

# Funding Application Form

Global Standard for CSO Accountability – Extension Phase 2018/19

## SECTION 1: General Information

Date of grant request: 06.08.2019

Revised Grant Request : 30.10.2019

Name of organization requesting funding: Voluntary Action Network India (VANI)

Project title: Strengthening Civil Society in India and South Asia: Promoting Accountability and Building Positive Narrative

Wiring or Bank Information:

Account Name : Voluntary Action Network India

Bank : Canara Bank

Account Number : 1387101012550

Branch : Canara Bank, Sector-20 Dwarka, New Delhi-110077

Swift Code : CNRBINBBDFM

IFSC : CNRB0006478

Main contact person

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Position title: Chief Executive Officer

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Amount of funding request: Euros 19,988

Grant period: October 2019 – September 2020

Project period: October 2019 – September 2020 (Report Preparation in October 2020)

Key staff or volunteers leading the project: Harsh Jaitli, CEO; Nivedita Datta, Programme Manager and Programme and Communication Team

## SECTION 2: Achievements and Impact

Note: All suggested projects have to be in line with the agreed objectives of the *Global Standard* extension phase (Annex I) and will be assessed against the agreed criteria (Annex II).

### 1. Which objectives of the extension phase does this project aim to contribute to?

The project aims to contribute to the larger objective of the Global Standard initiative of strengthening accountability, resilience and solidarity, amongst Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) in India and South Asia region (including Nepal and Bangladesh).

VANI will take forth the project in the second extension phase and achieve the following goals under the project:



- a) Strengthen the CSOs capacity to engage with Global Standard
- b) Create a knowledge pool on Global Standard and Dynamic Accountability
- c) Promote the use of Global Standard
- d) Inspire and nurture Global Standard and Dynamic Accountability

## 2. Project description:

### Background

India is a big country, with large civil society sector (an estimated 3.5 million). Despite the size, it lacks a government defined regulatory framework. Though the Voluntary Organisations (VOs) as a whole working within the sector acknowledge the need for accountability and transparency, the ones working especially at medium, small and micro level, feel constrained in adherence due to rapidly shrinking civic space and severe paucity of resources (both financial as well as human). Third party assessment (perceived gateway to funds from corporate) from multiple accreditation agencies is beyond their reach due to extremely high fees. Thus, the pace at which systemic change takes place within these organisations is somewhat slow due difficult operational circumstances. Thus, these medium, small and micro level organisations need perseverance, time, close and constant hand-holding in order to bring requisite change in their accountability systems and practices.

VANI is a network of CSOs in India (over 560 direct members and an outreach to almost 10,000 CSOs across the country). Since a large part of VANI's member base comprises medium, small and micro level voluntary organisations, it has been promoting self-regulation through its Code of Conduct which it developed over three decades back. However, withtime and change in socio-economic and political landscape, the Code required an up-dation. At the same time (2014-15), VANI got associated with the Global Standard initiative and started contributing towards the drafting of Global Standard for CSO effectiveness. In India, VANI initiated a participatory process with its different stakeholders (Governing Body, Board, Sector Experts, Civil Society Organisations, Academia, Staff and Volunteers etc) to deliberate on up-dation (with comprehensive revised commitments with measurable indicators) of its code in line with the Global initiative which VANI was associated with at the international level. Up-dation of VANI's Code (Declaration of Responsible and launch of Global Standard happened in 2017. Later, Global Standard initiative expanded its focus towards the Dynamic Accountability approach by undertaking webinars and developing concept note. Thus, VANI also incorporated informing and building capacities of Indian Voluntary Organisations on Dynamic Accountability.

In extension phase one of Global Standard Project, VANI was engaged in promoting Global Standard and Dynamic Accountability initiative at three levels –

- 1) National - with VOs, Accreditation Agencies, Government and Corporate in India
- 2) Regional - with CSO networks like NGO Federation of Nepal, Coast Trust – Bangladesh and Bhutan Transparency Initiative, Bhutan
- 3) Global – with CSO Networks like Forus



## Proposed Activities in Second Extension Phase – October 2019 – September 2020

In continuation of VANI's efforts and in line with the overall strategic global focus of the initiative in the current phase, VANI proposes the following activities in the second extension phase:

### 1. Goal: Strengthen CSOs capacity to engage with the Global Standard

#### Activity:

**Training of Trainers:** In order to address the need of the voluntary organisations for sustainable (*within close proximity*) handholding for systemic improvements, VANI proposes to organise two regional level training of trainers interventions. The first one will be held in North India (Delhi with participants from CSOs North, Western and Southern states in India). The second one will be organised in East India (in State of Odisha or Jharkhand with participants from CSOs from East and North-Eastern States).

