



**VANI**



**CELEBRATING 35 YEARS OF  
SERVING THE INDIAN VOLUNTARY  
SECTOR**



# **ANNUAL REPORT 2023-2024**

## **Voluntary Action Network India**

**Voice of the voluntary sector**

## Foreword from the Chairperson

As we reflect on the past year, it is with immense pride and gratitude that I present the Annual Report for 2023-2024. This year marks a significant milestone for Voluntary Action Network India (VANI) as we celebrate 35 years of unwavering commitment to strengthening the civil society sector in India.

Our journey began in 1988, driven by a collective vision to create a robust platform for voluntary organizations. Over the years, VANI has grown into a formidable network, representing over 625 member organizations and reaching out to more than 10,000 CSOs across the nation. Our mission has always been to promote voluntarism, foster convergence on sectoral issues, and amplify the collective voice of the voluntary sector.

The past year has been transformative, marked by our proactive response to the evolving challenges and opportunities within the civil society landscape. We have embraced digital technology, expanded our network, and engaged in meaningful dialogues with government and international bodies. Our initiatives in capacity building, research, and advocacy have empowered our members to navigate the complexities of the post-COVID era and continue their impactful work on the ground.

I extend my heartfelt thanks to our dedicated team, our member organizations, and our partners for their unwavering support and collaboration. Together, we have made significant strides in promoting social cohesion, economic empowerment, and national development. As we look ahead, I am confident that VANI will continue to be a catalyst for positive change, driving innovation and inclusivity in the voluntary sector.

Thank you for your continued trust and partnership.

Warm regards,

**Binoy Acharya**

**Chairperson**

**Voluntary Action Network India (VANI)**

## Preface

It gives me great satisfaction to present VANI's Annual Report for 2023-24, marking our 35th year of serving India's voluntary sector. Over these years, we have seen VANI adapt and evolve to meet the changing needs of civil society organizations (CSOs), all while staying true to our core mission of strengthening the voluntary sector.

Reflecting on this year, three key priorities stand out:

1. Creating and strengthening a more enabling environment for CSOs.
2. Embracing digital transformation to enhance sector capabilities.
3. Sharing the inspiring stories of civil society's contributions and building a positive narrative for the sector.

Our new initiatives – the "संवाद" (Samvaad) webinar series and the "She Leads the Way" podcast – have become vibrant platforms where our community comes together to learn, share, and celebrate leadership.

The post-COVID era has challenged us to think differently. Our member organizations have demonstrated remarkable resilience in adapting to change, particularly in embracing digital technologies. VANI has supported them through capacity-building sessions on technology adoption while also helping them navigate cybersecurity challenges. Our engagement with the Social Stock Exchange (SSE) has been particularly significant, opening new avenues for domestic resource mobilization.

This year, we have also strengthened our commitment to research and documentation. Working closely with our team and partners, we have produced meaningful studies on crucial issues, such as social security for grassroots activists and women's leadership on global platforms. Each publication and digital initiative have contributed to a deeper understanding of civil society's vital role in our nation's development.

I take particular pride in the growth of our network. Today, we are a community of 625 member organizations, reaching over 10,000 CSOs across India. Through our various consultations, webinars, and regional meetings, we have engaged in meaningful dialogues with dedicated individuals working tirelessly for social change.

I express my heartfelt gratitude to the Chairperson, Treasurer, and Governing Board Members for their guidance in helping us achieve our organizational goals during challenging times. My sincere thanks also go to our active and vibrant membership, whose collective wisdom and commitment continue to support us. We are grateful to Individuell Människohjälp - IM, Heinrich Boell Stiftung, Population Matters, Forus, VENRO who have provided effective and flexible programmatic support. Last but not least, I thank the vibrant and dedicated team at VANI, whose commitment is the spirit and soul of this report.

Please send me your observations and suggestions to help make VANI future ready.

**Harshvrat Jaitli**

**Chief Executive Officer & Member Secretary**

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## VISION & MISSION

**Vision:** To promote and Support voluntary and social sector initiatives to address a range of needs and rights of deprived and vulnerable communities.

**Mission:** Work towards building a society where volunteerism and social sector organisations play a relevant and constructive role in socio-economic empowerment of communities and nation building



## VALUES

- Collaborative & innovative
- Inclusive
- Ethical
- Dependable
- Adaptive
- Solidarity



## VANI'S PUBLICATIONS



## PILLARS OF VANI'S WORK



### ENABLING ENVIRONMENT FOR THE SECTOR

VANI aims to strengthen the enabling environment for CSOs by fostering collaboration and enhancing knowledge sharing, both internally and externally.



### POSITIVE PUBLIC NARRATIVE

Build a positive public narrative through collaboration, capacity building, and networking to strengthen the role and impact of the voluntary sector in India.



### SOUTH-SOUTH COOPERATION

Fostering South-South cooperation by promoting knowledge exchange, capacity building, and collaborative projects among developing countries to enhance mutual growth and development.



## Chapter 1 – Celebrating 35 years of VANI



Established in the year 1988, following an extensive consultative process, as a collective initiative of the civil society organisations, VANI has built a strong and well recognised institution as representative of Indian civil society, both nationally and internationally. VANI as a network of 642 CSO members and an outreach to over 10,000 Indian CSOs, has a threefold mandate:

1. As a platform promote voluntarism to create space for Voluntary Action.
2. As a network bring convergence on common sectoral issues and build a national agenda of voluntary action and facilitate linkages for multiplier effect.
3. To be promoter, protector, and collective voice for the voluntary sector.



This year on 19th May 2023, VANI released the new logo, commemorating its 35 years of service along with the Board members and some prominent CSO representatives and friends of VANI.

### *Chapter 2: Strengthening enabling environment for the Civil Society Organisations*

VANI, as a unique and apex representative organization in the not-for-profit sector in India, faces significant challenges. To fulfil its mandate of supporting the voluntary and social sector, it bears a substantial responsibility and an opportunity to shape the ecosystem by including a broader civil society.

To remain relevant in the evolving civil society landscape, VANI has started to reevaluate its engagement model and membership structure. Expanding its network to encompass a wide spectrum of civil society stakeholders and establishing constructive dialogues with the government are crucial steps. Additionally, VANI as an organization is in the process to articulate its vision distinctly and demonstrate its relevance within the broader social sector in the country.

#### Post Covid era & digitization of Civil Society



In response to the changing landscape brought about by the pandemic, civil society organizations (CSOs) have adapted their operational and project implementation approaches. In the realm of the social sector, the key lies in crafting and executing interventions that yield substantial impact, both qualitatively and quantitatively.

