
**A Study on Swadhar – A Scheme for Women in Difficult Circumstances
with Special Reference to Widows**

*Priyadarshiniindira. S. Badawal**
Research Scholar, Department of Sociolgy
Gulbarga University, Gulbarga.
*Dr. Chandra Kumar Sedamkar. B***
First Grade Govt. College,
Chittapur. Dist Gulbarga

Introduction

Although Indian family as a social institution is well known for the emotional and physical support that it provides to its extended members, many a time it fails to respond to the needs of women, specially for women in difficult circumstance like widows, destitute and deserted women, women ex-prisoners, victims of sexual abuse and crimes, including those trafficked and rescued from brothels, migrant or refugee women who have been rendered homeless due to natural calamities like flood, cyclone, earthquake, mentally challenged women, women victims of terrorist violence etc. Often the support of immediate or extended family are not available due to reasons ranging from economic instability of the family to provide such support to the breakdown of joint family system to the social bias against the marginalized women as also the attitude and value attached to such women. Sometimes society itself drives such women out of the system to lead lives of sub human existence. More often vulnerable women in distress end up as beggars or prostitutes for their own survival and at times for survivals and maintenance of their dependent children.

Very limited State intervention available through old age home, short stay home, NariNiketanetc, cover only a fringe of the problems of such women. Therefore a scheme known as ‘Swadhar’ has been designed with a more flexible and innovative approach to cater to the requirement of various types of women in distress in diverse situations under different conditions. The Swadhar Scheme purports to address the specific vulnerability of each of group of women in difficult circumstances through a Home-based holistic and integrated approach.

Objective of the scheme

The following shall be the objectives of the scheme:

- i) To provide primary need of shelter, food, clothing and care to the marginalized women/girls living in difficult circumstances who are without any social and economic support;
- ii) To provide emotional support and counseling to such women;

- iii) To rehabilitate them socially and economically through education, awareness, skill up gradation and personality development through behavioral training etc.;
- iv) To arrange for specific clinical, legal and other support for women/girls in need of those intervention by linking and networking with other organizations in both Govt. & Non- Govt. sector on case to case basis;

C. Target Group/Beneficiarie

The following shall be the target group beneficiaries of the scheme

- (i) Widows deserted by their families and relatives and left uncared near religious places where they are victims of exploitation;
- (ii) Women prisoners released from jail and without family support
- (iii) Women survivors of natural disaster who have been rendered homeless and are without any social and economic support;
- (iv) Trafficked women/girls rescued or runaway from brothels or other places or women/girl victims of sexual crimes who are disowned by family or who do not want to go back to respective family for various reasons;
- (v) Women victims of terrorist/**extremist** violence who are without any family support and without any economic means for survival;

Implementing Agencies

The implementing agencies can be the Social Welfare/ Women and Child Welfare Department of State Government, Women's Development Corporations, Urban Local Bodies, reputed Public/Private Trust or Voluntary Organistions who are willing to take up the responsibility of rehabilitating such women. The organization must have adequate experience and expertise of taking up such works of rehabilitation.

E. Eligibility Conditions

The implementing organizations must fulfill the following eligibility conditions:

- a) The organisation should be registered under law and must have a properly constituted Managing Body with its powers, duties and responsibilities clearly defined and laid down in its Constitution;
- b) The organization must not work for the profit of any individual or body of individuals;
- c) It should ordinarily have three years experience after its registration.
- d) Its financial position should be sound;

- e) It should have facilities, resources, experience and personnel to initiate the scheme for which assistance is sought.

F. Components of the Scheme

The scheme shall have the following main components:

- a) Assistance for construction of buildings for the Centre
- b) Rent for the shelter
- c) Assistance for the management of the Centre.
- d) Provision for food, shelter and clothing for the women and their children below the age of 18 years
- e) Counselling for the women in difficult circumstances
- f) Clinical, legal and other support for women in difficult circumstances who are in need of that intervention.
- g) Training for the economic rehabilitation of such women
- h) Help line facilities for such women

The implementing agencies may seek assistance for all the components as mentioned above under the scheme. However, assistance can be sought for a few components also provided that the other facilities are available and holistic care is provided by the organisation to the women in difficult circumstances.

Wherever necessary and feasible, each Centre shall be expected to aim at the convergence of the benefits of separate schemes of DWCD and other Ministries/Departments regarding education, training, health, awareness generation, self-employment etc, which are not specifically provided for in the scheme.

G. Pattern of Assistance

Government shall grant following types of assistance to the implementing organizations for the development of the Centres:

(i) Assistance for purchase of land

Land should be provided free of cost by implementing agencies.

(ii) Assistance for construction of building

Government shall grant assistance for construction of rooms/cottages/ huts for the shelter of the inmates and common facilities like kitchen, bathroom, training hall, recreation room, office room etc and infrastructure facilities like water, electricity, approach road, boundary wall etc. 75% of the cost of such constructions subject to a maximum ceiling of Rs. 25,000 per inmate i.e., Rs. 25 lakhs for a Centre for 100 women shall be permissible. The balance amount for construction shall be paid by the implementing agencies. An agreement **shall** be signed with the NGO to the effect that the building shall not be used for any purpose other than rehabilitation of women in difficult circumstances.