The aim of the intervention is to provide intensive training over two days to 30 Accountability Trainers (15 trainers in each training workshop). The trainers will be encouraged to form a first of its kind group of mutual learning and peer sharing as Collective of Accountability Trainers (CoAT).

VANI will to invite participants from CSO networks like NGO Federation of Nepal and Coast Trust, Bangladesh and CSOs from Nepal and Bangladesh (South Asian countries) who had shown interest in use of Global Standard during the training of trainers.

The curriculum would include sessions on

- Need for Accountability;
- Global Standards for CSO Accountability;
- Dynamic Accountability;
- Assessment Tools

As a subsequent step, the participants will be encouraged to review their organisations and incorporate improvement in line with some (as per organisations capacity) commitments outlined in Global Standard and document them for sharing with larger audience. Online technical assistance to the Accountability Trainers will be provided by VANI, as and when required.

### 2. Goal : Creation of Knowledge Pool on Global Standard and Dynamic Accountability

#### Activities

As part of the collateral preparation, before the training of trainers the undermentioned collaterals will be prepared:

**Stories of Success on Global Standard:** Five strong case studies/stories of success of Global Standard Project Partners will be collected and shared to



showcase the positive impact and effects of systemic improvements in NGOs around the world, subsequent to adoption of Global Standards.

**Dynamic Accountability Practices:** Similarly, three stories on Dynamic Accountability practices from the community of practise and the systemic improvement post the use of Assessment Tool shall be prepared. Support from Rendir Cuentas shall be solicited to collate stories about the usage and positive impact of Assessment tool usage.

In addition to the usage of the above case studies during the training sessions, VANI will also share these stories of success to its stakeholders via e-mails, e-newsletter, social media, reference on its Youtube channel.

### 3. Goal: Promote the use of Global Standard

#### Activity

**Multi Stakeholder Consultation in India:** In order to counter the negative narrative about the sector, VANI has been positioning the civil society as a self-regulated sector. Presence of string accountability tools like the globally acknowledged Global Standard and VANI's Code play a very important role in establishing credibility. These tools have already been shared with representatives of Government, accreditation agencies, corporate and industrial bodies. However, in order to reiterate the message there is a need for a continued dialogue to ignite action/acknowledgement from either the Government or the corporate there is a need for regular dialogue. Thus, VANI proposes to hold a multi-stakeholder engagement on Accountability, with participation from Government, Industrial bodies, Academic Institutions and Accreditation Agencies along with the CSOs. The aim of the intervention will be to share the best practices /stories of success from use of Global Standard and Dynamic Accountability.

VANI aims to get atleast one out of the top three accreditation agencies in India, agree on referencing Global Standard while assessing the organisations.

**Outreach in Sri Lanka and Afghanistan:** In addition, VANI will broaden the awareness and use of framework further in South Asia in countries like Sri Lanka and Afghanistan, through online sharing of information about Global Standard and Dynamic Accountability. Opportunities for informal discussion during participation of VANI staff in the meetings organised by ADA will also be explored.

VANI, through write-ups in newsletters, will also leverage its partnerships with AGNA, ADA and ADN to promote Global Standard and Dynamic Accountability.

### 4. Inspire and nurture Global Standard and Dynamic Accountability

#### Activity



VANI will contribute two articles in the newsletters of CSO networks like ADA, ADN, Forus and AGNA to inspire and nurture referencing to Global Standard and Dynamic Accountability amongst their member organisations.

