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EIGHTH REPORT

**COMMITTEE ON EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN
(2005-2006)**

(FOURTEENTH LOK SABHA)

**SCHEME FOR REHABILITATING WOMEN IN DIFFICULT CIRCUMSTANCES -
SWADHAR**

MINISTRY OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT

*[Action Taken on Second Report of Committee on Empowerment of Women
(Fourteenth Lok Sabha)]*

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**LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT
NEW DELHI**

August, 2006/Sravana, 1928 (Saka)

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MINISTRY OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT

*[Action Taken on Second Report of Committee on Empowerment of Women
(Fourteenth Lok Sabha)]*

Presented to Lok Sabha on 11th August, 2006

Laid in Rajya Sabha on 11th August, 2006

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NEW DELHI

August, 2006/ Sravana, 1928 (Saka)

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CONTENTS

	PAGE
Composition of the Committee on Empowerment of Women (2005-2006)	(iii)
Introduction	(iv)
CHAPTER I Report	1-8
CHAPTER II Observations/Recommendations which have been accepted by the Government.....	9-23
CHAPTER III Observations/Recommendations which the Committee do not desire to pursue in view of the replies received from the Government	24-26
CHAPTER IV Observations/Recommendations replies to which have not been accepted by the Committee and which require reiteration	27-29
CHAPTER V Observations/Recommendations in respect of which the Government have furnished interim replies	30

APPENDICES

I Statement of Observations/ Recommendations.....	31-35
II Analysis of the Action Taken by the Government on the Observations/Recommendations contained in the Second Report of the Committee (Fourteenth Lok Sabha)	36

PART II

I. Minutes of the sitting of the Committee on Empowerment of Women (2005-2006) held on 10 th August, 2006.....	37
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**COMPOSITION OF THE COMMITTEE ON
EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN
(2005-2006)**

Chairperson Smt. Krishna Tirath

MEMBERS

LOK SABHA

2. Shri Joachim Baxla
3. Smt. M.S.K. Bhavani Rajenthiran
4. Shri C.K. Chandrappan
5. Smt. Sushila Kerketta
6. Smt. Manorama Madhawraj
7. Smt. Kiran Maheshwari
8. Shri Rajesh Kumar Manjhi
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10. Smt. Kalpana Ramesh Narhire
11. Dr. P.P. Koya
12. Smt. Preneet Kaur
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14. Smt. Minati Sen
15. Smt. Sangeeta Singh Deo
16. Smt. Karuna Shukla
17. Smt. C.S. Sujatha
18. Shri Mohd. Tahir Khan
19. Smt. Tejaswini See Ramesh
20. Smt. Jayaben Thakkar

RAJYA SABHA

- 21* Smt. Shobhana Bhartia
- 22* Ms. Pramila Bohidar
23. Smt. Prema Cariappa
24. Kumari Nirmala Deshpande
25. Smt. N.P. Durga
26. Smt. Hema Malini
27. Smt. S.G. Indira
- 28.# Smt. Brinda Karat
29. Smt. Maya Singh
30. Smt. Syeda Anwara Taimur

SECRETARIAT

1. Shri S.K. Sharma - Additional Secretary

- | | | | |
|----|-------------------|---|--------------------|
| 2. | Shri R.C. Ahuja | - | Joint Secretary |
| 3. | Smt. Veena Sharma | - | Deputy Secretary |
| 4. | Shri V.P. Goel | - | Assistant Director |

Nominated *vice* Smt. Chandra Kala Pandey, MP, w.ef. 10th September, 2005.

* Nominated as Members of the Committee w.e.f 24th April, 2006 *vice* Smt. Kum Kum Rai, MP on her retirement and Smt. Jaya Bachahan on her disqualification from the membership of Rajya Sabha.

INTRODUCTION

I, the Chairperson of Committee on Empowerment of Women, present the Eighth Report (Fourteenth Lok Sabha) on the Action Taken by the Government on the recommendations contained in the Second Report of the Committee on Empowerment of Women (Fourteenth Lok Sabha) on 'Scheme for Rehabilitating Women in Difficult Circumstances - SWADHAR' relating to the Ministry of Women and Child Development.

2. The Second Report (Fourteenth Lok Sabha) of the Committee on Empowerment of Women was presented to Lok Sabha and laid in Rajya Sabha on 27th July, 2005. Replies of the Government to all the Observations/Recommendations contained in the Report have been received.

3. The Draft Report was considered and adopted by the Committee on Empowerment of Women (2005-2006) at their sitting held on 10th August, 2006. The Minutes of the sitting form Part II of the Report.

4. For facility of reference and convenience, the Observations/Recommendations of the Committee have been printed in thick type in the body of the Report and have also been reproduced in a consolidated form in Appendix – I of the Report.

5. An Analysis of the Action Taken by the Government on the recommendations contained in the Second Report (Fourteenth Lok Sabha) of the Committee is given at Appendix II.

**NEW DELHI;
10th AUGUST, 2006
19th Sravana, 1928 (Saka)**

**KRISHNA TIRATH
CHAIRPERSON
COMMITTEE ON EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN.**

INTRODUCTION

I, the Chairperson of Committee on Empowerment of Women, present the Seventh Report (Fourteenth Lok Sabha) on the Action Taken by the Government on the recommendations contained in the Third Report of the Committee on Empowerment of Women (Fourteenth Lok Sabha) on 'Economic Upliftment of Scheduled Caste Women Through National Scheduled Castes Finance and Development Corporation (NSFDC)' relating to the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment.

