

"Towards a Beggar-Free India: Ensuring a Dignified Life for All, through Empowerment and Rehabilitation"



Government of India
Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment
Department of Social Justice & Empowerment
(Economic Inclusion Division)

Begging in India: Challenges, Laws, and Statistics

Definition of Begging

What Constitutes Begging?

- Soliciting or receiving alms in public (singing, dancing, fortune-telling, or offering articles for sale)
- Entering private premises to ask for alms
- Exposing deformities or diseases for alms
- Living in public places without visible means of support

Begging in India (Census 2011)

- **Total Beggars in India:** 4,13,670
- **States with the Highest Number of Beggars:** Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh

Relevant Laws & Constitutional Provisions

- **The Bombay Prevention of Begging Act, 1959**
- **Article 23:** Prohibition of forced labour and human trafficking
- **Article 41:** Right to public assistance in times of unemployment, old age, sickness, and disability
- **Section 363A, IPC:** Criminalizes kidnapping or maiming minors for begging

Challenges & Contributing Factors

- **Social Deprivation:** Begging due to poverty, homelessness, and discrimination
- **Key Contributing Factors:** Mental illness, old age, drug addiction, family breakdown, disabilities, and gender discrimination (including transgender individuals)

Impact of Begging:

- **Economic Burden:** Lost labour potential, economic strain
- **Social Consequences:** Drug abuse, human trafficking, organized crime

Support for Marginalised Individuals for Livelihood and Enterprise (SMILE):

Comprehensive Rehabilitation of Persons Engaged in the Act of Begging

SCHEME SNAPSHOT

SMILE SCHEME

‘Comprehensive Rehabilitation of persons engaged in the act of Begging’ (SMILE- Beggary), Guidelines issued on 23.10.2023.

Components of the Scheme

Survey/identification, Counselling & mobilisation, Rescue & primary rehabilitation, comprehensive rehabilitation

GOAL

Make the country ‘**Bhiksha Vritti Mukta Bharat**’ -Reintegration of People involved in the act of beggary to the mainstream society for leading a life with dignity **and self-confidence**.