Since both NGO Federation of Nepal and Coast Trust Bangladesh work on Accountability of NGOs within their countries. VANI will try to take a session on Global Standards and Dynamic Accountability and/or SDGs in the Annual General Meeting/Consultation to in Nepal and Bangladesh. Like in the past, VANI will try to raise sponsorship for travel to Nepal and Bangladesh from either the host organisation and/or any other entity/organisation. Through this VANI aims to motivate atleast one CSO network or NGOs (from Nepal or Bangladesh) to reference Global Standard for furthering accountability code in their country.

### 3. Desired outcomes:

Outcome	Strategy for Achievement	Measurements of success (numerical when possible)
<p>1. Increased CSO capacities with Global Standard</p>	<p>Training of Trainers (two Workshops) organised</p> <p>15 Senior members/Accountability Experts from CSOs India (30-35 trainers in total in two workshops) provided intensive training on Global Standard and Dynamic Accountability.</p> <p>VANI aims to invite members from NGO Network Nepal and Coast Trust Bangladesh or CSOs from Nepal and Bangladesh to participate in the training of trainers.</p> <p>A Collective of 30 Accountability Trainers (CoAT) formed.</p>	<p>A collective of At least 30 Trainers developed as Accountability Experts for focussed and sustained mentoring efforts.</p> <p>At least 15-20 organisations review their and incorporate improvement in line with the commitments outlined in Global Standard.</p> <p>At least 10 strong case-studies of systemic improvement developed by trainers subsequent to training.</p> <p>Dissemination of the 10 case studies to 560 VANI members</p> <p>Online sharing of case studies through E-mails, VANI's e-newsletter, Social Media platforms including Youtube, Facebook, Twitter.</p>
<p>2. Use of Global Standard promoted</p>	<p>One Multi-Stakeholder Consultation organised with 20 representatives from CSOs, Government, industrial bodies, accreditation agencies, corporate and academic institutions to influence the government to</p>	<p>Atleast one accreditation out of three major accreditation agencies in India has agreed a pathway to adopting or referencing Global Standard.</p>



	develop a regulatory framework for Indian Civil Society.	
3. Created knowledge pool on Global Standard and Dynamic Accountability	Documentation and dissemination of experiences and stories of success from Project Partners from across globe on use of Global Standard and how it has impacted the Civil Society Organisations across different countries.	At least five stories of success from Project Partners prepared and shared with the Accountability Trainers to showcase the impact.
	Documentation of different Dynamic Accountability practices undertaken around the globe.	At least three stories on Dynamic Accountability practices/reflecting positive impact subsequent to use of Assessment Tool App, prepared and shared with trainers at the training session.
4. Inspired and nurtured Global Standard and Dynamic Accountability in South Asia	Leveraging VANI's existing relations with CSO networks like ADA, ADN, AGNA to expand outreach by writing articles in their newsletters for member CSOs.	At least two articles on Dynamic Accountability and Global Standards published in the newsletters of CSO networks like ADA, ADN, AGNA.
	<p>Connects will be made with CSOs in other South Asian countries like Sri Lanka and Afghanistan for understanding the presence of and experience with accountability codes in their respective countries.</p> <p>VANI will try to take a session on Global Standards and Dynamic Accountability and/or SDGs in the Annual General Meeting/Consultation to in Nepal and Bangladesh. Like in the past, VANI will try to raise sponsorship for travel to Nepal and Bangladesh from either the host organisation and/or any other entity/organisation.</p>	<p>Through this VANI aims to extend the outreach of Global Standards and Dynamic Accountability amongst CSOs in Sri Lanka and Afghanistan.</p> <p>Through this VANI aims to motivate at- least one CSO network or NGOs (from Nepal or Bangladesh) to reference Global Standard for furthering accountability code in their country.</p>