6. The Third Report (Fourteenth Lok Sabha) of the Committee on Empowerment of Women was presented to Lok Sabha and laid in Rajya Sabha on 11th August, 2005. Replies of the Government to all the Observations/Recommendations contained in the Report have been received.

7. The Draft Report was considered and adopted by the Committee on Empowerment of Women (2005-2006) at their sitting held on 3rd August, 2006. The Minutes of the sitting form Part II of the Report.

8. For facility of reference and convenience, the Observations/Recommendations of the Committee have been printed in thick type in the body of the Report and have also been reproduced in a consolidated form in Appendix – I of the Report.

9. An Analysis of the Action Taken by the Government on the recommendations contained in the Third Report (Fourteenth Lok Sabha) of the Committee is given at Appendix II.

**NEW DELHI;
31ST JULY, 2006
9 Shrawana, 1928 (Saka)**

**KRISHNA TIRATH
CHAIRPERSON
COMMITTEE ON EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN.**

(i)

CHAPTER I

REPORT

1.1 This Report of the Committee deals with the action taken by the Government on the recommendations contained in the Second Report (Fourteenth Lok Sabha) of the Committee on Empowerment of Women relating to the Ministry of Women and Child Development.

1.2 The Second Report of the Committee was presented to Lok Sabha on 27th July, 2005. Replies of Government in respect of all recommendations have been received and are categorized as under:

- (i) Observations/Recommendations which have been accepted by the Government.
Para Nos.:- 43,44, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 55,56, 57 and 58.
- (ii) Observations/Recommendations which the Committee do not desire to pursue in view of the replies of the Government.
Para Nos.- 53 and 54.
- (iii) Observations/Recommendations, replies to which have not been accepted by the Committee and which require reiteration.
Para Nos.- 45 and 46.
- (iv) Observations/Recommendations in respect of which the Government have furnished interim replies.
Nil.

Recommendation No. 45

Time bound strategy for establishing Shelter Homes

1.3 In Para 45 of their Original Report, the Committee had found that 84 Shelter Homes were functional in different States/UTs of the country and 12 more such Homes were likely to be functional during 2005-2006. The Committee were informed that the work of construction of Shelter Homes under the control of Mathura-Vrindavan Development Authority had been started and was likely to be completed within a period of six months. The Government had also approved the proposals in principle for construction of one Swadhar Home in Gujarat and Shelter Homes in Tsunami affected areas of Tamil Nadu. The Committee also found that there had been no financial crunch with the Government, as sufficient funds had been sanctioned and dispersed for construction of Shelter Homes, as informed by the Ministry. The Committee had expressed the hope that all these Shelter Homes would be functional by the end of 2005-2006. The Committee had also opined that these Shelter Homes were not adequate to cater to the needs of the affected women. Therefore, the Committee had desired that a proper survey should be conducted throughout the country to find the adequacy of such Homes and also to identify the places where such Homes should be set up so that these Homes could cater to the needs of the larger number of women not only in big cities but also targeted women residing in rural and remote areas. The Committee further desired that Government should formulate a time bound strategy to establish such Homes and apprise the Committee about the action plan prepared in this regard.

1.4 The Ministry of Women and Child Development in their Action Taken Replies have stated that their policy is to have at least one Swadhar Home per district in each state of the country. The matter has been taken up with

State Secretaries concerned of all the States to formulate a time bound strategy to establish Swadhar Home in all the districts.

1.5 While noting that in addition to the 84 Swadhar Shelter Homes already functional in different States/UTs, 12 more such Homes were likely to be functional during 2005-06, the Committee had expressed the hope that all these Shelter Homes would be functional by the end of 2005-06. Expressing, however, the view, that these Shelter Homes were not adequate to cater to the needs of the affected women, the Committee had desired that a proper survey should be conducted to find adequacy of such Homes. The Committee had also desired the Government to formulate a time-bound strategy to establish such Shelter Homes.

1.6 From the Action taken notes furnished by the Ministry of Women and Child Development, the Committee find that the policy of the Ministry is to have at least one Swadhar Home per district in each State of the country. The Committee are surprised that the Ministry have not apprised them about the total number of Swadhar Homes that actually are required to be set up in the country to cater to the needs of the destitute women. The Committee have also not been apprised that out of the 12 more Homes which were likely to be functional during 2005-2006, how many have become functional so far. Further, the Committee are not satisfied with the reply of the Ministry with regard to the recommendation of the Committee to formulate a time-bound strategy to establish Shelter Homes. The Ministry have simply stated that the matter has been taken up with State Secretaries concerned of all the States to formulate a time-bound strategy to establish Swadhar Homes in all the districts. The Committee are

inclined to conclude that the Ministry have taken their recommendation in a very casual manner which is evident from the fact that instead of taking suitable steps to devise a time-bound programme to establish at least one Swadhar Home per district in each State of the country as per their policy, they have chosen to wash their hands off by passing the buck to the States. The Committee deplore this attitude of the Ministry and feel that unless a target date is fixed for the State Governments to establish such Homes, the scheme cannot be effectively implemented. The Committee, therefore, desire that the Ministry should convene a meeting of the State Secretaries at all India level and work out a time-bound programme to establish Shelter Homes not only in big cities but also in rural and remote areas. The Committee would like to be apprised of the specific action taken in this regard within a period of three months of presentation of this Report.

