

Government of Bihar



STATE POLICY ON THE VOLUNTARY SECTOR

2010

Department of Planning & Development

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THE STATE POLICY ON THE VOLUNTARY SECTOR - 2010

1. Preamble

1.1 This Policy is a commitment to encourage, enable and empower an independent, creative and effective voluntary sector, with diversity in form and function, so that their contribution is made more valuable for the holistic development of the State.

1.2 The voluntary sector has contributed significantly to finding innovative solutions to illiteracy, community disharmony, poverty, deprivation, discrimination and exclusion, through means such as awareness raising, social mobilization, service delivery, training, research, and advocacy. The voluntary sector has been serving as an effective non-political link between the people and the Government. This policy recognizes the important role that the voluntary sector has to play in various areas and affirms the growing need for partnership with the VOs by the Government, as well as by the private sector, at the local, regional and State levels.

2. Scope of the Policy

2.1 In the Policy, Voluntary Organizations (VOs) mean to include **not for profit** organizations, formal or informal, engaged in public service. VOs can be of different types such as community-based organizations (CBOs), non-governmental development organizations (NGDOs), charitable organizations, organizations involved in policy research and advocacy, movement based organizations, resource and research centers, support organizations, networks or federations of such organizations, as well as professional membership associations. They also include institutions which are engaged in micro credit, micro finance, livelihood support and similar activities.

2.2 To be covered under the Policy, VOs should broadly have the following characteristics:

- a) They are non-governmental, i.e., not controlled by State or Central Government.
- b) They are not-for-profit organisations i.e. they do not return profits generated to their owners or directors
- c) They are self-governing, i.e. they have their own rules of governance consistent with laws and rules enacted by State or Central Government.
- d) They are registered organizations or informal groups, with defined aims and objectives.

3. Objectives of the Policy

3.1 The specific objectives of the policy are listed below:

3.1.1 To create an enabling environment for VOs that stimulates their innovation, enterprise and effectiveness, and safeguards their autonomy;

3.1.2 To support financially and technically the activities of VOs involved in development and to enable them to legitimately mobilize necessary financial and technical resources from India and abroad;

3.1.3 To identify systems by which the State Government may work together with VOs, on the basis of the principles of mutual trust and respect, and with shared responsibility; and,

3.1.4 To encourage VOs to adopt transparent and accountable systems of governance and management giving due respect to their self-regulatory systems.

The following paragraphs describe how these objectives are to be achieved.

4. Establishing an Enabling Environment for the Voluntary Sector

4.1. The State Government will develop laws, policies, rules and regulations in such a way that Voluntary Organizations' autonomy is completely respected and at the same time enable them to strengthen self-regulations and accountability.

4.2 Voluntary organizations may be registered as societies, charitable trusts, or non-profit companies under Central or State laws. The existing provisions of the Societies Registration Act, 1860 and other relevant acts and rules thereof shall be reviewed and simplified to meet the emerging needs of VOs. The government departments should introduce time bound procedures for dealing with the VOs covering all aspects, from registration to financial assistance.

4.3 The Department of Planning & Development of the state government shall work as a nodal agency to coordinate with other departments, agencies, national and international institutions /organisations and VOs. It shall be consulted by all departments in all kinds of policies related to VOs. Office of District Planning Officer shall be the nodal office at the district level.

4.4 VOs shall address the governance, accountability and transparency of their organizations and State Government will encourage self regulation by the Sector.

5 Partnership in Development (Financial and Technical Support)

5.1. The State recognizes that the Voluntary Sector plays an important role in the development process, particularly at grassroots level by facilitating community participation and ownership. VOs offer alternative perspectives; expertise; insights and understanding of the local opportunities and constraints; and perhaps most importantly, the capacity to constructively engage the community with meaningful dialogue in a sustainable way. It is therefore essential that the State and the Voluntary Sector mutually acknowledge each others' role and work together. Wherever necessary and feasible, such

partnership may include other entities such as *panchayati raj* institutions, and other local bodies such as Town Panchayats, Municipalities and Municipal Corporations, academic institutions, and other such organizations.

5.2. Partnership between the State and VOs implies identifying shared goals and defining complementary roles for achieving shared goals. It is based on the basic principles of mutual trust and respect, with shared responsibility and authority. These principles shall be explicit in the terms and conditions of the partnership and shall be evident in every system of collaboration reflecting collective ownership.

5.3. This Policy recognizes three instruments of partnership, viz.

(i) Participatory Consultation, through a formal process of interaction at the micro and macro levels;

(ii) Strategic collaboration for sustained social mobilization to ensure social justice.

(iii) The State shall provide financial support to VOs for empowerment and improving the quality of life of the marginalized communities.

The State will ensure that these three instruments (Participatory Consultation, Strategic Collaboration and financial support) of partnership are given due attention and made visible in Annual Plans (including Plan, Non- plan and Central Sector Schemes) prepared by all the departments of the State.

The action that will be taken in respect of each of the three instruments is discussed in the following paragraphs.

5.4 The State shall through a Government Order encourage setting up of Joint Consultative Groups / Fora or Joint Machineries of government and voluntary sector representatives in official decision

making bodies. These bodies shall be constituted with a positive discrimination in terms of gender, Persons with Disability, trans-gender, SCs, STs, fisherfolk and other socially excluded communities as related reference groups in respective departments. The representation from the VOs may be made on rotation basis. The State shall encourage district administrations, district planning bodies, district rural development agencies, and Panchayat Raj Institutions to do so. The State shall evolve suitable mechanisms for involving a wide cross-section of the voluntary sector in these Groups / Fora.