Subsequently, the capacity to swiftly expand reach, exert significant influence, and effect tangible improvements in the lives of marginalized communities becomes paramount. Embracing digital technology, the organizations have shifted to utilize platforms like WhatsApp, Zoom, and Canva for sharing and learning.

VANI has been proactive in supporting its members during these times. We have organized educational sessions to demystify these digital applications. Members learned how to leverage tools like WhatsApp for various communication, Zoom for virtual meetings, Canva for creative content creation, social media to reach out to larger society and spread information about their work and activities on ground level. These skills empower CSOs to enhance project implementation. While digital technology offers immense benefits, it also brings challenges. Issues like information hacking, cybersecurity threats, and misuse of data need attention. To address these concerns, VANI continues to conduct webinars and workshops. Topics include cybersecurity best practices, podcasting, spam handling, and strategies to avoid hacking incidents. By equipping CSOs with digital literacy and security awareness, VANI ensures that they can navigate the digital landscape effectively while safeguarding their work and information.

### Building positive narrative of Civil Society

VANI has embarked on an important initiative since last year, focusing on documenting and sharing stories about the significant contributions of the civil society sector to the country's development and growth. This is an important step of VANI being the **"voice of the sector"**. Recognizing that much of the existing material about civil society work is couched in highly technical language, we aim to bridge this gap.



We seek to make this information more accessible to policymakers and general public too. While literature often covers thematic aspects, it tends to overlook critical details about institutions, leaders, activists, and the challenges and innovations within the sector. VANI has put in efforts to rectify this by capturing a more holistic picture.

The lack of people-friendly information contributes to misconceptions about the work, resources, and challenges faced by civil society organizations (CSOs). These real stories may support to dispel these misconceptions. We have taken on the task of recording the history of the sector, highlighting key organizations, diverse perspectives, and the lives of CSO leaders and activists. Leveraging the power of social media, VANI actively spreads these messages to create awareness and foster informed discussions. Through these efforts, VANI aims to provide a clearer understanding of the vital role played by civil society in shaping our society and nation. Not only small but even large organizations are coming forward to put their stories in the public domain.

## Generation of local resources in the current scenario:



In response to limitations on foreign funding and FCRA regulations, Indian civil society organizations (CSOs) have increasingly turned their attention toward seeking domestic resources. This shift reflects the need to diversify funding sources and reduce reliance on external support. To strengthen the capabilities of such organizations, VANI organized various education events and evidence-based interventions on philanthropy, CSR, individual giving, etc. The emergence of the Social Stock Exchange (SSE) is a significant development during this period. VANI, as a prominent organization in the not-for-profit sector, has been actively involved. VANI received an invitation from the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) and its experts' group. Their collaboration aims to enhance outreach efforts related to the SSE. The CEO of VANI was invited to serve as a board member of the Impact Assessment Cadre of ICMEA-SAO. This organization plays a crucial role in developing impact assessment practice. VANI facilitated an interface between Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) and the SSE. This interaction fosters dialogue and collaboration. VANI encouraged its members and others to sign up for its self-certification system. By doing so, organizations can demonstrate their commitment and generate local resources. Several amendments proposed by VANI regarding rules and procedural requirements were accepted by SEBI. These efforts by VANI contribute to shaping the landscape of social impact and sustainable finance in India.

## VANI as partner NGO in C20 (2023) India





The Group of Twenty (G20) is the premier forum for international economic cooperation. It plays an important role in shaping and strengthening global architecture and governance on all major international economic issues. India held the Presidency of the G20 and the summit is held in India in the month of September` 2023. The C20 aims to ensure that world leaders pay attention to the recommendations and demands of organized civil society. The C20, launched in 2013 as an official G20 Engagement Group, provides a platform for the CSOs to bring forth non-governmental perspectives on the issues being taken up by the official G20. It gives them a forum to reflect on the primary & common concerns affecting the world and promote social & economic development.



VANI was officially recognized as a partner in the C20 processes within India and persevered, steering itself through the process and making valuable contributions. VANI received an invitation from the Ministry of External Affairs to guide them in the C20 processes. Notably, VANI had been actively engaged with the C20 process even before its formal establishment. VANI worked diligently to mobilize both Indian and global Civil Society Organizations (CSOs). The goal was to position the Indian C20 as a significant platform for knowledge exchange. However, at a critical juncture, the government opted to host the C20 through its own mechanism. They appointed an ideologically aligned organization, with Mata Anandmai as its chair, to lead the process. Undeterred, VANI extended support to Amma and her team in every possible way.

### ***Chapter 3: Capacity building and collectivization of the sector through Forums and consultations with CSOs***

#### **A National Consultation on the - “Importance of Knowledge Generation and Dissemination for the CSO Sector”**

This meeting was organized on 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> May 2023 with a twin objective: a) developing a positive narrative of the sector b) motivating CSOs to come forward with stories. 30 participants representing a wide range of organizations from national, state and local levels participated.

The discussions emphasized addressing challenges hindering the perception and effectiveness of the voluntary sector.

VANI's initiatives aim to bridge the narrative gap by emphasizing research over advocacy and establishing a knowledge bank. The "India's Million Missions" study highlights the invaluable contributions of millions of workers to societal and economic development.



### Knowledge Generation



Recommendations include - regulatory simplification, tax reforms, and policy changes to support philanthropy, leveraging grassroots impact, promoting knowledge dissemination through regional languages and electronic media, and prioritizing community voices are key strategies. Ultimately, the goal is to amplify the sector's positive impact, empower communities, and foster a supportive environment for social change.

It was also highlighted on language accessibility of the proposed Knowledge Bank initiative under VANI which aims to compile grassroots insights. Efficiency relies on credible governance models, with case studies suggested for learning. In summary, collaborative efforts are urged to fortify the sector for positive societal impact. The participants recognized the value of developing a positive narrative as it will also strengthen the civic space and agreed to participate in the process. This process is now entering the phase where 360-degree documentation of the sector is taking shape.

### Regional Consultation with CSOs of Jharkhand



Consultation on the status of Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) was held in Ranchi, Jharkhand on May 30<sup>th</sup> and 31<sup>st</sup>, 2023. The consultation brought together Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) in India to discuss the Finance Bill 2023. Led by Mr. Sahoo, an expert in CSO taxation, the meeting aimed to enhance participants' understanding of the bill's intricate provisions. These provisions could significantly impact the CSOs' operations. Additionally, the gathering facilitated collective problem-solving, addressing challenges faced by the civil society sector. It also

explored collaboration opportunities within the dynamic regulatory landscape. By fostering open dialogue, the consultation empowered CSOs to navigate financial and regulatory changes, ensuring their continued positive impact on India's socio-economic development. 33 participants, representing the states of Jharkhand, Orissa, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, and West Bengal participated in this consultation.