Recommendation No. 46

Closure of Shelter Homes

1.7 The Committee were surprised to be informed that 4 Shelter Homes located in Delhi, Gujarat and Haryana had been closed. However, the Committee were not apprised about the reasons for their closure. The Committee took note of the fact that the representative of the Ministry during evidence admitted that there was "shortage of the Shelter Homes in Delhi which was not adequate to cater to the large population of Delhi" and "there is definitely a need for more Shelter Homes in the NCT of Delhi". The Committee were pained to find that instead of setting up more Shelter Homes in Delhi to cater to the demands of destitute women as admitted by the Government, they closed one Shelter Home located in Delhi. In this

regard, the Committee desired to be apprised of the reasons for the closure of Shelter Home in Delhi.

1.8 The Ministry of Women and Child Development in their Action Taken Reply have stated that the Shelter Home in Delhi was closed as the Implementing Agencies i.e. CORE expressed their inability to run the Swadhar Shelter Home.

1.9 In their Original Report, the Committee were surprised to note that 4 Shelter Homes located in Delhi, Gujarat and Haryana had been closed. While taking note of the fact that the Ministry themselves had admitted the shortage of Shelter Homes in Delhi, the Committee had observed with concern that instead of setting up more Shelter Homes in Delhi, the Government had closed one Shelter Home located in Delhi and desired to know the reasons for the closure. The Committee are disturbed to note from the action taken reply that instead of probing into the matter to ascertain the causes for closure, the Ministry have simply put forth the reason that the implementing agency i.e. CORE expressed their inability to run the Swadhar Shelter Home. The reply of the Ministry reflects the lackadaisical approach adopted by the Ministry in handling the matter. The Committee feel that if this situation is allowed to continue, the other Swadhar Homes in the country may as well be closed down due to one or the other reason. The Committee, therefore, desire that the Ministry should take steps to find out the reasons of closure of the Swadhar Shelter Home run by CORE and take appropriate measures to restart this Home and also to check closure, if any, of Swadhar Homes in other parts of the country.

1.10 In this regard, the Committee also desire that the Ministry should get an annual survey done so as to identify the Swadhar Homes in the country which are on the verge of closure and to analyse the reasons for which they are closing down, with a view to taking pre-emptive remedial action.

(Recommendation No. 50)

Appropriate steps for Problems being faced by Implementing Agencies

1.11 The Committee were given to understand that the Implementing Agencies/Voluntary Organizations had been facing various problems in the implementation of this scheme viz. delay in release of full funds by the Government; delay in obtaining survey report from Revenue Department and also clearance certificate by Municipal Commissioner. The Committee were also informed that no specific guidelines had been issued to the implementing agencies and State Governments regarding implementation of the programme. The Committee also noted that the Implementing Agencies were facing problem in the rehabilitation of women due to social taboos and stigma. The Committee, therefore, had desired that the Government should take appropriate steps with regard to the aforesaid problems being faced by the implementing agencies so that they were able to implement the programme in an effective manner.

1.12 The Ministry of Women and Child Development in their Action Taken Reply have stated that the State Secretaries concerned have been requested that cases for release of second and subsequent instalments may be submitted in time.

1.13 The Committee had observed in their Original Report that the implementing agencies/voluntary organizations were facing various problems in the implementation of the scheme viz. delay in release of full funds by the Government, delay in obtaining survey report from Revenue Department and clearance certificate by Municipal Commissioner as also in the rehabilitation of destitute women due to social taboos and stigma. The Committee had desired the Government to take appropriate steps with regard to the problems being faced by the implementing agencies so that they were able to implement the programme in an effective manner.

1.14 From the Action Taken Notes submitted by the Ministry, the Committee note that the Ministry have not taken any concrete steps to initiate action on their recommendations except requesting the State Secretaries concerned to submit cases for release of second and subsequent instalments in time. The Ministry were expected to issue clear instructions to the State Governments to devise ways and means whereby the implementing agencies were helped in obtaining the survey report and clearance certificate from the Revenue Department and Municipal Commissioner respectively, without much hassles. Further, they should have taken specific steps to ensure that there was no delay in release of full funds to the implementing agencies. This has not been done which is regrettable.

1.15 As regards the steps to be taken to deal with the issue of rehabilitation of the destitute women, the Ministry have chosen to remain silent which clearly proves that they have not taken any steps whatsoever in this direction. The Committee express their strong displeasure over the attitude of the Ministry. The Committee

are of the firm opinion that merely providing shelter to the destitute women will not serve any purpose until and unless steps are also taken to rehabilitate them and bring them into the main-stream of the society. While reiterating their earlier recommendation, the Committee desire that the Ministry should take specific remedial steps with regard to the problems being faced by the implementing agencies so as to enable them to implement the programme in an effective manner.

CHAPTER II

OBSERVATIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS WHICH HAVE BEEN ACCEPTED BY THE GOVERNMENT

Recommendation

43. Swadhar, a Central Government scheme was designed and launched by the Government of India in 2001 to cater to the needs of women in diverse situations under different conditions like widows deserted by their families; women prisoners released from jails who are without any family support; women survivors of natural disaster who have been rendered homeless and are without social and economic support; trafficked women/girls rescued or run-away from brothels; victims of sexual crime disowned by their families; women victims of terrorists' violence and mentally challenged women etc, taking into consideration the fact that very limited support is available from Government through Old Age Homes, Short Stay Homes, Nari Niketan. Initially this scheme was designed to rehabilitate widows found concentrated near religious places at Mathura, Kashi and Vrindavan. This scheme which is to be implemented by the Government as well as by NGOs etc. envisages financial assistance provided by the Government of India to these implementing agencies. The basic objectives of the scheme are to provide primary need of shelter, food and clothing and care to marginalised women living in difficult circumstances who are without social and economic

support and further to rehabilitate them socially and economically through education, awareness and skill upgradation.