#### 4. Work Plan and Timeline:

Objective	Activities	Delivery Date
a) Promote the use of Global Standard and strengthen the CSOs capacity in India and South Asia (Nepal and Bangladesh) to engage with Global Standard	Planning, collateral preparation and identification of participants from India, Nepal and Bangladesh for training of trainers	November 2019 – January 2020
	Holding of two regional level Training of Trainers Workshops one each in East (covering Eastern and North Eastern states) and one in North (covering the states of North and West India).	February 2020 – May 2020
	At least 10 strong case-studies of systemic improvement from trainers subsequent to training.	June 2020 – August 2020
	Online Sharing of case-studies with different key stakeholders	August 2020 - September 2020
	Organise a Multi-Stakeholder Dialogue on Regulatory Framework, CSO Accountability and SDG achievements	August 2020
b) Create a knowledge pool on Global Standard and Dynamic Accountability	Preparation of success stories/stories of impact showcasing positive impact of Global Standards with the support of Global Standards Project Partners (assistance will be requested from CCC and ACFID from their experience of working in South East Asia and Pacific).	November 2019 – January 2020
c) Inspire and nurture a Global Standards and Dynamic Accountability community of practice	Two articles in the newsletters of CSO networks (like ADA, ADN, AGNA and Forus) to promote Global Standard and Dynamic Accountability.	April 2020 – August 2020



	<p>Participation* in at least two International Level Workshops (one each in Nepal, Bhutan and Bangladesh) like the Annual general body Meeting and/or any meeting organised by NGO Federation of Nepal (network of over 6500 NGOs from across 77 districts in Nepal) and Coast Trust to link Global Standard with Sustainable Development Goals.</p> <p>*Subject to availability of sponsorship/funds for travel to Nepal and Bangladesh.</p>	January 2020 – September 2020
d) Narrative and Financial Reporting	Preparation and submission of narrative and financial reports.	October 2020

## 5. Who will benefit from this project? Direct, indirect?

**Civil Society Organisations (CSOs):** Capacities of Indian CSOs and those in Bhutan, Bangladesh and Nepal will be built through direct sensitization intervention. 30 Trainers from organisations will directly benefit in enhancing their understanding about Accountability Standards and Dynamic Accountability approach. They shall further benefit more civil society organisations in India, Nepal and Bangladesh in future. The experiences from the project partners shall help them get a better understanding of how the standards and enhancing the effectiveness of civil society organisations working in different contexts across the globe. Also, they shall be encouraged to make systemic improvements within their own organisations with the help of the commitments from the standards.

In addition, write-ups will be shared with members of ADA, ADN, AGNA.

**Donors:** VANI has been organising multi-stakeholder engagements bringing together corporate and institutional donors on our different interventions including dialogues on multi-stakeholder partnerships and SDGs. During these engagements, VANI has been and will continue to enhance donors understanding about accountability standards used by Civil Society organisations. This may increase the chances of their partnership on the subject in future.

**Government:** VANI has shared its Code of Conduct and Global Standard for CSO accountability with the members of the sub-committee of Niti Aayog, Ministry of





Corporate Affairs etc. Going forward, VANI shall be interacting further with the government officials to further to discussions.

**Accreditation Agencies:** In order to prevent the above, VANI shall continue advocating with the accreditation agencies for identification of common accountability parameters, their universal recognition and streamlining of assessment indicators to make them relevant for the changing Indian context. This shall benefit the small and grass-root level CSOs and the corporate (who are in need to credible voluntary organisations as part of CSR initiative). Accreditation agencies shall be invited to the CSO-HNI connect interventions to understand the accountability expectations of different stakeholders from each other.

**Media:** There is an urgent need for the sector to sensitize media about the accountability practices adopted by civil society in order to seek their support in building a positive image of the sector. Good case studies showing responsible practices adopted by Indian Civil society will be shared with media to build a positive narrative of the sector.

## 6. How will you engage various stakeholder groups?

**Constant engagement with stakeholders will be ensured via:**

1. Online
  - A. E-Mails: Sharing of event reports
  - B. Social Media Platforms: Facebook, Twitter and VANI's website
2. Offline
  - A. Inter-personal (Face to Face) – Training of Trainers and intra-inter sector dialogues.

## 7. How will you monitor and evaluate your achievements?

Achievements will be monitored and measured by way:

- Periodic evaluation (quarterly) through progress tracker will be undertaken to measure achievements against planned interventions.
- Registration Sheets: for recording attendance and participation in training of trainers and Multi-stakeholder dialogue.
- Documentation: photographs from Trainings and Multi-stakeholder dialogue. Individual reports for the trainings and dialogue will be prepared.

