



# Call for Expression of Interest (EOI)

## Rapid Review of Programmatic Intervention on Strategic Communication and Storytelling for Civil Society Organisations

### Background

Vikas Samvad Samiti (VSS) has been implementing a programme on Strategic Communication and Storytelling for the last 5 years. The intervention has been aimed at capacitating the Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) so that they can tap the potential of the discipline of Strategic Communication in pursuing a planned, purposeful approach to communicating that links messages and channels directly to organizational objectives - such as reputation building, behaviour change, or stakeholder alignment. Notably, the purpose of communicating is not simply to inform but to influence the envisaged outcomes by coordinating content, timing, and delivery across an array of touchpoints. Furthermore, the idea has been to enable the CSOs to take on the discipline of Strategic Communication in terms of the craft and culture of Storytelling for progressively creating and building-on their constructive narrative. After all, it is the narrative that accords a vintage position to the CSOs in complementing their key roles and remit. Notably, however, the writing on the wall is clear. The civil society community, both in India and at the global level, has been largely faced with a formidable challenge in not being perceived as a crucial and significantly useful actor in the civic space, and it has to grapple with constriction, restriction, and obstruction from the powers that be.

The programme, accordingly, has been designed and implemented keeping in focus the critical issue of maintaining an expanded civic space wherein the civil society community is a vital and catalytic force to reckon with in shaping and rendering a relational process marked by its interactions with its own constituent civil society organisations as well as the diverse stakeholders in its dynamic ecosystem. Notably, this ecosystem is contextualized in the policy and programmatic response to societal and community issues vis-à-vis the norms on the one hand, and dominant perception about the CSOs, albeit a negative one, on the other.

VSS, therefore, chose to undertake a programme that identifies and addresses the strategic communication needs of the CSOs. It is no gainsaying that the CSOs ought to exercise their leverage to make a meaningful contribution in reconfiguring the civic space and maintaining its sacrosanctity. The initiative, thus, has included a host of actions comprising Capacity Building and Training and, Conclaves, ActShops, Mentoring, Campaign Support, and Resource Development on Storytelling and Story Writing. Developing and embedding inclusive narratives in civil society's operations and practices has been the hallmark of VSS's endeavour characterised by thrusts on Bilingual and Visually Engaging Communication, Reflective Learning, and Systemic Change through storytelling across the thematic pursuits as are undertaken by the CSOs.

Therefore, VSS, in its endeavour to transform itself into a 'Centre for Strategic Communication and Development Visibility', seeks to ensure that the entity eminently functions as an Enabler, Facilitator and Co-creator along with the CSOs for centre-staging strategic communication

and storytelling in their organizational culture, processes and practices. The idea is to help the CSOs create an effective and credible relationship with diverse set of stakeholders, such as government, media, people's representatives, academia, youth and social leaders towards strengthening governance systems and building up constructive relationships amongst them. It needs to be recognised that a pathway in increasing participation of CSOs in the social and policy governance processes paves the way for developing a heightened and an efficacious narrative for and about them as the key actors in securing and sustaining wider civic space.

Thus, the Specific Objective of the programmatic intervention, "Strategic Communication and Storytelling" has been 'to capacitate the CSOs to increase their foothold in the communication sphere through an approach-driven storytelling enabling them to establish the idea, role, and contribution of the civil society community to its stakeholders within and across its ecosystem'. Consequently, VSS now seeks a rapid independent evaluation to assess programme's relevance, effectiveness, impact, and to generate insights for future initiatives.

### **Purpose of the Evaluation**

- *Assess the intervention's relevance, effectiveness, and impact.*
- *Examine how Strategic Communication and Storytelling have influenced organizational culture, stakeholder engagement, and systemic change in and amongst the CSOs.*
- *Identify lessons learned, provide actionable recommendations for deepening impact, and bring out insights for future initiatives.*
- *Capture innovative practices in participatory communication and narrative-building.*

### **Scope of Work**

Interested evaluators/consulting organizations are expected to:

1. *Appraise the relevance of programmatic intervention's design vis-à-vis the strategic communication needs of the CSOs.*
2. *Review programme, implementation, outreach, and outcomes in terms of value added for the civil society community.*

### **Eligibility**

Vikas Samvad Samiti invites EOI from independent consultants, research institutions, or evaluation firms who have demonstrated expertise in Strategic Communication, Storytelling, Participatory Evaluation, and Civil Society Strengthening with experience of working in Hindi and English languages across multicultural contexts.

### **Proposal Submission Guidelines**

#### **Interested parties are requested to submit:**

1. Profile/Organizational Background (max 2 pages)
2. Relevant Experience in programme evaluation, communication, and storytelling.
3. Proposed Approach/Methodology (brief outline)
4. Indicative Budget Range (optional at EOI stage)
5. Contact Information of lead evaluator/organization

### **Timeline**

- Deadline for Submission of EOI: 6<sup>th</sup> Feb 2026
- Shortlisting and Issuance of Request for Proposal (RfP) by VSS: [10<sup>th</sup> Feb 2026]
- Proposal Submission: 20<sup>th</sup> Feb 2026
- Selection and Contracting with the Agency: 28<sup>th</sup> Feb 2026
- Evaluation Commencement: [10<sup>th</sup> March 2026]
- Submission of Draft Evaluation Report: 5<sup>th</sup> May 2026
- Submission of Final Report: 20<sup>th</sup> May 2026
- Presentation of Review Report to VSS/Donor: Mutually agreed date before 31<sup>st</sup> May 2026

Submission: EOIs should be sent to: [communication@vssmp.org](mailto:communication@vssmp.org), contact person Mr. Rakesh Kumar Malviya, +91 99779 58934. Subject line: EOI – "Evaluation of Strategic Communication and Storytelling Programme"