Reply of the Ministry of Women and Child Development

No action is required to be taken.

(Ministry of Women and Child Development O.M. No. 8-37(39)/2004-Swadhar dated 13-01-2006)

Recommendation

44. The Committee are constrained to find that only 1533 women have been rehabilitated under this scheme in 26 Shelter Homes so far. The Committee agree with the observation of the representative of the Ministry made during evidence "that rehabilitation is a difficult task". But taking into consideration the number of women rehabilitated so far, the Committee feel that this scheme has not been implemented in the right perspective. As such, in their opinion there is an urgent need to identify the bottlenecks in the implementation of the scheme. The Committee feel that this scheme needs to be evaluated by a study with a view to find out shortcomings/lacunae so as to take prompt remedial measures to ensure that this scheme is free from deficiencies and loopholes so that benefits of this scheme should reach to the maximum number of destitute women. The Committee desire that wide coverage should be given to this scheme to ensure that the targeted beneficiaries are able to take advantage of

this scheme. The Committee also urge the Ministry to involve people's representatives/local NGOs and voluntary organisations in this stupendous task of rehabilitation of women. The Committee further desire that the salient features of this scheme should be disseminated through the print and electronic media to generate awareness among targeted women.

Reply of the Ministry of Women and Child Development

Regarding evaluation of the scheme by a study with a view to find out shortcomings/lacunae, necessary action has been taken by this Department and advertisement asking for expression of interest from interested Consultant has been published in all the leading newspapers throughout the country. It is expected that the evaluation of the scheme would be completed within four-five months. Further action has also been taken to give wide coverage to this scheme by way of advertisement in all the leading newspapers throughout the country. Moreover, all the State Secretaries concerned have also been requested to give wide coverage of the Swadhar Scheme and to involve people's representatives/local NGOs and voluntary organization to the stupendous task of rehabilitation of women. The salient features of the scheme have been disseminated through the print and electronic media.

(Ministry of Women and Child Development O.M. No. 8-37(39)/2004-Swadhar dated 13-01-2006)

Recommendation

47. During their visit to Sudinalaya Swadhar Home at New Delhi and Nityanandita Swadhar Homes at Gurgaon, the Committee found that all categories of women had been housed under the same roof. The Committee were not happy to find that women ranging from mentally challenged, sexually exploited and trafficked women and even HIV Positive victims were housed under the same roof. Even the children of some of the women were staying with them, which further added to the complexity of the situation. The Committee are of the view that some categories of women viz. mentally challenged and HIV positive victims need special care and should be kept separately. The Committee are of the opinion that there is an urgent need for segregating the mentally challenged, the trafficked women and the HIV/AIDS victims in separate enclosures which would not only lead to better management of the Shelter Homes but also help the management to take proper care of the mentally challenged and HIV/AIDS victims.

Reply of the Ministry of Women and Child Development

Instructions have been issued to the State Secretaries concerned of all States that mentally challenged, the trafficked women and the HIV/AIDS victims may be segregated in separate enclosures for better management of the Swadhar Shelter Home and also to help the management to take care of the mentally challenged and HIV/AIDS victims.

(Ministry of Women and Child Development O.M. No. 8-37(39)/2004-Swadhar dated 13-01-2006)

Recommendation

48. The Committee have been informed that Swadhar Shelter Home Scheme is being implemented through State Governments, NGOs, State Social Welfare/State Women and Child Development Department, Women Development Corporations, urban local bodies and Voluntary Organisations having adequate experience and expertise to take the responsibility of rehabilitating such women. The Committee find that the project is given to State Governments for its execution and the State Governments select NGOs for its implementation. The Committee are of the opinion that these NGOs, Voluntary Organisations, Self Help Groups can play a very crucial role in the rehabilitation of the destitute women and implementation of various programmes under this scheme. They are extremely important links between the Government and targeted beneficiaries and can play a catalytic role in the capacity building, training, generation of awareness, educating the targeted women. The Committee feel that these NGOs and Voluntary Organisations should be carefully selected for implementation of this scheme. In this regard, NGOs should fulfill all the criteria for their selection and their financial reputation and integrity should be ascertained before they are selected.

Reply of the Ministry of Women and Child Development

All the State Secretaries have been asked to be careful while selecting the NGOs and voluntary organizations for implementation of the scheme. They have also been asked to select the NGOs who fulfil all the criteria for their selection and their financial reputation and integrity should be ascertained before they are selected.

(Ministry of Women and Child Development O.M. No. 8-37(39)/2004-Swadhar dated 13-01-2006)

Recommendation

49. The Committee feel that besides issuing guidelines/directives to the implementing agencies for converging the benefits of various Government schemes regarding education, training, health awareness generation, self employment etc. which are not specifically provided in Swadhar Scheme, the Ministry should also monitor at regular intervals that these guidelines are being adhered to by the implementing agencies.

Reply of the Ministry of Women and Child Development

Necessary guidelines have been issued to all the State Secretaries concerned to intimate whether convergence of the various Government schemes is being done by the implementing agencies.

(Ministry of Women and Child Development O.M. No. 8-37(39)/2004-Swadhar dated 13-01-2006)

Recommendation

50. The Committee have been given to understand that the implementing agencies/voluntary organisations have been facing various problems in the implementation of the scheme viz. delay in release of full funds by the Government; delay in obtaining survey report from Revenue Department and also clearance certificate by Municipal Commissioner. Further, no specific guidelines have been issued to the implementing agencies and the State Governments in the implementation of the programme. They are also facing problem in the rehabilitation of women due to social taboos and stigma. The Committee desire that the Government should take appropriate steps with regard to the aforesaid problems being faced by the implementing agencies so that they are able to implement the programme in an effective manner.

