Guidelines on Transparency and Ethics
Approved by the Board 2015-03-10

1. Introduction
Swedwatch is committed to principles of accountability, transparency and ethics. The organisation strives to manage all issues related to communication and information with this perspective. Swedwatch aims to communicate openly to members, authorities, partners, rights holders, companies, media, staff and the public in general (stakeholders) about who we are, how we work, how the financial resources are utilised and how the results are achieved.

2. Purpose
The purpose of these guidelines is to clarify and ensure that stakeholders and the general public have access to timely, relevant and clear information about Swedwatch, its activities and methods. Swedwatch should be able to demonstrate that financial resources are used in a correct way, that research is done according to the organisation's ethical guidelines and that the commitments toward rights holders are fulfilled. Swedwatch considers that this will lead to strengthened relationships and provide the possibility for stakeholders and rights holders to hold Swedwatch accountable. An open dialogue between Swedwatch and its stakeholders is necessary for the organisation to achieve its goals.

3. Information sharing
- The organisation shall be clear about its processes for sharing information, covering;
    - Commitment to accurate and timely information-sharing
    - What information it will share with people it seeks to assist and other stakeholders
    - How decisions will be made on when and how to share information
    - Criteria used for deciding not to share information
- The organisation shall strive to present information in languages, formats and media that are appropriate for, accessible to, and understood by the rights holders and other stakeholders.
- The organisation shall ensure that its staff identifies themselves to the rights holders and other stakeholders. In relation to right holders Swedwatch commits to ensure that employees give relevant and correct information about Swedwatch during field visits to right holders and communities and adapt the information to the context and after assessing security conditions.

4. Non-restricted and restricted information

The main principle is that all information and documentation will be public and accessible and only information classified as confidential and/or risk and security sensitive will be managed internally. See heading 5 below where and how to find non-restricted documents and information.

There are legal, operational and practical considerations that are necessary to preserve Swedwatch´s interests, as well as those of its partners. The information under the following categories is considered confidential and not available to the public. Documents containing the following type of information should not be shared outside the organisation without the decision of the Director:

- Information whose disclosure could endanger the safety or security of any individual, violate his or her rights, or invade his or her privacy (including personal details about staff, for example private telephone number, address, etc).
- Information whose disclosure could endanger the security of partner organisations, rights holders or jeopardise the security or proper conduct of any operation or activity of Swedwatch (Please consult the risk assessment that is part of the security planning for the country in question).
- Intellectual property or information revealed or provided to Swedwatch under obligation of confidentiality. Information covered by legal privilege or under negotiation including disciplinary and investigative information or related to access to internal audit reports and/or Complaints and Incident reports.
- Advocacy and communications strategies which would be compromised if made public before they were implemented.

5. Where to find Documents and information

Swedwatch aims to publish documents of general interest on the website (www.swedwatch.org). Documents published on the web, as well as other documents, can also be accessed through Swedwatch's office.

6. Press ethical rules

Although not a media institution, Swedwatch uses journalistic methods in its research. Therefore, Swedwatch aims to live up to national and international press ethical rules, such as the Swedish Code of Ethics for Press, Radio and Television and the IFJ Declaration of Principles on the Conduct of Journalists.[1]

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[1] http://www.ifj.org/about-ifj/ifj-code-of-principles/
 http://www.po.se/regler/pressetiska-regler

It is important that the individual is protected from unwarranted suffering as a result of publicity. In compliance with these ethical rules and Swedwatch's Methodology Handbook, Swedwatch commits to:

- Check facts carefully and in the light of the circumstances. Listen to each side and be critical of all sources. Swedwatch aims at being accurate and presenting the views of all parties involved.
- Treat rebuttals generously. Anyone wishing to rebut a statement shall, if this is legitimate, be given the opportunity to do so.
- Respect individual privacy. Swedwatch considers carefully any publicity which could violate the privacy of interviewees and other individuals. Therefore Swedwatch is cautious in publishing names on interviewees or other key sources who risk harmful consequences for their contribution to our research.
- Exercise care in the use of pictures. In case a person´s name is not published, Swedwatch also refrains from publishing photos of that person or particulars of occupation, title, age, nationality, sex, etc, which would enable identification.

Swedwatch always takes action to rectify any published information which is found to be harmfully inaccurate.