(iii) Assistance for rented accommodation

In the first year of the project, 100% assistance towards rent, subject to a ceiling of Rs. 50,000/- p.m. for a centre for 200 women, and correspondingly for other centers, may be provided in order to enable the implementing agencies to begin implementation of the scheme quickly, while bringing up resources to construct the building or for continuing on rent. However, from the second year onwards 75% assistance, subject to a ceiling of Rs.37,500/- for a centre for 200 women, and correspondingly for other centres, shall be provided. Reasonability of the rent should be certified by the DM/State PWD.

(iv) Administration and Management

The exact quantum of staff to be sanctioned in each project shall be decided on a case-to-case basis. Indicative complement of staff, which can be sanctioned, is provided in the standard modules as provided in Annexure VI. The following shall be the types of staff and their salary that can be sanctioned. The salary structure of the staff shall be reviewed every ten years.

Salary	Per month	Annual
Resident Superintendent	6,000	72,000
Asstt. Superintendent	5,000	60,000
Medical Doctor (part time)	3,000	36,000
Counselor –(Full time)	6,000	72,000
Counselor –(Part time)	2,000	24,000
Trained Nurse (Full time)	4000	48,000
Clerk (Typing, Accounting and Store Keeping)	4000	48,000
Chowkidar/Peon	3000	36,000

In addition, services of a lawyer may be obtained on contract basis.

Help Line for Women in Distress

The lease charges and bills for toll free phone shall be reimbursed by the DWCD. Other assistance to be provided on a 100% reimbursement basis are detailed in Module VII.

Each proposal shall be sanctioned by a Project Sanctioning Committee comprising of the following members

- a. Secretary, Women and Child Development Department (Chairperson)
- b. Financial Adviser, Ministry of Human Resource Development (DWCD)
- c. Secretary in charge of Women and Child Development of the concerned State Governments.
- d. Joint Secretary of the concerned bureau in the Department (Convener).

Procedure for Sanction

i) Grants for the construction of the building shall be sanctioned on production of the following documents:

- a) Layout, architectural and structural plan of the building approved by the local authority.
- b) Detailed estimate of construction duly verified by the District Superintending Engineer/Civil Engineer.
- c) Any other document that the Sanctioning Committee may deem fit.
- d) Proof of ownership of land
- e) Land documents
- f) Non encumbrance certificate of the land.

(ii) Grant for construction of the buildings shall be released in three installments, 50% before the construction is started, 40% when the civil construction is completed and remaining 10% after the construction is over. Recurring grant for other expenses shall be released in two bi-annual installments. Each installment of grant shall be released only on production of Utilization Certificate in respect of the previous installment duly certified by the Chartered Accountant along with photographic documents in support of physical progress of construction.

K. Monitoring of the Scheme :

(i) Monitoring at District Level

The functioning of the Swadhar Centres where residential facility for the inmates shall be monitored by a District Level Committee comprising of the following:

- a. District Magistrate (Chairperson)

- b. District Superintendent of Police
- c. President/Secretary/Executive Head of the Implementing Organisation
- d. Lady Principal of College/Head Mistress of Girls School.
- e. One senior lady doctor to be nominated by Chief Medical Officer
- f. General Manager District Industries Centre
- g. One socially active woman of the area to be nominated by the D.M
- h. Women representative of Panchayat/urban local bodies.
- i. District Welfare Officer (Convener)

(ii) Monitoring at the State Level

The Secretary in-charge of Social Welfare/Women & Child Development Department in the State Government/UT Admn. shall be the chairperson of the State Level Monitoring Committee for Swadhar Scheme. The other members of the committee would be nominated by the Secretary. The Committee at the State Level shall meet at least once a year and monitor the project.

(iii) Monitoring at the Central Level

DWCD shall also review the functioning of the Centre once in a year.

Other Swadharcenters without residential facility shall be got monitored and evaluated by the DWCD in such a manner as it may deem fit.

O. Conditions of Grants

(i) The grant approved will be paid in two to three instalments, the first instalment being normally released with the sanction of the Project and the second and subsequent instalment will be released when the organisation has spent the previous instalment along with its own proportionate share of cost. Requests for release of these instalments will be accompanied by a certificate from a Chartered Accountant or a Government Auditor indicating the total expenditure incurred on the project. In case of the project implemented by the State Government/UT Administration or its agencies the second and subsequent instalments of the grant may be released on receipt of the requisite certificate duly signed by an officer of the State Government or Union Territory,

Conclusion

The strategy adopted for the programmes in the areas of women development involves empowerment of women through education and awareness generation and greater emphasis on vocational training and employment so as to enable them to enter the mainstream of economic development as equal partners.

The department implements programmes in the areas of employment, training for women, awareness generation and gender sensitization. The emphasis is on helping women to become self sufficient and economically independent with the help of training and income generating activities so as to enhance their earning capacity and to bring up their status in life.

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