The meeting enhanced participants' understanding, fostered community, and empowered them to adapt to challenges. It promoted resilience and innovation in navigating the evolving financial landscape.

### Round Table discussion on Social Stock Exchange



VANI in collaboration with ICAI Social Auditors Organization ICAI SAO, decided to discuss with some established CSOs of Delhi to understand the concept and modalities of SSE. A round table was organised jointly by VANI India and ICAI SAO on 9th August 2023 and 19 CSOs participated in the round table. A very animated and serious discussion took place on the actual and practical issues of following the compliances. Social stock exchanges (SSEs) provide a platform for investors to support social businesses and impact investing, revolutionizing the traditional concept of stock markets. SSEs allow ethical investors to invest in businesses aligned with their values, creating a parallel social economy. India's social stock exchange is distinct from its global counterparts in the sense that it is right now based more on a donation-based model than an impact investment model.

For example, clean energy, sanitation, healthcare etc. These platforms can get themselves to list on a social stock exchange to raise capital. The benefits of the Social Stock Exchange are that it results in better reporting capabilities by NGOs, social auditing, etc. Providing supportive regulations such as tax exemptions, etc. could lead to better utilization of funds for social causes.

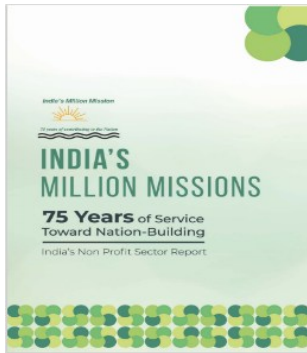


VANI's CEO Mr. Harsh Jaitli and ICAI SAO's CEO Dr. S. K. Gupta, are making efforts to popularize the SSE model for the benefit of CSO who are suffering the financial



crisis. It was the first time CSOs interacted with SEBI and ICAI, and discussed feasibility of the system which is being designed. The input from CSOs led to some changes in the registration system of SSE. The CEO of VANI was also offered membership on the board of ICAI-SAO. As a part of its efforts of strengthening the avenue of domestic resources for Indian CSOs, VANI plans to take this forward in influencing SSE on one hand and Capacity building on the other.

### Consultation with CSOs of Rajasthan



A 2-day interactive and interesting meeting was conducted by VANI on 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> September`2023, with CSOs of Rajasthan. Highlights of the consultation are:

**Collaborative Spirit:** The meeting opened with a focus on unity, sharing experiences, and learning from each other, emphasizing the voluntary sector's values.

**"India's Million Missions":** A presentation on this report was done by Mr. Harsh Jaitli and he highlighted the civil society's contributions and challenges, particularly in fundraising, prompting discussions on inclusive strategies.

**Social Stock Exchange (SSE):** An in-depth session was conducted by Mr. Yogesh Gupta from SSE with detailed information on SSE concept, its operational challenges, and its potential in India, aiming to increase CSO registrations.

**Post-COVID-19 Adaptations:** Discussions on changes in funding mechanisms and the increased use of social media and technology, concluding with a commitment to document CSO contributions and change the sector's narrative. The meeting successfully engaged 59 participant CSOs from Rajasthan.

### Consultation on Universal access to education in India

A round table meeting was conducted at the VANI office on 21<sup>st</sup> September`2023 to discuss universal access to education. A team from Population Matters of UK and representatives from CSOs such as Deepalaya, DST, Bal Raksha Bharat, The YP Foundation, the coalition for food and security,



Centre for Reproductive rights and CRY participated in this. The representatives from the NGOs shared their experience of working on education theme and emphasized on the gender disparity and gap in access to education in India. There was also a productive discussion on solutions for filling up the gap and how



important it is to achieve universal access to education for the growth and development of the country. The participants from Population Matters shared that they are willing to work hand in hand for education advocacy and creating a partnership coalition with Indian NGOs working for Girl child education and empowerment.

### **“Beyond Barriers: Empowering Women Leaders to Rise Above Glass Ceilings and Sticky Floors”**

On October 18<sup>th</sup> 2023 Voluntary Action Network India (VANI) organized an interactive face to face meeting, at Vishwa Yuvak Kendra, New Delhi. The event was supported by Heinrich Boell Foundation. Global platforms, such as international conferences and summits, offer vital opportunities for civil society leaders to connect, share knowledge, and influence



decision-making. Unfortunately, women’s participation in these spaces has historically been limited. Understanding the factors that hinder or contribute to their involvement is crucial for promoting gender equality. The first session on “Role of Women in Socio- Economic Development”, by giving a brief introduction of the panelists (Ms. Maja Daruwala and Ms. Tinni Sawhney) and the moderator (Ms. Poonam Muttreja). Ms. Poonam talked about the various challenges that women in the Indian context face, ranging from violence, lack of education and opportunities, etc., and stressed upon the importance of celebrating women leaders in this sector. She shared her personal experiences of working in this sector and the critical need to bring about behavioural changes in the men of the society. The second panel discussion focused on “Navigating Glass Ceilings and Sticky Floors: Challenges and Solutions”. The panelists, Ms. Jaswant Kaur and Ms. Anubhuti Patra shared their journeys of becoming leaders within this sector, the challenges that they faced and the strategies they adopted to stay determined towards achieving their desired goals and making a space for themselves. Ms. Ujjaini Halim also shared a prerecorded video of herself, speaking about the unconscious biases that prevail within the civil society in India.



The speakers, Ms. Hemal Kamat and Ms. Nidhi Goyal, discussed the changes that have occurred with respect to women’s participation in civil society and at the Global level. They also discussed the additional difficulties, women with disabilities face, in making a space for themselves and proving their leadership

qualities. VANI identified the six successful women leaders to share about their journeys, and strategies to overcome barriers, and how they made their way to global platforms. 31 CSO representatives participated in the event. The meeting provided a platform for dialogue, fostering a sense of solidarity and empowerment.

## **“Unveiling Opportunities: The Dynamics of Collectivisation and Resource Generation in the Contemporary World”**

A national level consultation with CSOs from UP, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh, Uttarakhand, J & K, Gujarat, Tamil Nadu, Delhi and Orissa was held in Vishwa Yuvak Kendra, New Delhi, on December 26<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> 2023, with the aim to bring together representatives from various CSOs to provide insights into the current trends and challenges in the fundraising environment for the civil society, identify innovative fundraising approaches tailored to the present challenges and discuss the importance of networking and collaboration in this ever evolving dynamic.