Reply of the Ministry of Women and Child Development

The State Secretaries concerned have been requested that cases for release of second and subsequent instalments may be submitted in time.

(Ministry of Women and Child Development O.M. No. 8-37(39)/2004-Swadhar dated 13-01-2006)

Recommendation

51. The Committee would like the Ministry to examine the following suggestions for implementation as it may go a long way for making the programme more effective.

- (i) Explicit directions/guidance to be given to the aided institutions and State Governments on their role in implementation, networking and convergence of services for rehabilitation.
- (ii) Periodical professional supervision and guidance to the Homes for effective delivery of services to the target group.
- (iii) Training for the functionaries and management for their capacity building and skill enhancement.
- (iv) Sensitization of police and local administration for their support on correctional services and rehabilitation.
- (v) Awareness building in society for re-integration of women.
- (vi) Preparation and maintenance of a resource directory for rehabilitation of inmates.

Reply of the Ministry of Women and Child Development

Necessary guidelines have been issued to all the State Secretaries concerned to keep in mind the above suggestions for implementing and making the Swadhar Scheme more effective.

(Ministry of Women and Child Development O.M. No. 8-37(39)/2004-Swadhar dated 13-01-2006)

Recommendation

52. The Committee are not happy to find that meagre funds allocated under Swadhar Scheme during 2002-2003 and 2004-2005 were not fully utilised and

remained under utilised which is evident from the fact that Rs. 4.04 crore were spent against the allocated fund of Rs. 9 crore during 2002-2003 and again in 2004-2005 against the allocation of Rs. 2.70 crore, expenditure to the tune of Rs. 1.69 till 17.12.2004 was made. The Committee are of the view that due to this under-utilisation of the funds allocated in these years, the benefits of the scheme have not been availed of by the beneficiaries of this Scheme viz. destitute women and as a result they have to suffer. The Committee also find a wide gap in the provision of provisional budget and final budget and projected budget since 2001-2002 onwards. The Committee feel that it was not done realistically. The provision of the budget was made without taking into account the expenditure incurred during the previous year as it can be seen that during 2002-2003 an amount of Rs. 9 crore was allocated for this scheme, while the expenditure under this scheme during the previous year i.e. 2001-2002 was only Rs. 80 lakhs. Again an amount of Rs. 1 crore was allocated under this scheme during 2003-2004 while the expenditure under the scheme during the previous year i.e. 2002-2003 was 4.04 crore. Further a provision of Rs. 2.70 crore was made during 2004-2005, while the expenditure under this scheme during the previous year was only Rs. 1.10 crores. The Committee are of the view that this is a clear proof of Ministry's indifference. The Ministry have not furnished any reasons for such a variation in allocation and expenditure. The Committee desire the Ministry to be realistic while making provisional budget under this scheme so that it is not drastically reduced at the time of final

allocation. The Committee also desire the Ministry to take necessary steps to ensure that funds allocated under this scheme are timely and fully utilised during the year.

Reply of the Ministry of Women and Child Development

During the current financial year, Rs. 5.50 crores+ Rs. 50.00 lakhs had been allocated for the Swadhar Scheme and the said amount has been fully utilized this year as on 31-12-2005. The Departments has, thus, taken proactive steps to utilize whatever funds were allocated under BE. Some more funds are being sought in RE 2005-2006.

(Ministry of Women and Child Development O.M. No. 8-37(39)/2004-Swadhar dated 13-01-2006)

Recommendation

55. The Committee during their visit to Shelter Homes in New Delhi and Gurgaon were informed that NGOs were paying exorbitant rent for Shelter Homes which were located in residential areas and also attracting resentment from neighbours for keeping the destitute women in the residential areas. The Committee are of the view that if the Swadhar homes are located in the areas away from the residential colonies, the problems of paying exorbitant rent and resentment of neighbours could be sorted out. The Committee, therefore, desire the Ministry should identify such areas for setting up Shelter Homes which are at a distance from residential areas in consultation with State and local authorities to solve this problem. The Committee also desire that the

Ministry should take appropriate steps in coordination with the local authorities to persuade local people to accept these women who have already been accommodated in the Shelter Homes located in residential areas.

Reply of the Ministry of Women and Child Development

All the State Secretaries concerned all over the country have been requested to identify areas for setting up Swadhar Home which are a distance from residential. Further, they have been requested to take steps to take action to persuade local people to accept these women who have already been accommodated in the shelter homes in the residential areas.

(Ministry of Women and Child Development O.M. No. 8-37(39)/2004-Swadhar dated 13-01-2006)

Recommendation

56. The Committee note that the scheme is being monitored at three levels i.e. at the Central, State and District level. Monitoring Committee at the Central level is headed by the Secretary, Department of Women and Child Development. Monitoring Committee at the State level is headed by the States' Secretary. Both the Committees at the Central and State level meet at least once a year to monitor the scheme. The Monitoring Committee at District level is headed by District Magistrate and is supposed to meet at least twice a year to monitor and review the functioning of these Shelter Homes and suggests steps for sustainable rehabilitation and also review steps for safety of inmates, facilities which are provided to the inmates, encourage community participation and provide linkages with other schemes of the Government. The Committee are of the

opinion that an effective monitoring mechanism is a necessity for the successful implementation of any scheme. Regular visits by high level team consisting of senior officers from Centre should be undertaken to State and Districts to oversee the progress of implementation of the Schemes. Besides this, the Secretary of the Department should hold review meetings at regular intervals with the States to assess the progress made by various programmes undertaken for the successful implementation of the Scheme which will help in identifying the lacunae in the schemes to take remedial measures. The Committee feel that the existing monitoring mechanism is not adequate and effective when they noted that funds allocated for the scheme remained underutilised, there is inadequacy of Shelter Homes throughout India and also lack of awareness of this scheme among beneficiaries as only 1533 could be rehabilitated since the inception of this scheme in 26 Shelter Homes. The Committee, therefore, desire the Government to strengthen the existing monitoring mechanism in close coordination and consultation with the State Governments.

