

# **VOLUNTEERS FOR RURAL INDIA**

## **VRI**

formerly known as  
**INDIAN VOLUNTEERS FOR COMMUNITY SERVICE  
IVCS**

### **Constitution**

#### 1. **NAME**

The name of the Association is Volunteers for Rural India (hereinafter called “the Association”).

#### 2. **OBJECTIVES AND POWERS**

(a) The Association is established to

- (1) relieve poverty in India, particularly by undertaking voluntary work and raising funds to assist village development schemes of a charitable nature
- (2) educate the public in the United Kingdom about Indian culture and traditions and other aspects of Indian life
- (3) undertake voluntary work in the U.K. in education, social services and similar charitable activities, particularly for the benefit of persons of Indian origin

(b) In furtherance of the said objects but not otherwise the association may:-

- (1) invite applications from persons wishing to undertake voluntary work and select suitable persons for such work
- (2) arrange and provide for or join in arranging and providing for educational tours and visits including exchange visits
- (3) bring together in conference representatives of voluntary organisations, government departments, statutory authorities and individuals
- (4) promote and carry out or assist in promoting and carrying out research, surveys and investigations and publish the useful results thereof
- (5) arrange and provide for or join in arranging and providing for the holding of exhibitions, meetings, lectures, classes, seminars and training courses
- (6) collect and disseminate information on all matters affecting the said objects and exchange such information with other bodies having similar objects whether in this country or overseas
- (7) undertake, execute, manage or assist any charitable trusts which may lawfully be undertaken, executed, managed or assisted by the Association
- (8) procure to be written and print, publish, issue and circulate gratuitously or otherwise such papers, books, periodicals, pamphlets or other documents or films or recorded tapes as shall further the said objects
- (9) purchase, take on lease or in exchange, hire or otherwise acquire any property and any rights and privileges necessary for the promotion of the said objects and construct, maintain and alter any buildings or erections necessary for the work of the Association
- (10) make regulations for any property which may be so acquired
- (11) sell, let, mortgage, dispose of or turn to account all or any of the property or assets of the Association
- (12) procure contributions to the Association by personal or written appeals, public meetings or otherwise
- (13) accept gifts and borrow or raise money for the said objects on such terms and on such security as shall be thought fit
- (14) invest the moneys of the Association not immediately required for the said objects in or upon such investments, securities or property as may be thought fit, subject nevertheless to such conditions (if any) as may for the time being be imposed or required by law
- (15) employ and pay any person or persons to supervise, organise and carry out on the work of the Association and make all reasonable and necessary provision for the payment of

pensions and superannuation to or on behalf of employees and their widows and other dependants

(16) do all such other lawful things as are necessary for the attainment of the said objects.

### 3. MEMBERSHIP

- (a) Full membership of the Association shall be open to
  - (1) individuals of 18 years and over who are interested in furthering the work of the Association and who have paid the annual subscription as laid down from time to time by the Executive Committee hereinafter mentioned and
  - (2) organisations, whether national, international and local voluntary or other, corporate or incorporate, which are interested in furthering the said work and have paid the annual subscription as aforesaid.
- (b) Each member organisation shall appoint one individual person to represent it and vote on its behalf at General Meetings of the Association. In the event of such individual resigning or otherwise leaving an organisation, he or she shall forthwith cease to be a representative thereof.
- (c) Each member organisation may appoint
  - (1) a deputy to replace its appointed representative if the latter is unable to attend any particular meeting of the Association and
  - (2) observers (who shall not be entitled to vote) to attend any such meeting.
- (d) Associate membership shall be open to those under the age of 18 years who are interested in furthering the work of the Association. Associate members shall not be entitled to vote.
- (e) Honorary members may be appointed at the discretion of the said Executive Committee. Honorary members shall not be entitled to vote.
- (f) The said Executive Committee shall have the right
  - (1) to approve or reject applications for membership and
  - (2) for good and sufficient reason to terminate the membership of any type provided that the member/organisation concerned shall have the right to be heard by the said Executive Committee before a final decision is made
  - (3) to pass a no-confidence vote against any members and /or any honorary officer by a two-thirds majority, all the members present and voting. After the declaration of the passage of no-confidence vote, the honorary officer and./or the member shall be deemed to have resigned and the vacancy shall be filled under clause 5(5).

### 4. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

- (1) Subject as hereinafter mentioned, the policy and general management of the affairs of the Association shall be directed and managed by an Executive Committee (hereinafter called 'the Committee') which shall meet not less than 4 times a year and when complete shall consist of not less than 10 members.
- (2) The members of the committee shall be elected at an annual general meeting of the Association in accordance with clause 7 hereof.
- (3) Election to the committee shall be for three years. One third of the membership shall retire Annually but shall be eligible for re-election, the members so to retire being those who have been longest in office since the last election but not reckoning ex-officio members. As between members who have been in office the same length of time, those due to retire shall be chosen by lot.
- (4) In addition to the members so elected and to those serving by virtue of clause © hereof the Committee may co opt up to 6 further members who shall be full members of the Association Whether individual or representative or a combination of both and who shall serve until the conclusion of the next AGM after individual co option, provided that the number of co opted members shall not exceed one third of the total number of members of the committee in

accordance with clause 5(1) hereof. Co opted members shall be entitled to vote at meetings of the committee.