## 8. How will you ensure the results from this project are sustainable?

In this year, VANI intends to build capacities of trainers on Global Standards and Dynamic Accountability. We shall also explore possibility of future funding from other donors and corporate for taking the initiative forward. VANI is also trying to seek support from Government of India to provide funds towards institutional capacity building of Civil Society Organisations.



**9. Have gender specific issues and programming/budgeting been included in developing this project? If so, please explain how.**

Yes, gender specific issues and programming have been included in all VANI’s activities.

VANI has been promoting strengthening of internal systems of voluntary organisations. It is also working towards encouraging Indian Civil Society to play an enhanced role in implementation and monitoring of SDGs. As part of SDG 5, VANI is encouraging enhanced gender presence (especially at the leadership positions) amongst the Civil Society, through its Women Leadership Forum. Adherence to gender sensitive and safe workplace policies and practices is focussed in VANI interventions around internal system strengthening. Like our other programmes’ representation of women participants across all interventions will be maintained in this project. Write-ups on gender issues will be shared in VANI’s newsletter.

**10. Are there any environmental impacts of this project and/or the organisation? If so which and how are these managed with?**

As part of internal system strengthening, VANI discussion platforms generate awareness amongst Indian Voluntary Organisations to adopt environment friendly policies and practices including paper-less/digital work culture, reducing carbon foot-prints by using public mode of transportation, conserving water and electricity, rain water harvesting, encouraging reuse of water, pooling in of resources. VANI will continue to focus on this critical area in our interventions including the trainings and other interventions.

**SECTION 3: Financial Information**

**11. Please list other key donors or sources of income:** The list of other donors for the organisation are as under (with details in the budget template).

Source	Description	Amount (EUR)	Notes
Kerk in Actie		51,000	
Heinrich Boell Stiftung		15,818	
Forus/IFP		19,902	European Union Funded Project on SDGs

**12. Due Diligence Documents: Please provide us with the following documents as attachments (if not applicable please state your reasons below):**

- 1.1 Description of organization/ entity/ their work and structure/ key objectives and mission / board and governance structure
- 1.2 Legal registration status / Certificate of incorporation/ Articles of association
- 1.3 Current tax and VAT status



- 1.4 Most recent organizational financial audit
- 1.5 Specific anti-fraud and anti-corruption policies
- 1.6 Organigram or other staff/task structure
- 1.9 Procurement policy

Note: Successful project partners might be asked to provide additional due diligence documents to assess their organisational capacity as laid out in Annex II.

**13. Please provide us with a detailed budget proposal, laying out all expected expenditures using the attached template.**

Note: Proposals of more than 40.000 € need to be audited. Audit costs can be included in the budget. The Review Panel will assess budget proposals against criteria 4, as listed in Annex II and might ask successful applicants to amend (parts of) the budget.

**SECTION 4: Risk assessment**

Please provide us with a brief assessment risk of internal and external risks as perceived by your organisation. If possible, also assess the possibility and impact of said risk and how these risks can be managed.

Risk	Description	Possibility and Impact	Mitigation
Regulatory Regime	Introduction of rules and policies inhibiting implementation	Constrained work environment making it difficult to implement some activities	Constant engagement with government. As a national platform, VANI has the ability to influence policies and rules, however, only to a certain extent.
Gradual Uptake of CSOs	Majority of CSOs in India are small and medium scale	This segment may take time to incorporate Dynamic Accountability / Code of Conduct	Sustained capacity building initiative and mentoring

**SECTION 5: Comments**

Please provide any other information you think will help us understand the project you are proposing.

## REALLOCATION DUE TO COVID

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, some activities in this proposals were amended. The delivery period of the project was also extended to 30 November 2020. The affected activities are revised as below:

- Due to inability to meet in person and physical distancing needs - the two Trainings of Trainers and the in-person Multi-stakeholder Dialogue could not take place.

In their place, VANI proposed to publish a publication entitled “Global Standard, Accountable Practices and Indian CSOs in times of Covid-19”, hold 4 digital meetings over Zoom to build national CSOs’ capacities on Global Standard and accountability practices, hold one Physical Round Table Meeting on Accountability of Civil Society Leaders in October/November if conditions permits.

Alongside these activities, VANI proposes to continue to engage its audience through a Social Media Campaign and to continue its engagement with the government through multiple channels