Mr. Harsh Jaitli, CEO of VANI, delivered the opening remarks and acknowledged the challenges faced by CSOs in fundraising and sustainability. Dr. S. K. Gupta, Managing Director of ICMAI, conducted a session on Social Stock Exchange (SSE) for CSOs.



He presented a presentation on SSE, explaining its concept, eligibility criteria, registration process, and fundraising mechanisms. Mr. Sanjay Patra and Ms. Uttama Pandit from IndiaDonates conducted a session on unlocking individual giving for CSOs. The panelists for the session on the importance of networking and collectivization were Mr. Datta Patil (Executive Director, YRA), Ms. Hemal Kamat (Secretary, CONCEPT Sansthan), and Mr. N M Prusty. They shared their experiences of working in collaboration with other partners and civil society networks. This meeting aimed to empower CSOs with the knowledge, connections, and tools needed to thrive in the current fundraising landscape, fostering a sense of community and shared purpose among organizations working towards common goals.

### ***Chapter 4 - Growing the network and augmenting sector capabilities by conducting Webinars and online meetings.***

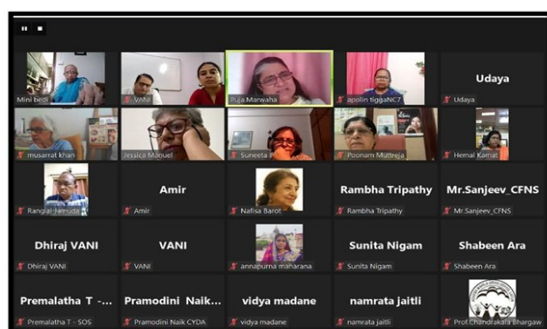
#### **Status of Social Security among Grass Roots Organisations: Constraints & Scope**

Ms. Arshia Tanvee, an intern at VANI, made a Power Point presentation to the board members and eminent CSO heads in a webinar on 27<sup>th</sup> April`2023. Her PowerPoint presentation covered: India’s Philanthropic/ Voluntary Sector; Constraints and Challenges- Developing Countries (India); Social Security Provisions in India- Trends & Patterns; Social Security Provisions in India-Mapping of Existing Schemes; Scope and Way Forward. The young presenter was appreciated. Around 25 participants attended. It was suggested to encourage young people for development work. The participants included board members of VANI.

## Online Workshop on Budget Basics and Gender Budgeting

VANI-CBGA Centre for Budget and Governance Accountability in collaboration organised an online workshop from 29<sup>th</sup> to 31<sup>st</sup> May `23 on Budget Basics and Gender Budgeting for India Partners of IM South Asia. The Workshop was conducted successfully. Around 38 participants from member CSOs participated. Upon request from VANI, CBGA conducted the workshop in Hindi.

## “Women Leaders from Indian Civil Society-Breaking Barriers and Making Impact on Global Platforms”



The participation of women leaders from civil society in global platforms can have a significant impact on shaping policies, building networks, and raising awareness about the work being done in India to promote gender equality and social justice. This increased visibility can also contribute to ensuring inclusivity and representation of Indian civil society in global discussions and decision-making processes. VANI conducted this online webinar on June 13<sup>th</sup>, 2023. The objective of the webinar was to highlight the participation of women leaders from civil society in India on global platforms, discuss the challenges they face, and explore ways to amplify their voices and impact. The panelists included Ms. Poonam Muttreja, Ms. Puja Marwaha, Ms. Mini Bedi, Ms. Hemal Kamat, Ms. Suneeta Dhar, and Ms. Sheela Patel, who are exceptional women leaders making significant contributions to the civil society sector in India and beyond. The discussion covered inspiring journeys and motivations of the women leaders, overcoming barriers and challenges they faced, impactful initiatives they spearheaded in the Indian civil society, navigating the global platform, and the intersection of global challenges with local initiatives. The leaders emphasized the importance of networking and building alliances with global partners, as well as the significance of inspirational mentors in achieving greater impact. Key takeaways from the meeting:

- ❖ Sharing experiences and perspectives
- ❖ Building networks and collaborations
- ❖ Raising visibility and voice

## VANI Membership Drive

On July 12<sup>th</sup> `2023, a webinar was held by VANI on the updates of membership and encouraging increase in membership base. Around 25 CSO members participated in the webinar. A short video was presented about VANI and its membership.

How the organisation works to increase the membership base and reach out to a large number of CSOs working under various themes. VANI's initiatives and objectives were shared. There was also discussion on the process of application for membership, required documents, and membership fee structure.

### Social Stock Exchange

VANI has conducted an interactive webinar on Social Stock Exchange on 4<sup>th</sup> September`2023. Mr. S.K. Gupta, CEO, ICAI, Social Auditors Organisation, shared information on the Framework of Social Stock Exchange, Status of the SSE, Challenges and issues. The participants learned about the functioning and operating system of Social Stock Exchange. How NGOs can benefit by registering on SSE board is explained.

### India's Role in Global Platforms: CSO Perspectives



In the rapidly evolving landscape of global platforms, India stands at the forefront, playing a pivotal role in shaping the narrative from the lens of civil society organizations (CSOs). As a country with a rich tapestry of cultural diversity and a robust civil society sector, India's engagement with global platforms extends beyond economic considerations. On 27<sup>th</sup> October, VANI organized the webinar. Representatives around 20 from various CSOs participated in this meeting.

The Potential solutions highlighted in the webinar are:

**Mutual Strengthening:** Larger and smaller organizations can collaborate and strengthen their capacities to add value to global forums. By working together, they can increase CSO participation in global arenas. Examples of platforms doing similar work are Grand Bargain and Charter for Change.

**Regional Level Platforms:** International platforms can develop regional platforms to increase representation from the regional civil society. For example, there can be a platform for South-East Asia, another one for South Africa, and so on. This would allow for more diverse perspectives and voices to be heard.

**Common Calendar:** A one-stop calendar can be developed where relevant information related to upcoming international events is updated. CSOs can register themselves to access this calendar and stay informed about global platforms and events. This would address the challenge of missing information and CSOs have access to opportunities for participation.

**Hybrid Meetings:** In the digital age, international platforms should be able to conduct hybrid meetings that allow larger participation. By incorporating virtual participation options, CSOs that may face financial constraints or travel limitations can still engage in global platforms and contribute to the discussions.



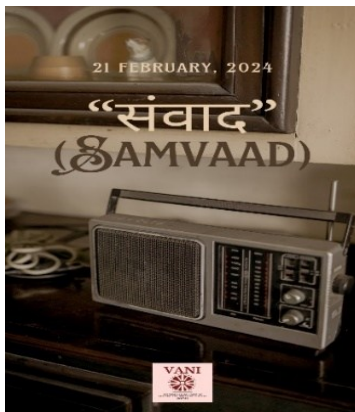
These solutions aim to address the challenges identified in the meeting summary, such as missing information, financial constraints, limited space for smaller CSOs to share and influence decision making, and sponsorship requirements.