Reply of the Ministry of Women and Child Development

The officers of the CSWB/State Governments as well as the officers of this Department have inspected the Swadhar Homes all over the country at regular intervals. Further the State Secretaries have been requested to strengthen the existing monitoring mechanism.

(Ministry of Women and Child Development O.M. No. 8-37(39)/2004-Swadhar dated 13-01-2006)

Recommendation

57. The Committee have been informed that none of the Shelter Homes have approached National AIDS Control Organisation (NACO) to get assistance for managing treatment of HIV Positive victims at the Shelter Homes. Since NACO have been operating various programmes such as surveillance system, extensive awareness generation programme, community care centres, targeted intervention projects etc., the Committee recommend that the Department of Women and Child Development should coordinate with the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare and ensure that benefits of NACO projects should be got percolated down to the HIV Positive victims at Swadhar Homes.

Reply of the Ministry of Women and Child Development

The matter has been taken up with the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare

(Ministry of Women and Child Development O.M. No. 8-37(39)/2004-Swadhar dated 13-01-2006)

Recommendation

58. The Committee find that number of steps have been taken by the Government to generate awareness among women about this Scheme like advertisement in National/local dailies, broadcasting a programme on All India Radio under caption 'Aakash Hamara Hai'. State level workshops were also

organised at various places viz. Patna, Hyderabad, Chandigarh, Bangalore, Jammu & Kashmir by senior level officers of the Department and besides proposals to organise such workshops in Goa, Kerala & Tamil Nadu. State Government were requested to involve NGOs in the implementation of the Schemes in this regard. The Committee were, however, informed that no separate budget is allocated for publicity purposes for this Scheme. The Committee feel that the Government should allocate a separate budget to popularise this scheme through publicity. The Committee desire the Government to organise workshops not only in State Capitals of the country but in small towns of the States also. The Committee further desire the Government to utilise both electronic and print media for dissemination of basic components and objectives of the scheme so that the scheme could reach throughout India including the hilly and remote areas of the country. The Committee are of the view that effective involvement of local bodies, voluntary organisation and people's representatives could be of great help in generating public awareness about the scheme. The Committee, therefore desire that these agencies should be actively involved in this regard as they could act as a bridge between the government and the potential beneficiaries.

Reply of the Ministry of Women and Child Development

Separate budget already exists for publicity for all the schemes of this Department. The State Secretaries have been requested to organize workshops not only in State capitals of the country but in small towns of the States also.

They have also been requested to involve local bodies, voluntary organizations and peoples representatives which would be of great help in generating public awareness about the scheme. This Department has already taken action to utilize both electronic and print media for dissemination of basic components and objectives of the scheme.

(Ministry of Women and Child Development O.M. No. 8-37(39)/2004-Swadhar
dated 13-01-2006)

CHAPTER-III

OBSERVATIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS WHICH THE COMMITTEE DO NOT DESIRE TO PURSUE IN VIEW OF THE REPLIES RECEIVED FROM THE GOVERNMENT

Recommendation

53. While interacting with the representatives of Coalition for Rural Empowerment (CORE), the NGO managing the Sudinalaya and Nityanandita Homes during their visit to these Homes in New Delhi and Gurgaon, the Committee were informed that they have been facing problems due to delay in the release of instalments. In this connection, the Committee have been informed that the approved grant is paid in two to three instalments, the first instalment being normally released with the sanction of the Project. The second and subsequent instalments are released when the organisation has utilised the previous instalment alongwith its own proportionate share of cost. The Committee are of the view that the existing procedure of releasing funds to the NGOs is quite cumbersome and it often pushes the NGOs and other implementing agencies to financial crunch. The Committee therefore, desire that the Department should explore the possibility of releasing of some portion of second instalment provisionally before the settlement of accounts of the first instalment on the basis of actual expenditure incurred in accordance with the average women beneficiary being served by the respective NGOs, so as to enable them to meet their daily basic requirements of food, medicine etc.

Reply of the Ministry of Women and Child Development

As per High Court' directions, second instalment is only released after the receipt of (i) State Government Inspection Report (ii) Utilisation Certificate (iii) Audited & Accounts Report and (iv) Progress Report.

(Ministry of Women and Child Development O.M. No. 8-37(39)/2004-Swadhar dated 13-01-2006)

Recommendation

54. The Committee find that the financial assistance under construction grant is given by the Government to the implementing agencies for construction of rooms/cottages/huts and for the provision of common facilities like kitchen, bathroom, training hall, recreation room etc. and also for infrastructure facilities like water, electricity etc. for targeted beneficiaries. At present 75% of the cost of such construction subject to a maximum ceiling of Rs. 25,000/- per inmate i.e. Rs. 25 lakhs for a centre for 100 women is permissible. The balance amount for construction is to be paid by the implementing agencies. The Committee have been informed that functioning of Shelter Homes has often been hampered due to delay in the grant of assistance for construction work. The Committee are of the view that the delay in the release of construction grant affects construction work of Shelter Homes and provisions of common and infrastructure facilities. They, therefore, desire that the release of grant should not be delayed so that the construction work of Shelter Homes and provision of facilities are not affected.

