

## WORKSHOP ON GOOD GOVERNANCE IN CSOs AND NATIONAL POLICY ON VOLUNTARY SECTOR

Voluntary Action Network India (VANI), a national level network of Voluntary organizations spread across 24 states of India, in association with VANI members in J&K state, organized a two-day workshop on Good Governance in NGO's and National Policy on the Voluntary sector in Srinagar on 10-11 September 2007. Professor G.M. Wani, Director



Extension Education SK University of Agriculture Science and Technology Srinagar inaugurate the Workshop. Speaking on the occasion, Mr. Paresh Tewary, CEO, VANI, emphasized that voluntary Sector must get the credit it deserves, to take up various issues confronting society. The policy on Voluntary sector, which has recently been approved by the Union Cabinet, is a testimony to the fact that the government is willing and eager to treat them as partners.

The Policy is indeed a great victory for the civil society in India, as well as around the world, he said. It provides for a balance between autonomy and engagement with the government. It seeks to end suspicion and clears the way for the voluntary sector to perform by dealing with issues of funding, registration, accreditation, and so on. This is a welcome change from the friction and animosity that has prevailed in the past. The government seems to have put its best foot forward. How the voluntary sector works with the government in an innovative and honest manner to take the country ahead has to be watched carefully.

Mr. Tewary urged upon the state government to soon formulate a policy, on similar lines for Jammu & Kashmir aimed at involving the voluntary sector appropriately for accelerated and inclusive development.

The Session on "Good Governance in NGO's the need, issues and Challenges" was received well by the participating organizations and their representatives. Need to have regular interactions on crucial issues facing the sector, besides bringing diverse organizations on one single platform was also spelt out.

In any operating environment, according to Mr. Tewary, well governed organizations are more effective and more likely to be successful than poorly governed ones. It is because good governance systems focus on activities which contribute to achieve the objective for which the organization exists. Good governance is even for important for organizations in the voluntary sector, as compared to those in the for-profit sector as the voluntary organizations are required the deliver more services and are accountable to its members, donors and various stakeholders whereas the for-profit organizations are primarily accountable to their shareholders to provide a benefit in form of profits.

The workshop was attended by over fifty (50) participants from all over Kashmir and the adjoining areas. Some of the prominent development practitioners who attend the event include, Mr. Imtiyaz Hussain from the NGO's Co-ordination Federation J&K, Mr. Mazher Hussain, COVA, Hyderabad, and Mrs. BEDI, from DST, Pune, just to name a few.