### Series of Webinars on Good Governance of CSOs

8th December 11.30am - 12.30pm	18 December 11.30am - 12.30pm	19 December 11.00am - 12.00pm	21 December 11.30am - 12.30pm	22 December 11.30am - 12.30pm
				
Shri. Ramesh Saran CEO & Secretary URMUL	Shri. Bharat Bhushan Secretary, Chief Functionary PANI	Ms. Pooja Secretary Srijan Foundation	Shri. Arun Jindal Executive Director Society for Sustainable Development	Shri. Jagadananda Member Secretary Centre for Youth and Social Development (CYSD)

A series of Webinars in the month of December `2023 was conducted by VANI on ‘How Good Governance and management System Contributed to organisational Effectiveness’ were organised. URMUL, PANI, Srijan Foundation, Society for Sustainable Development, and CYSD - these organisations presented the case study of their institutions. On average 30 to 35 grassroots organisations participated in the webinars.

### "संवाद" (Samvaad)



VANI has launched this series of webinars dedicated to exploring pertinent topics within civil society in the month of February `2024 which aims to facilitate meaningful conversations and exchange of ideas on various issues impacting civil society today. Through these webinars, we seek to foster collaboration, knowledge-sharing, and innovative solutions to address the challenges faced by our communities. We believe that संवाद will serve as a valuable platform for CSOs to enhance their understanding, network with peers, and stay updated on emerging trends within the civil society sector.

Under this "संवाद" (Samvaad) series 2 webinars were conducted. The first one was on “Unlocking Social Stock Exchange” which was organized by VANI for the member organizations and other CSOs on February 21<sup>st</sup>, 2024. The speaker for this webinar was Mr. S.K Gupta CEO ICAI, Social Auditors Organizations who brings a wealth of knowledge and experience in this domain. It was an informative session which covered topics such as evolution of Social Stock Exchange, perspective of CSOs, update on progress so far, funding structure, challenges and recommendations for mitigation.

Another webinar was on - "Navigating PoSH Act 2013: Creating Safe and Inclusive Workplaces" was held on March 27, 2024, by Ms. Nandita Bhatt, Director Operations from Martha Farrell Foundation, which was an interactive and informative session to enhance understanding of the PoSH Act, its compliance requirements and significance in promoting a culture of respect and dignity at workplaces.

### **"She Leads the Way" - Podcast**

From grassroots activists to renowned policy makers, there are many women who have shattered glass ceilings, challenged stereotypes, and dedicated their lives to bringing about positive change in their communities and the nation at large, while also creating an impact at the international level.

To discover the keys to breaking down barriers, fostering inclusivity and igniting change within organizations, all while celebrating the immense leadership potential that women bring to the table, VANI has started conducting a series of podcast in the month of October `23. These podcasts bring in inspiring conversations on dynamic journey, valuable insights, experiences, and wisdom on the transformative power of women leaders of CSOs in today's evolving landscape. It also spotlights on their stories and significant contributions to Indian civil society.

The CSO women leaders who participated in the series are Ms. Puja Marwaha- Executive Director, Child Rights and You, Ms. Hemal Kamat - Director, Concept Society, Ms. Jaswant Kaur - Director, Protsahan India Foundation, Ms. Mini Bedi - Founder DST, Ms. Maja Daruwala- Chief Editor, India Justice Report, Ms. Priti Darooka - Founder, Executive Director, Programme on Women's Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (PWESCR), Ms. Nidhi Goyal - Founder and Director of Rising Flame - India, Ms. Syeda Hamid - Founder, Trustee of the Women's Initiative for Peace in South Asia (WIPSA) and Ms. Nirjharini Rath - Sr. Manager, HR; Manager of Advocacy & Research, LEADS. These series will inspire young listeners to strive for leadership roles and representation at global levels. The positive success stories will help promote a positive narrative of the sector. The series created awareness regarding the challenges women face in this sector and effective strategies to overcome them.

#### **Links to Episodes:**

Episode 1: <https://youtu.be/uq7Nh7uyTWE?si=MKAKlSm-gxwJxlRb>

Episode 2: <https://youtu.be/uQHGL7AFuNY?si=0CV8XZSBHAcK6Jio>

Episode 3: <https://youtu.be/U87eZ1or2Yo?si=VEhQexyYRp-S86sc>

Episode 4: <https://youtu.be/i5yP2ikHwZE?si=U1vv5YTZGpMu6tBd>

Episode5: [https://youtu.be/vHx8WPB2bjs?si=B7\\_WUG6l\\_ayFzDBY](https://youtu.be/vHx8WPB2bjs?si=B7_WUG6l_ayFzDBY)

Episode 6: <https://youtu.be/YNsAaCuqxoY?si=Ht2iME4ve58HPRMy>

Episode 7: [https://youtu.be/b73V\\_gytNgQ?si=Rg4PTgmxOJnBF9KX](https://youtu.be/b73V_gytNgQ?si=Rg4PTgmxOJnBF9KX)

Episode 8: <https://youtu.be/nLdxa6BSnxl?si=Ypth90s7yMRNjg0U>

Episode 9: [https://youtu.be/\\_sZ99D8mMRk?si=fUUvBP2MHVTV7S4w](https://youtu.be/_sZ99D8mMRk?si=fUUvBP2MHVTV7S4w)