Reply of the Ministry of Women and Child Development

As per High Court' directions, second instalment is only released after the receipt of (i) State Government Inspection Report (ii) Utilisation Certificate (iii) Audited & Accounts Report and (iv) Progress Report.

(Ministry of Women and Child Development O.M. No. 8-37(39)/2004-Swadhar
dated 13-01-2006)

CHAPTER IV

OBSERVATIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS IN RESPECT OF WHICH REPLIES OF THE GOVERNMENT HAVE NOT BEEN ACCEPTED BY THE COMMITTEE AND WHICH REQUIRE REITERATION

Recommendation

45. The Committee find that 84 Shelter Homes are functional in different States/UTs of the country and 12 more such Homes are likely to be functional during 2005-2006. The Committee have been informed that the work of construction of Shelter Homes under the control of Mathura-Vrindavan Development Authority has been started and is likely to be completed within a period of six months. The Government has also approved the proposals in principle for construction of one Swadhar Home in Gujarat and Shelter Homes in Tsunami affected areas of Tamil Nadu. The Committee find that there is no financial crunch with the Government as sufficient funds have been sanctioned and dispersed for construction of Shelter Homes, as informed by the Ministry. The Committee hope that all these Shelter Homes would be functional by the end of 2005-2006. In the opinion of the Committee these Shelter Homes are not adequate to cater to the needs of the affected women. The Committee feel that a proper survey should be conducted throughout the country to find the adequacy of such Homes and also the places are identified where these Homes are to be set up so that these Homes could cater to the needs of the larger number of women not only in big cities but targeted women residing in rural and remote areas. The Committee would like the Government to formulate a time

bound strategy to establish such Homes. The Committee would like to be apprised of the action plan prepared in this regard.

Reply from the Ministry of Women and Child Development

The policy of this Department is to have at least one Swadhar Home per district in each state of the country. The matter has been taken up with State Secretaries concerned of all the States to formulate a time bound strategy to establish Swadhar Home in all the districts.

(Ministry of Women and Child Development O.M. No. 8-37(39)/2004-Swadhar dated 13-01-2006)

Recommendation

46. The Committee are surprised to be informed that 4 Shelter Homes located in Delhi, Gujarat and Haryana have been closed. They were not, however, apprised the reasons for their closure. The Committee take note of the fact that the representative of the Ministry during evidence admitted "the shortage of the Shelter Homes in Delhi which was not adequate to cater to the large population of Delhi" and "there is definitely a need for more shelter homes in the NCT of Delhi". The Committee are pained to find that instead of setting up more Shelter Homes in Delhi to cater to the demands of destitute women as admitted by the Government they have closed one Shelter Home located in Delhi. The Committee would like to be apprised of the reasons for the closure.

Reply from the Ministry of Women and Child Development

The Shelter Home in Delhi was closed as the Implementing Agencies i.e. CORE expressed their inability to run the Swadhar Shelter Home.

(Ministry of Women and Child Development O.M. No. 8-37(39)/2004-Swadhar dated 13-01-2006)

CHAPTER-V

**OBSERVATIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS IN RESPECT OF WHICH THE
GOVERNMENT HAVE FURNISHED INTERIM REPLIES**

-NIL-

**New Delhi
August, 2006
Sravana 1928**

**KRISHNA TIRATH
Chairperson
Committee on Empowerment of Women**

APPENDIX I

OBSERVATIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS

Sl. No.	Para No.	Ministry/Department	Observations/Recommendations
1.	2.	3.	4.
1	1.5	Ministry of Women and Child Development	<p>While noting that in addition to the 84 Swadhar Shelter Homes already functional in different States/UTs, 12 more such Homes were likely to be functional during 2005-06, the Committee had expressed the hope that all these Shelter Homes would be functional by the end of 2005-06. Expressing, however, the view, that these Shelter Homes were not adequate to cater to the needs of the affected women, the Committee had desired that a proper survey should be conducted to find adequacy of such Homes. The Committee had also desired the Government to formulate a time-bound strategy to establish such Shelter Homes.</p>
2.	1.6	Ministry of Women and Child Development	<p>From the Action taken notes furnished by the Ministry of Women and Child Development, the Committee find that the policy of the Ministry is to have at least one Swadhar Home per district in each State of the country. The Committee are surprised that the Ministry have not apprised them about the total number of Swadhar Homes that actually are required to be set up in the country to cater to the needs of the destitute women. The Committee have also not been apprised that out of the 12 more Homes which were likely to be functional during 2005-2006,</p>

how many have become functional so far. Further, the Committee are not satisfied with the reply of the Ministry with regard to the recommendation of the Committee to formulate a time-bound strategy to establish Shelter Homes. The Ministry have simply stated that the matter has been taken up with State Secretaries concerned of all the States to formulate a time-bound strategy to establish Swadhar Homes in all the districts. The Committee are inclined to conclude that the Ministry have taken their recommendation in a very casual manner which is evident from the fact that instead of taking suitable steps to devise a time-bound programme to establish at least one Swadhar Home per district in each State of the country as per their policy, they have chosen to wash their hands off by passing the buck to the States. The Committee deplore this attitude of the Ministry and feel that unless a target date is fixed for the State Governments to establish such Homes, the scheme cannot be effectively implemented. The Committee, therefore, desire that the Ministry should convene a meeting of the State Secretaries at all India level and work out a time-bound programme to establish Shelter Homes not only in big cities but also in rural and remote areas. The Committee would like to be apprised of the specific action taken in this regard within a period of three months of presentation of this Report.