5.5. The expertise of the voluntary sector shall be utilized, by including experts from VOs in the committees, task forces, and advisory panels constituted by the State from time to time to help address important and critical issues. A roaster of experts with various expertises in different thematic areas shall be developed at state level and kept ready for this purpose by the VOs. This shall be made available to all government departments.

5.6. The State shall involve Voluntary Organizations where sustained social mobilization is required which include poverty alleviation, skill promotion, entrepreneurship development, empowerment of women and other socially excluded communities, population stabilization, all health related programs, combating HIV/AIDS, labour rights, elimination of bonded / child labour, reviewing the government policies and schemes, managing water resources, elementary/secondary education and forest management, disaster preparedness and management, addressing gender and other equity issues physically challenged, orphans etc. to name a few. Such areas urgently require strategic collaboration between the State Government and VOs, through State level programmes that are long-term in duration, and utilize multiple strategies, innovative methodologies and activities to achieve their objectives.

5.7. The third instrument of partnership between the State and the voluntary sector is financial support. This financial support includes

schemes such as SHGs, surveys, research, workshops, documentation, awareness raising, training, creation and running of public welfare facilities, camps and so on. Project grants are a useful means for the State to promote its activities with the participation of VOs and communities through them. The procedure for Project grant would be simplified and wherever feasible, decentralised. In view of the requirement of growth and sustenance of VOs, State government would consider making provision of ten percent of the total project cost as organisational charges an integral component of Project grants.

5.8 In each department a Screening committee shall be constituted for screening and recommending different projects and schemes to Government of India and other agencies. It will comprise of following members

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| (i) Secretary of the department | - | Chairperson |
| (ii) Representative of Finance department | | Member |
| (iii) Representative of Planning department | | Member |
| (iv) Director/Joint Secretary of the department
dealing with the subject | | Secretary |

6. Strengthening the Voluntary Organisations

6.1. The State shall simplify procedures for VOs to approach various government departments for implementation of any development intervention. The State shall explore the possibility of extending exemptions from Sales Tax, Power tariff concessions and other such State levied taxes in case of Voluntary Organizations. VOs may also be considered to be exempted from deposit of earnest money and security money, wherever they are expected to participate in any tender process.

6.2. The state shall provide necessary facilitation for making donor agencies more accessible to VOs. For this purpose, it shall organise seminars, workshops and fairs for meeting of donor agencies and VOs.

6.3 Accountability and transparency are key issues in good governance. VOs are expected to set and practice its own benchmarks in these areas. The state government would facilitate such practices. The state government would prepare a website where VOs can be encouraged to put up their organisational and financial details for public view. The State shall also recognize and promote excellence in governance among VOs.

6.4 The State Government shall provide financial and technical support for capacity and knowledge building training for the VOs. The state government shall encourage and support starting of courses and institutions necessary for proper functioning and growth of VOs.

6.5 Innovation in institutional, technical, social and other approaches to various human development concerns is an essential ingredient of voluntary action. The State shall encourage and recognize innovative & pioneering work. Such Institutionalization process must recognize the ownership and provide due credit. The state shall recognize the programmatic lessons learnt and useful good practices of VOs and engage VOs in scaling it up through Government programmes wherever possible.

6.6 Information on State Government policies and programmes shall be made easily accessible to VOs. The websites of various State Government agencies will be re-designed to provide links to key documents and databases, including those related to project funding schemes. The state and the VOs shall jointly set up the last mile connectivity through grievance cell and / or setting up a system at state and district levels which will have direct access to the people in

the community; also enabling them to use the tool RTI (right to information) act easily.

6.7 The state shall provide necessary social security benefits for the voluntary sector workers.

6.8 The Government will encourage all its departments to introduce training modules on constructive relations with the voluntary sector in its pre-service and in-service training programmes.

7. State Monitoring Committee

A State Monitoring Committee shall be constituted to oversee the implementation of the policy. It shall comprise of following members:

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| (i) | Development Commissioner | Chairperson |
| (ii) | Principal Secretary/Secretary,
Planning and Development Department | Secretary |
| (iii) | Principal Secretary/Secretary
Finance Department | Member |
| (iv) | Principal Secretary/Secretary
Rural Development Department | Member |
| (v) | Principal Secretary/Secretary
Health Department | Member |
| (vi) | Principal Secretary/Secretary
Public Health & Engineering Department | Member |
| (vii) | Principal Secretary/Secretary
Social Welfare Department | Member |
| (viii) | Principal Secretary/Secretary
Scheduled Caste & Scheduled Tribe
Welfare Department | Member |
| (ix) | Principal Secretary/Secretary | |

	Backward Classes & Extremely Backward Classes	
	Welfare Department	Member
(x)	Principal Secretary/Secretary	
	Information & Public Relation Department	Member
(xi)	Principal Secretary/Secretary	
	Energy Department	Member
(xii)	Principal Secretary/Secretary	
	Rural Works Department	Member
(xiii)	Principal Secretary/Secretary	
	Human Resource Development Department	Member
(xiv)	Principal Secretary/Secretary	
	Labour Resources Department	Member
(xv)	Principal Secretary/Secretary	
	Minority Welfare Department	Member

Any other department/person may be made a member on the recommendation of the Development Commissioner.

This State Policy on the Voluntary Sector-2010 is the beginning of a process to evolve a new partnership between the Government and the Voluntary Sector, without affecting the autonomy and identity of VOs.