## Chapter 5 - VANI Publications - Research studies and Surveys

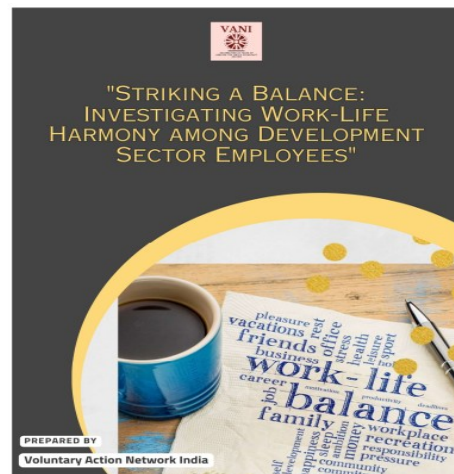
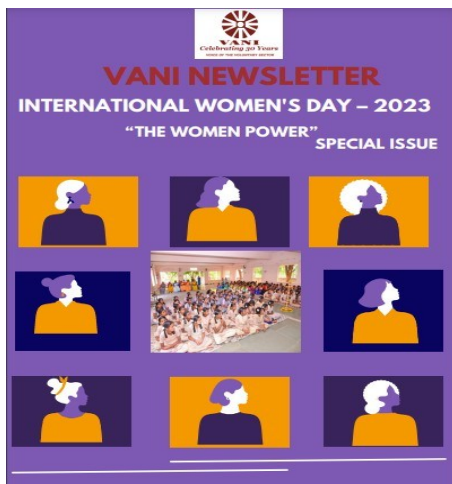
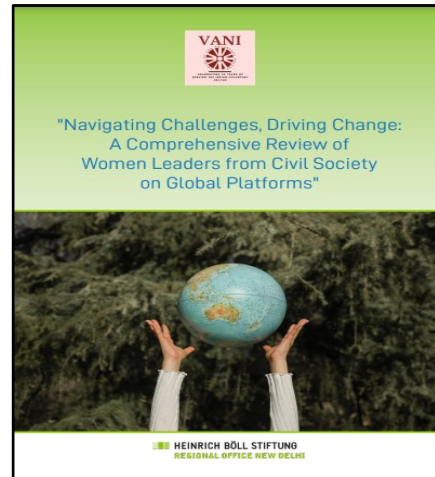
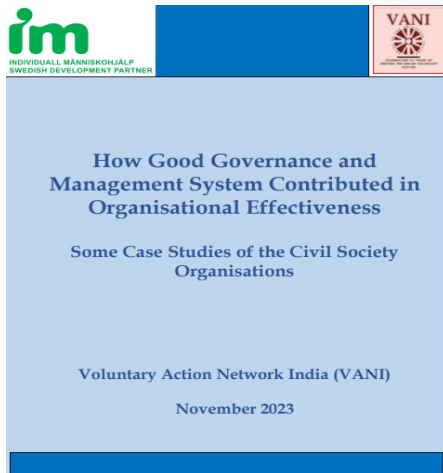
Theme and objectives	Impact
<p><b>Social Security for activists at Grassroot Organizations in India</b></p> <p>This is the basic study analyzes grassroots organizations, and access to social security schemes. Understanding the context of voluntary sector, Examining the role and impact, Insights into NGO regulations, COVID Mitigation, Social security access, importance, Key issues &amp; challenges, Government initiatives providing access to social security programs. Analyzing social sector expenditure and healthcare infrastructure, considerations of reform measures like Aadhaar.</p> <p><a href="https://acrobat.adobe.com/id/urn:aaid:sc:ap:c4ce426d-e939-4aa3-962c-70ac63d5de89">https://acrobat.adobe.com/id/urn:aaid:sc:ap:c4ce426d-e939-4aa3-962c-70ac63d5de89</a></p>	<p>The research contributes to a deeper understanding of socio-economic dynamics. It is disseminated to 643 VANI members and more than 6000 sector representatives from VANI's database. It was also shared with media persons and private sector.</p>
<p><b>Navigating Challenges, Driving Change: A Comprehensive Review of Women Leaders from Civil Society on Global Platforms</b></p> <p>The study is made in the context that women in India's voluntary sector contribute significantly on grassroots level, challenges faced. Importance of their participation which can influence public by sharing their perspectives, building collaborations &amp; elevating visibility of Indian civil society's voice and promoting inclusivity.</p> <p><a href="https://acrobat.adobe.com/id/urn:aaid:sc:AP:dc5ebeb-fda8-44ff-a7c3-dc4f9ca00b52">https://acrobat.adobe.com/id/urn:aaid:sc:AP:dc5ebeb-fda8-44ff-a7c3-dc4f9ca00b52</a></p>	<p>The findings of the study captured the nature of women leadership, examining the strategies employed to overcome obstacles and the impact of these initiatives on gender inclusivity. It acts as a source of inspiration to young girls and women joining this sector.</p>
<p><b>India's Developmental Diplomacy: Balancing Strategic Interests with Global Development Goals</b></p> <p>India has emerged as a major player in the global development landscape, with its significant contributions to global poverty reduction efforts and the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. Developmental diplomacy plays a crucial role in India's foreign policy and serves as an important instrument for advancing its economic and strategic interest.</p> <p><a href="https://acrobat.adobe.com/id/urn:aaid:sc:AP:1b56d579-e905-4048-9646-3b31afcadf42">https://acrobat.adobe.com/id/urn:aaid:sc:AP:1b56d579-e905-4048-9646-3b31afcadf42</a></p>	<p>The report contributes to academic understanding of India's diplomatic endeavors and informs policymakers and the general public about the nation's role in the global arena. It is disseminated to 643 VANI members and more than 6000 sector representatives from VANI's database. It was also shared with media persons and private sector. This study report can be further used for building partnerships and strengthening ties with CSO networks in the Southern countries.</p>
<p><b>How Good Governance and Management System Contributed to Organisational Effectiveness</b></p> <p>Ten organisations shared their experiences on "What makes your institution one of the best of its size in India?" The report was documented on their case studies and success stories.</p> <p><a href="https://www.vaniindia.org/uploads/resources/Good_Governance_of_CSOs_(Final_November_2023)_1_1.pdf">https://www.vaniindia.org/uploads/resources/Good_Governance_of_CSOs_(Final_November_2023)_1_1.pdf</a></p>	<p>These inspiring stories made a great impact when they learned how CSOs become successful through a symphony of transformation, emerges with a harmonious blend of planning, implementation and unwavering commitment. Many organizations are interested in participating in such studies and share their own stories, struggles, victories, innovation</p>