- (5) Any casual vacancy in the committee may be filled up by the committee and any person appointed to fill such a vacancy shall hold office until the conclusion of the next AGM of the Association and shall be eligible for election at that meeting.
- (6) The proceedings of the committee shall not be invalidated by any failure to elect or any defect in the election, appointment, co option or qualification of any member.
- (7) The committee shall appoint and fix the remuneration of a General Secretary and of all such other staff as may in their opinion be necessary.
- (8) The committee may appoint such special or standing committees as may be deemed necessary by the committee and shall determine their terms of reference, powers, duration and composition. All acts and proceedings of such special or standing committees shall be reported back to the committee as soon as possible.

#### 5. HONORARY OFFICERS

- (a) At the AGM hereinafter mentioned, the committee shall elect a chairperson, a vice chairperson, a general secretary, a treasurer and such other honorary officers as the committee shall from time to time decide.
- (b) The honorary officers shall hold office until the conclusion of the second AGM of the Association next after their election and shall be eligible for re-election.
- (c) The honorary officers shall be ex-officio members of the Association and the said Executive Committee.
- (d) The committee shall appoint one or more auditors and may determine their remuneration, if any.

#### 6. MEETINGS OF THE ASSOCIATION

- (1) The First General Meeting of the Association shall be held not later than Dec. 1982 and once in each year thereafter an AGM shall be held at such time (not being more than 15 months after the holding of the preceding AGM) and place as the committee shall determine. At least 15 days' notice shall be given in writing by the General Secretary to each member.  
At the AGM the business shall include the election of full members to serve on the committee, the election of honorary officers by the committee, the consideration of an annual report of the work done by or under the auspices of the committee and of the audited accounts; and the transaction of such other matters as may from time to time be deemed necessary by the committee.
- (2) The chairperson of the committee may at any time at his or her discretion and the General Secretary shall within 21 days of receiving a written request so to do signed by not less than ten full members and giving reasons for the request call a special General Meeting of the Association.

#### 7. NOMINATIONS OF HONORARY OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE MEMBERS

- (a) Only full members of the Association shall be eligible to serve as honorary officers or members of the committee.
- (b) Nominations for all these posts must be made by full members of the Association in writing and must be in the hands of the General Secretary before the AGM.
- © Should nominations exceed vacancies election shall be by ballot.

#### 8. RULES OF PROCEDURE AT ALL MEETINGS

- (a) Quorum The quorum at a meeting of the Association or the committee or of any committee appointed under clause 5(8) hereof shall be one third of the total membership, or five, whichever is less.
- (b) Voting Save as otherwise herein provided, all questions arising at any meeting shall be decided by a simple majority of those present and entitled to vote thereat. No person shall exercise more than one vote notwithstanding that he or she may have been appointed to represent two or more interests, but in the case of an equality of votes, the chairperson of the meeting shall have a second or casting vote.

- (c) Minutes Minute books shall be kept by the committee and all the other committees and the appropriate secretary shall enter therein a record of all proceedings and resolutions.
- (d) Standing Orders and Rules The committee shall have power to adopt and issue standing orders and/or rules for the Association. Such standing orders and/or rules shall come into operation immediately provided always that they shall be subject to review by the Association in a General Meeting and shall not be inconsistent with the provisions of this constitution.

9. FINANCE

- (a) All monies raised by or on behalf of the Association shall be applied to further the objects of the Association and for no other purpose PROVIDED THAT nothing herein contained shall prevent The payment in good faith of reasonable and proper remuneration to any employee of the Association or the repayment of reasonable out-of-pocket expenses.
- (b) The Honorary Treasurer shall keep proper accounts of the finances of the Association
- (c) A statement of the accounts for the last financial year signed by the Treasurer and any other three members of the committee shall be submitted by the committee to the AGM as aforesaid.
- (d) A bank account shall be opened in the name of the Association with a bank decided by the committee. The committee shall authorize in writing the Treasurer, the Chairperson and the General Secretary of the Association to sign cheques on behalf of the Association. All cheques must be signed by not less than two of the three authorized signatories.

10. TRUST PROPERTY

The title of all real or personal property which may be acquired by or on behalf of the Association shall be vested in a corporation lawfully entitled to act as custodian, trustee or in not less than two individual persons, not being members of the committee.

11. ALTERATIONS TO THE CONSTITUTION

Any alteration of this Constitution shall receive the assent of not less than two-thirds of the full members of the Association whether individual or representative present and voting at a meeting specially called for the purpose PROVIDED THAT notice of any such alteration shall have been received by the General Secretary in writing not less than 21 clear days before the meeting at which the alteration is to be brought forward. At least 14 clear days' notice in writing of such meeting setting forth the terms of the alteration to be proposed shall be sent by the General Secretary to each member of the Association PROVIDED THAT no alteration shall be made which would have the effect of causing the Association to cease to be a Charity at law.

12. DISSOLUTION

If the Committee by a simple majority decide at any time that on the grounds of expense or otherwise it is necessary or advisable to dissolve the Association, it shall call a meeting of all members of the Association who have the power to vote of which meeting not less than 15 days' notice (stating the terms of the Resolution to be proposed thereat) shall be given. If such decision shall be confirmed by a simple majority of those present and voting at such meeting, the committee shall have power to dispose of any assets held by or on behalf of the Association. Any assets remaining after the satisfaction of any proper debts and liabilities shall be given or transferred to such other charitable institution or institutions having objects similar to the objects of the Association as the committee may determine.

13. NOTICES

Any notice may be served by the General Secretary on any member either personally or on its appointed representative as the case may be or by sending it through the post in a prepaid letter addressed to such member at his/her or its last known address in the United Kingdom and any letter so sent shall be deemed to have been received within 10 days of posting.

14. INTERPRETATION

For the interpretation of this Constitution, the Interpretation Act 1978 shall apply as it applies to the interpretation of an Act of Parliament.