3. 1.9 Ministry of Women and Child Development

In their Original Report, the Committee were surprised to note that 4 Shelter Homes located in

Delhi, Gujarat and Haryana had been closed. While taking note of the fact that the Ministry themselves had admitted the shortage of Shelter Homes in Delhi, the Committee had observed with concern that instead of setting up more Shelter Homes in Delhi, the Government had closed one Shelter Home located in Delhi and desired to know the reasons for the closure. The Committee are disturbed to note from the action taken reply that instead of probing into the matter to ascertain the causes for closure, the Ministry have simply put forth the reason that the implementing agency i.e. CORE expressed their inability to run the Swadhar Shelter Home. The reply of the Ministry reflects the lackadaisical approach adopted by the Ministry in handling the matter. The Committee feel that if this situation is allowed to continue, the other Swadhar Homes in the country may as well be closed down due to one or the other reason. The Committee, therefore, desire that the Ministry should take steps to find out the reasons of closure of the Swadhar Shelter Home run by CORE and take appropriate measures to restart this Home and also to check closure, if any, of Swadhar Homes in other parts of the country.

4. 1.10 Ministry of Women and Child Development

In this regard, the Committee also desire that the Ministry should get an annual survey done so as to identify the Swadhar Homes in the country which are on the verge of closure and to analyse the reasons for which they are closing down, with a view to taking pre-emptive remedial action.

- 5. 1.13 Ministry of Women and Child Development** The Committee had observed in their Original Report that the implementing agencies/voluntary organizations were facing various problems in the implementation of the scheme viz. delay in release of full funds by the Government, delay in obtaining survey report from Revenue Department and clearance certificate by Municipal Commissioner as also in the rehabilitation of destitute women due to social taboos and stigma. The Committee had desired the Government to take appropriate steps with regard to the problems being faced by the implementing agencies so that they were able to implement the programme in an effective manner.
- 6. 1.14 Ministry of Women and Child Development** From the Action Taken Notes submitted by the Ministry, the Committee note that the Ministry have not taken any concrete steps to initiate action on their recommendations except requesting the State Secretaries concerned to submit cases for release of second and subsequent instalments in time. The Ministry were expected to issue clear instructions to the State Governments to devise ways and means whereby the implementing agencies were helped in obtaining the survey report and clearance certificate from the Revenue Department and Municipal Commissioner respectively, without much hassles. Further, they should have taken specific steps to ensure that there was no delay in release of full funds to the implementing agencies.

This has not been done which is regrettable.

- 7. 1.15 Ministry of Women and Child Development**
- As regards the steps to be taken to deal with the issue of rehabilitation of the destitute women, the Ministry have chosen to remain silent which clearly proves that they have not taken any steps whatsoever in this direction. The Committee express their strong displeasure over the attitude of the Ministry. The Committee are of the firm opinion that merely providing shelter to the destitute women will not serve any purpose until and unless steps are also taken to rehabilitate them and bring them into the main-stream of the society. While reiterating their earlier recommendation, the Committee desire that the Ministry should take specific remedial steps with regard to the problems being faced by the implementing agencies so as to enable them to implement the programme in an effective manner.**

APPENDIX II

(Vide Para 1.2 of the Report)

ANALYSIS OF ACTION TAKEN BY GOVERNMENT ON THE SECOND REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN (14TH LOK SABHA)

(i).	Total No. of Recommendations	- 16
(ii)	Observations/Recommendations which have been accepted by the Government: Para Nos. 43, 44, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 55, 56, 57 and 58	
		12
	Total	75.00%
	Percentage	
(iii)	Observations/Recommendations which the Committee do not desire to pursue in view of the replies of the Government: Para No. 53 and 54	
	Total	2
	Percentage	12.50%
(iii)	Observations/Recommendations, replies to which have not been accepted by the Committee and which require reiteration: Para Nos. 45 and 46	
	Total	2
	Percentage	12.50%
(iv)	Observations/Recommendations in respect of which final replies have not been received.	
	Total	Nil

MINUTES OF THE ELEVENTH SITTING OF THE COMMITTEE ON EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN (2005-06)

The Committee sat on Thursday the 10th August, 2006 from 1530 hours to 1615 hours in Committee Room 'D', Parliament House Annexe, New Delhi.

PRESENT

IN CHAIR

Smt. Krishna Tirath

-

Chairperson

MEMBERS

LOK SABHA

2. Smt. M.S.K. Bhavani Rajenthiran
3. Shri C.K. Chandrappan
4. Smt. Sushila Kerketta
5. Smt. Jayaprada
6. Dr. P.P. Koya
7. Smt. Preneet Kaur
8. Smt. Minati Sen
9. Smt. C.S. Sujatha
10. Smt. Tejaswini See Ramesh

RAJYA SABHA

11. Ms. Pramila Bohidar
12. Smt. Prema Cariappa
13. Kumari Nirmala Deshpande
14. Smt. N.P. Durga
15. Smt. S.G. Indira

SECRETARIAT

1. Smt. Veena Sharma - Deputy Secretary
2. Shri V.P. Goel - Assistant Director

2. At the outset, the Hon'ble Chairperson welcomed the Members of the Committee to the sitting. Thereafter, the Committee took up for consideration the draft Action Taken Report on the subject '**Scheme for Rehabilitating Women in Difficult Circumstances - SWADHAR**'. After some deliberations, the Committee adopted the draft Action Taken Report and authorized the Chairperson to finalise the Report and present the same to Parliament.

3. The Committee then adjourned.