Theme and objectives	Impact
<p><b>New Age Capacity Building with the Use of Technology</b></p> <p>The article emphasized the importance of digital technology for CSOs. The pandemic impact which accelerated CSOs adoption of modern technology, resource constraints, benefits of effective communication through technology, facilitating sharing and learning especially in the age of social media, enabling CSOs to connect with experts and peers worldwide. This study underscores the transformative role of digital tools in empowering civil society organizations.</p>	<p>600+ members received the article. It was posted on the website and social media. It was also shared with the NASSCOM Foundation and Digital Empowerment Foundation</p>
<p><b>Status of FCRA Renewals of CSOs - Survey</b></p> <p>The majority of CSOs have been waiting for the renewal of their FCRA registration for the last three years. The new procedures required field as well as monitoring reports by agencies, which caused delays. This delay has created a scary status quo which has resulted in the denial of new projects by donors, a reduction in already approved grants, and no change in the composition of governance or bylaws. VANI initiated an online survey to analyze the situation, and challenges faced by the organizations and to inculcate a feeling of solidarity.</p> <p><a href="https://acrobat.adobe.com/id/urn:aaid:sc:ap:8ce44964-b83d-4901-92be-ad230dc7e1e2">https://acrobat.adobe.com/id/urn:aaid:sc:ap:8ce44964-b83d-4901-92be-ad230dc7e1e2</a></p>	<p>This survey also highlighted the need of resourcing CSOs beyond foreign funds. It is disseminated to 643 VANI members and more than 6000 sector representatives from VANI's database. It was also shared with policymakers and media.</p>
<p><b>"Striking a Balance: Investigating Work-Life Harmony Among Development Sector Employees."</b></p> <p>In the context of the development sector, where employees are dedicated to making a positive impact on society, the challenges of maintaining work-life harmony can be particularly pronounced.</p> <p>This report aims to delve into the topic of work-life balance among development sector employees, shedding light on the factors that influence their ability to strike a balance between their professional responsibilities and personal well-being.</p> <p><a href="https://www.vaniindia.org/uploads/resources/Work_Life_Balance_Report_2023.pdf">https://www.vaniindia.org/uploads/resources/Work_Life_Balance_Report_2023.pdf</a></p>	<p>The study highlighted a few points: that achieving a satisfactory work-life balance is an ongoing challenge for many civil society employees. While a significant number express overall job satisfaction, there is a need for organizations to recognize the importance of work-life balance and implement supportive policies and practices to enhance the well-being of their employees. This can lead to higher job satisfaction, increased productivity, and overall organizational success in the civil society sector.</p>
<p><b>Newsletter - "THE WOMEN POWER" SPECIAL ISSUE</b></p> <p>VANI has circulated a special edition of newsletter on International Womens` Day 2023.</p> <p><a href="https://www.vaniindia.org/uploads/resources/VANI_NEWSLETTER_International_Womens_Day_%E2%80%93_2023_%E2%80%9CThe_Women_Power%E2%80%9D_Special_Issue_(6).pdf">https://www.vaniindia.org/uploads/resources/VANI_NEWSLETTER_International_Womens_Day_%E2%80%93_2023_%E2%80%9CThe_Women_Power%E2%80%9D_Special_Issue_(6).pdf</a></p>	<p>It is disseminated to 643 VANI members and more than 6000 sector representatives from VANI's database.</p> <p>The newsletter showcased aspirational stories of successful women leaders from CSO sector.</p>



## VANI`s PUBLICATIONS

The process of establishing the digital VANI Knowledge Bank has begun in 2023. A search engine is created on the website. VANI publications are digitalized. Weekly a video or a publication of VANI is being widely circulated on Facebook, LinkedIn, and WhatsApp groups.

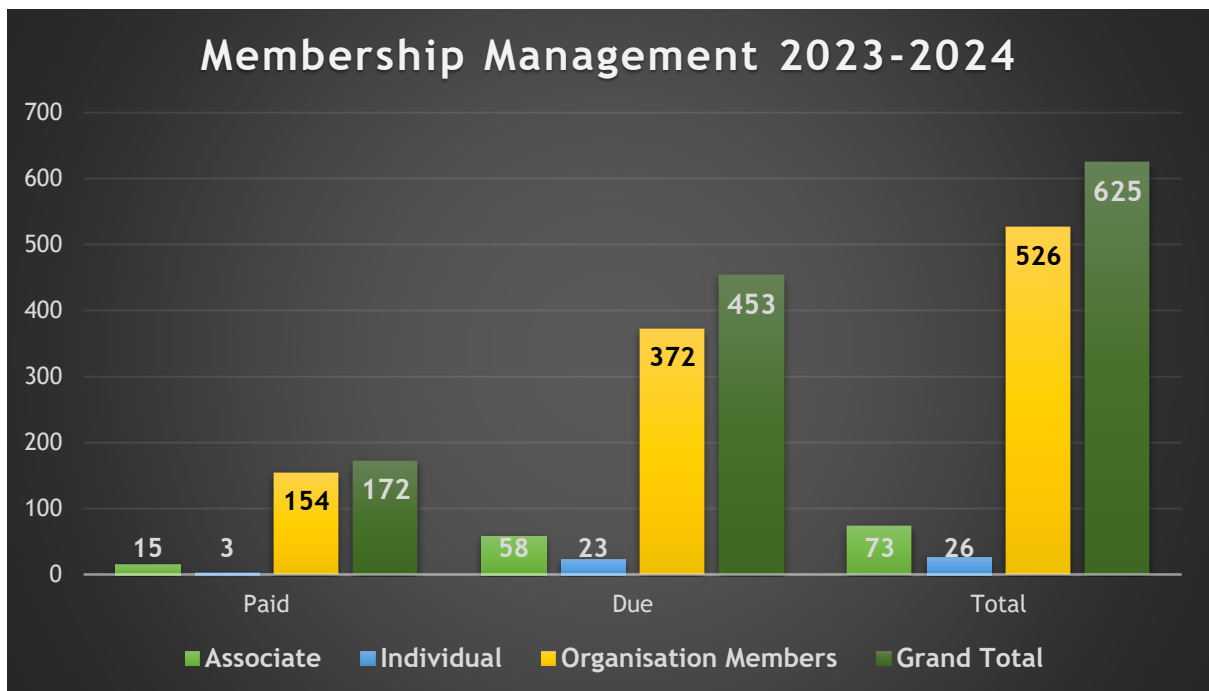


## *Chapter 6 - List of meetings & webinars for the Financial Year 2023-2024*

<b>Date</b>	<b>Theme/Purpose</b>	<b>Venue</b>
April 27 ,2023	Status of Social Security among Grassroots Activists: Constraints and Scope	Online
May 18-19, 2023	A National Consultation on the - “Importance of Knowledge Generation and Dissemination for the CSO Sector”	Delhi
May 30 -31, 2023	Regional Consultation with CSOs	Ranchi, Jharkhand
May 29 to 31,2023	Budget Basics and Gender Budgeting	Online
June 13,2023	Webinar on "Women Leaders from Indian Civil Society: Breaking Barriers and Making Impact on Global Platforms"	Online
July 12,2023	Webinar on VANI Membership Drive	Online
August 3, 2023	CBGA-SDG Workshop	Online
August 9, 2023	Round Table discussion on Social Stock Exchange	Physical meeting
September 4, 2023	Social Stock Exchange	Online
September 14-15, 2023	Consultation with CSOs	Rajasthan
September 21,2023	Consultation on universal access in education in India	Delhi, VANI office
October 08,18,19, 21,22, 2023	How Good Governance and management System Contributed to organisational Effectiveness	Online
October 18,2023	Beyond Barriers: Empowering Women Leaders to Rise Above Glass Ceilings and Sticky Floors	Delhi
October 27,2023	India's Role in Global Platforms: CSO Perspectives	Online
December 26 & 27,2023	Unveiling Opportunities: The Dynamics of Collectivisation and Resource Generation in the Contemporary World	Delhi
February 21,2024	Unlocking – Social Stock Exchange	Online
March 27,2024	Navigating Posh Act	Online

