retention, using the ideas of all team members, including having family and friends invited to see the centre and speak to the CEO about their concerns, regular emotional counselling, increased holidays and benefits after working for a year (from 10 paid days leave in first year, to 20 in the second year and 30 in the third), and conducting exit interviews with all staff to understand their reasons for leaving. Sadly none of these approaches have successfully increased retention rates thus far, indicating perhaps that this problem is an unavoidable symptom of the work they are doing. We recommend reaching out to organisations working in the same field to understand whether they share this problem and how they have developed strategies to retain staff. It is important to recognise that although this is a major challenge, we believe Apne Aap are currently doing all they can think of to address it, and showing best practice in many areas of staff and volunteer development.

## 10. Inclusion & Access

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Apne Aap is a very inclusive organisation, both internally and towards their beneficiaries. As mentioned, all staff and trustees are encouraged to contribute towards decisions for the future of Apne Aap, and everyone's opinion is valued. Due to the sensitive nature of their work it is not possible to have male staff members in roles with direct contact with the young girls and women they work with, although in the past men have worked in roles such as fundraising and communications. Similarly, Apne Aap found that when boys were included in the Udaan programme, mothers were not as comfortable sending their daughters to the centre, and there were even incidences of brothel owners sending their sons to recruit girls. As a result Apne Aap adopted a strategy of only including girls in Udaan, referring boys to other NGOs working in the area. In this way, although Apne Aap cannot help everyone themselves, they ensure that no one in the community is denied access to help from one organisation. Apne Aap identified however that there were no others offering help to boys under 5 years old, and therefore have included boys in their toddler programme. Apne Aap are so adamant that there should be no discrimination in their organisation that all applicants are given a specific hypothetical

scenario to see if they have any discriminatory tendencies as part of the interview process, something we found very impressive. All of the staff are highly open, tolerant individuals which is key to building the trust of the beneficiaries. Apne Aap also has a policy on HIV whereby staff in direct contact with beneficiaries day to day are aware of their HIV status (so that their health can be carefully monitored), but other beneficiaries and the wider staff are not informed to avoid any kind of discrimination or stigma.

## 11. Environment & Well-Being

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Apne Aap recognise that although environmental conservation is not the primary focus of their work, it is an important part of their ethos. To this end Apne Aap sell bottles and tins on for recycling and minimise the use of electricity by switching off lights and wifi when not in use. They also reduce paper waste by only printing when necessary, and using the blank back of pages that have already been printed on. Food waste is kept to a minimum by giving each child a small initial portion and offering multiple opportunities to have more, ensuring no food is left on a plate. Any excess food is stored in the fridge and used the next day. The Udaan girls are also taught about the environment as part of their curriculum. Umeed women are taught how to dispose of condoms and sanitary products in an environmentally friendly way.

The wellbeing of the staff is of primary importance to Apne Aap, and from talking to the staff it is clear that they all feel extremely well supported. Regular counselling is available to the beneficiaries should they need it, and informal emotional support is given frequently by senior management to staff.

## 12. Delivery & Impact

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Apne Aap has extremely robust and all-encompassing monitoring and evaluation processes. Both qualitative and quantitative data is regularly collected, though more emphasis is placed on qualitative measurements because this feedback allows beneficiaries to feed into development of the programmes for the future. Outreach officers document their visits to women in the red light area daily, which is extremely important because some beneficiaries will drop into the office unannounced and upset and therefore all staff need to be able to access the most up to date information on their lives to assist them properly. Attendance of all children is also monitored daily, and if a child does not attend for even just one day an outreach worker will visit her home to check she is safe and bring her to the centre. Each month a report is prepared on each Udaan and Umang child (including their education, health and social development) and shared with the mother. Older girls are encouraged to contribute to the report through self-assessment, and are also encouraged to suggest improvements and targets for the next month. Udaan girls also create committees and assign jobs between themselves to run events, and then monitor their successes and failures.

Apne Aap has recently hired a Research Officer so that they can expand both the monitoring of their own programmes and also collect data regarding the wider community. They hope to share the results of these analyses widely to improve the services of all NGOs working in red light areas. Another study, which they aim to conduct in the future, is a study of maternal and prenatal health of women in the red light community. They propose comparing a group of women given nutritional meals and supplements during 3 months of pregnancy with those who eat their usual diets. The design of this study demonstrates that Apne Aap understand the importance of establishing a baseline and having control groups during evaluation. This must be balanced by their desire to help the community, meaning that after 3 months all will have access to the nutrition. At Apne Aap monitoring and evaluation is in the minds of all staff day to day, as evidenced by the fact that many staff have copies of data to be collected and who is responsible above their desks.

The impact that Apne Aap is having is clear. Since 1998 they have helped over 2,800 women and children, having a huge impact on their families and the wider community. Apne Aap are in contact with over 90% of their past Udaan members, none of whom have entered into prostitution (despite being in the most vulnerable section of society) thus achieving Apne Aap's primary aim of breaking the intergenerational cycle of prostitution. It is therefore clear that Apne Aap's work is creating successful impact in both the short and long term. It is unsurprising that their work has been recognized by many prestigious awards, including winning the Jury's Choice Award, out of over 200 applicants, at the Americares India Foundation's Spirit of Humanity Awards (2014) and being a finalist for MATCH International Women's Fund (2014).



## 13. Summary of Key Recommendations:

### **Governance and Accountability:**

- Open the AGM (or part of it) to beneficiaries and the public, or create another formal annual meeting with trustees and staff present for such individuals.
- Actively advertise for trustees to recruit from a wider circle.

### **Finance and Administration:**

- Develop a comprehensive fundraising strategy.
- Develop a comprehensive development strategy and financial policy, which outlines and prioritises long term strategic aims to guide future growth.
- Diversify funding by increasing corporate funding (especially by targeting Indian businesses in light of the new CSR law) and by increasing individual funding (especially by taking greater advantage of online and social media platform to develop and run campaigns).
- Develop a formal reserves policy.

### **Use of Technology:**

- Develop a more detailed database to create a stronger base for tailored communications and fundraising.

### **Communications:**

- Take greater advantage of social media, for increasing awareness, networking and fundraising. Start using twitter as part of this.

### **Development of Staff and Volunteers:**

- Make increased use of intentional volunteers by developing structured and specific internship opportunities aimed at highly skilled individuals at leading European and US universities who can assist AAWC on the administrative side of the organisation.

## 14. Conclusion

Apne Aap is an inspiring organisation that maintains exceptionally high standards throughout the organisation, meaning that their work makes a huge difference to the women and children they support. Their drive and motivation to better the lives of their beneficiaries means that Apne Aap is an organisation that is always proactively striving to develop and improve. As such, we feel confident that they will take on board the recommendations in this report and continue to create lasting positive change in Kamathipura.