## Chapter 7 - Membership Management

2023-2024			
Category	Paid	Due	Total
Associate	15	58	73
Individual	3	23	26
Organisation Members	154	372	526
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>172</b>	<b>453</b>	<b>625</b>



**Total amount received**  
**1<sup>st</sup> April 2023 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024 Rs. 9,56,985/-**

## Chapter 8 - Summary of Income and Expenditure

**INCOME AND EXPENDITURE**  
**Year Ended 31.03.2024**  
**Extracted from Audited Statement of Accounts 2023-24**

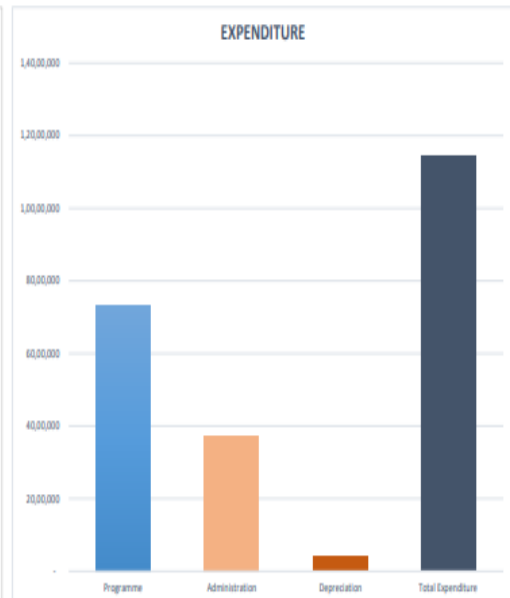
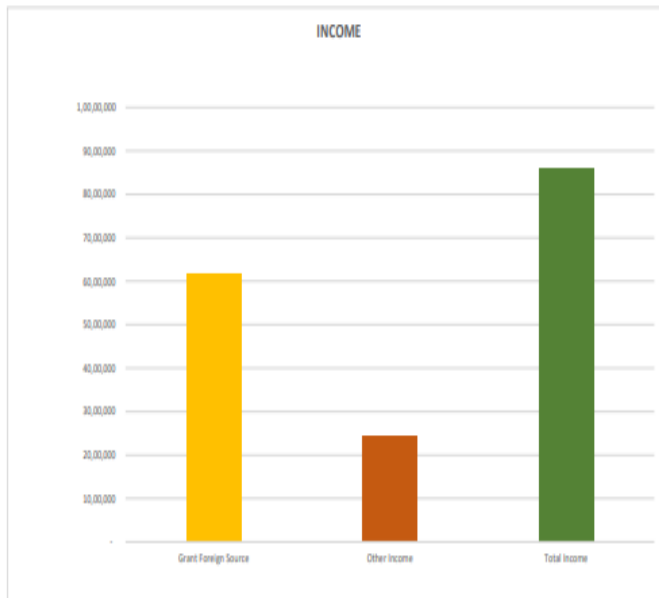
In INR

### Income

Grant (Foreign Source)	61,70,864
Other Income	<u>24,23,572</u>
<b>Total Income</b>	<b><u>85,94,436</u></b>

### Expenditure

Programmatic Expenditure	73,21,625
Administrative & Overhead Expenses	37,18,910
Depreciation	<u>3,94,383</u>
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b><u>1,14,34,918</u></b>
<b>Excess/ (Deficit) of Income Over Expenditure</b>	<b><u>(28,40,482)</u></b>





## **Chapter 9 - Governing Board**

*(as of 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024)*

### **Chairperson**

Mr. Binoy Acharya

Director, Unnati, Organisation for Development Education

### **Treasurer**

Ms. Jaswant Kaur,

Individual, New Delhi

### **Chief Executive Officer**

Mr. Harsh Jaitli, Voluntary Action Network India, New Delhi

### **Working Committee Members**

Mr. Amod Kanth, Founder & General Secretary, Prayas JAC Society

Ms. Puja Marwaha, Chief Executive, CRY - Child Rights and You

Ms. Hemal Kamat, Director & Secretary, Concept Society

Mr. G. Placid, Director, SAHAYI- Centre for Collective Learning and Action

Mr. Basant Yadav, President, Sahabhagi Samaj Sevi Sanstha

Mr. K. Panchaksharam, Secretary & CEO, SIPA-Federation of South India Producer Associations

Mr. Saradindu Banerjee, SHG Promotional Forum

Mr. K.N. Tiwari, Director, Disha Social Organisation

## **Chapter 10 - VANI Team**

**(as of 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024)**



**Mr. Harsh Jaitli, Chief Executive Officer**

**Mr. Ravi Ranjan Rawat, Accounts Officer**

**Dr. Pallavi Rekhi, Programme Officer**

**Mr. Dhiraj Kumar Tiwari, In-Charge Admin & Facilities**

**Ms. Neha Shrivastava, Accounts Assistant**

**Ms. Subhashini Prabhakar, Programme Associate**

**Dr. Shabeen Ara, Consultant**

**Ms. Aakansha, Admin Assistant**

**Mr. Krishnadev Goswami, Support Staff**

## **About Voluntary Action Network India (VANI)**

Voluntary Action Network India (VANI) is the apex body of Voluntary Development Organizations. It has a strong network base of over 625 direct and outreach to over 15,000 organizations, spread across India.

VANI has always been upfront with the issues and challenges of voluntary organizations and has been working towards building a stronger network of civil society organisations in the country. VANI, as the voice of the sector, works relentlessly towards playing a constructive role in social cohesion, economic empowerment and national building. VANI acts as a catalyst for change through strengthening leadership, evidence-based research and documentation and outreach enhancement through membership engagement.

Over the years, VANI has also worked with several policy making and government institutions to enhance partnerships and collaborations. Being a membership-based organisations, VANI strives for collectivisation of the sector through its membership engagement.



### **Voluntary Action Network India (VANI) (An Apex Body of Voluntary Organisations)**

VANI HOUSE, 7, PSP Pocket,

Sector-8, Dwarka, New Delhi-110077

011-49148610, 40391661

E: [info@vaniindia.org](mailto:info@vaniindia.org)

W: [www.vaniindia.org](http://www.vaniindia.org)

Youtube: <https://www.youtube.com/@vaniperspective7203>

Twitter- @vani\_info, Facebook-@TeamVANI