COVERAGE

Currently 81 historical/religious/tourist cities/towns

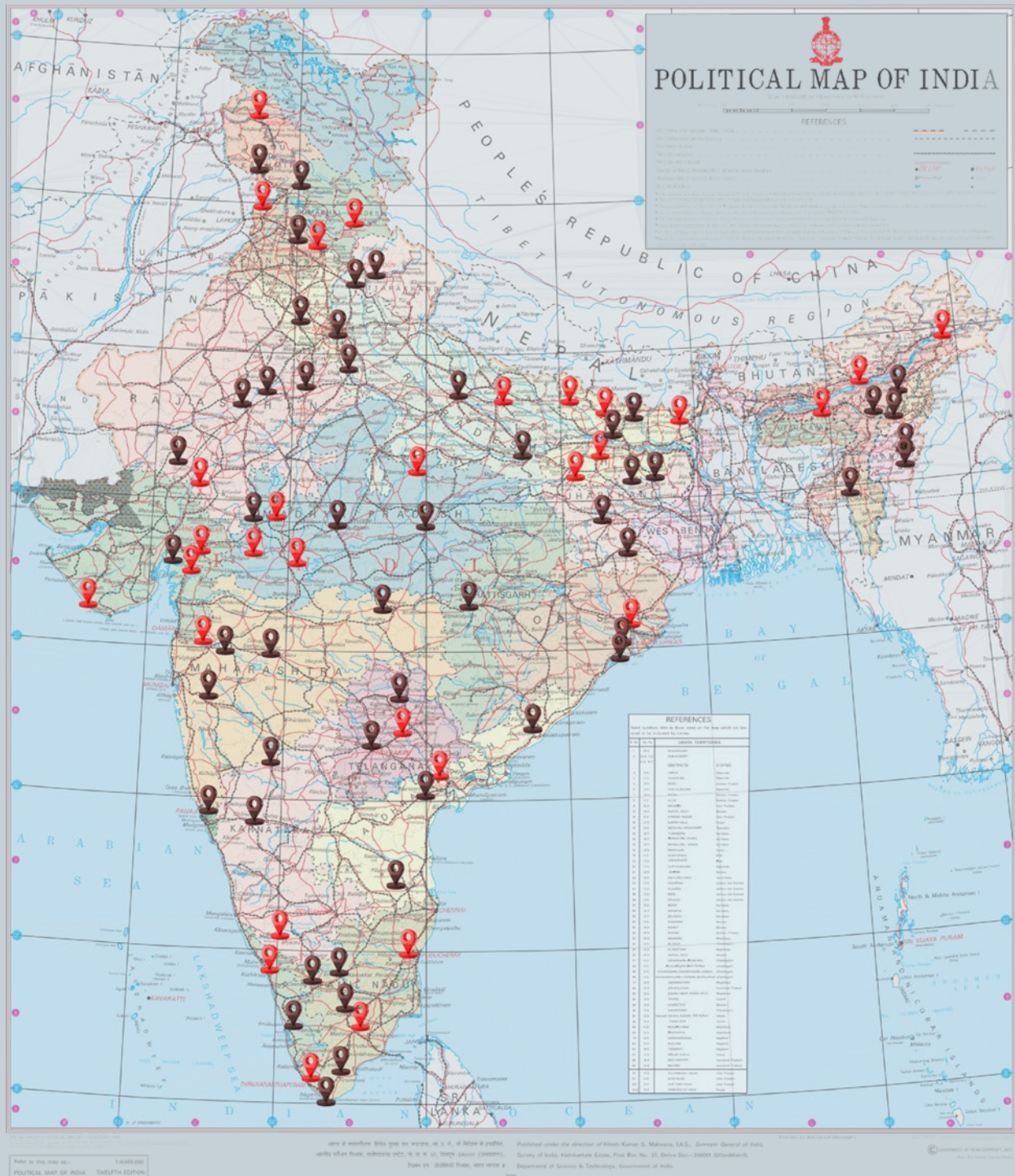
Approach

Convergence with GoI and States Schemes like DAY-NULM, NRLM, Mission Vatsalya, Shakti Sadan, Saksham Anganwadi, Poshan 2.0, National Health Mission, Samagra Shiksha, Annapurna Scheme, PMGKAY

Implementing Agencies

District Administration, Temple Trusts, NGOs, SHGs & other stakeholders will help implement services like awareness campaigns, counselling, medical aid, education, skill training, and reintegration programs.

Implementing Cities



Current Coverage - 29 States and UT's



Phase-1

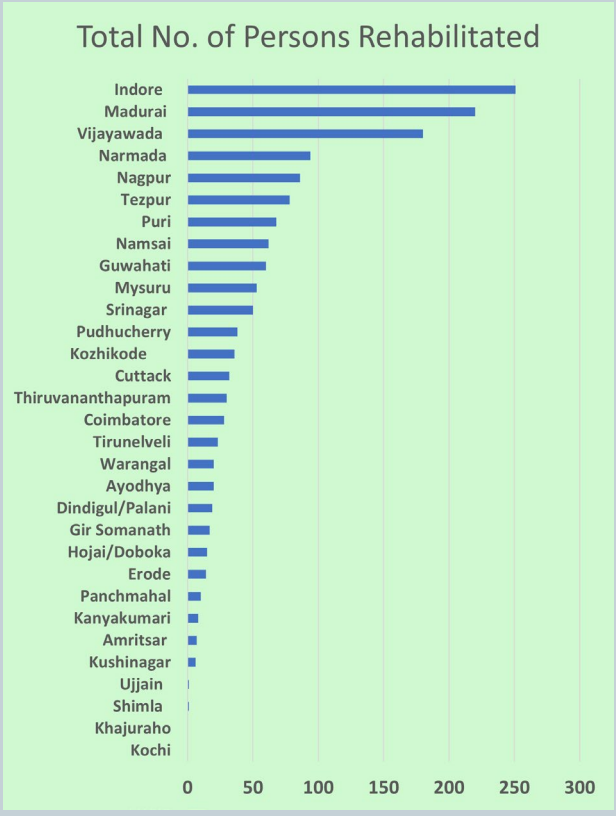
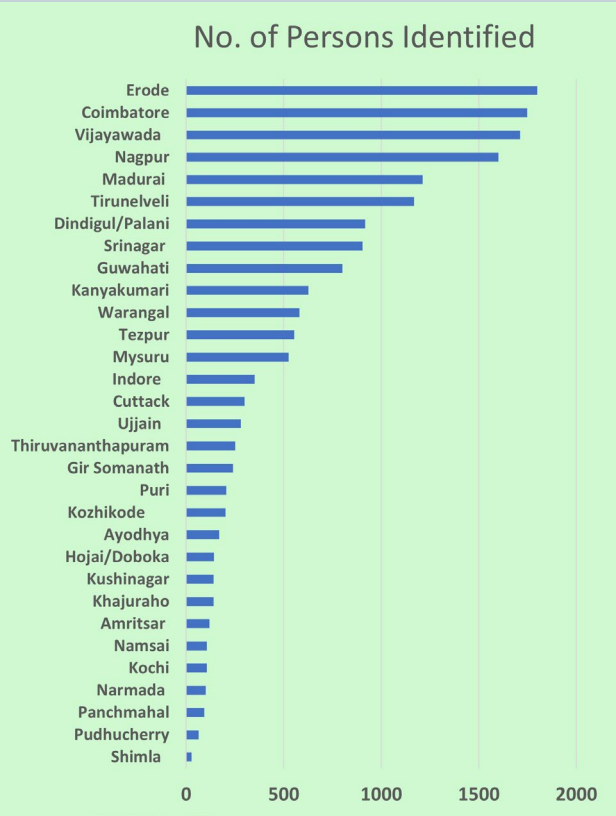
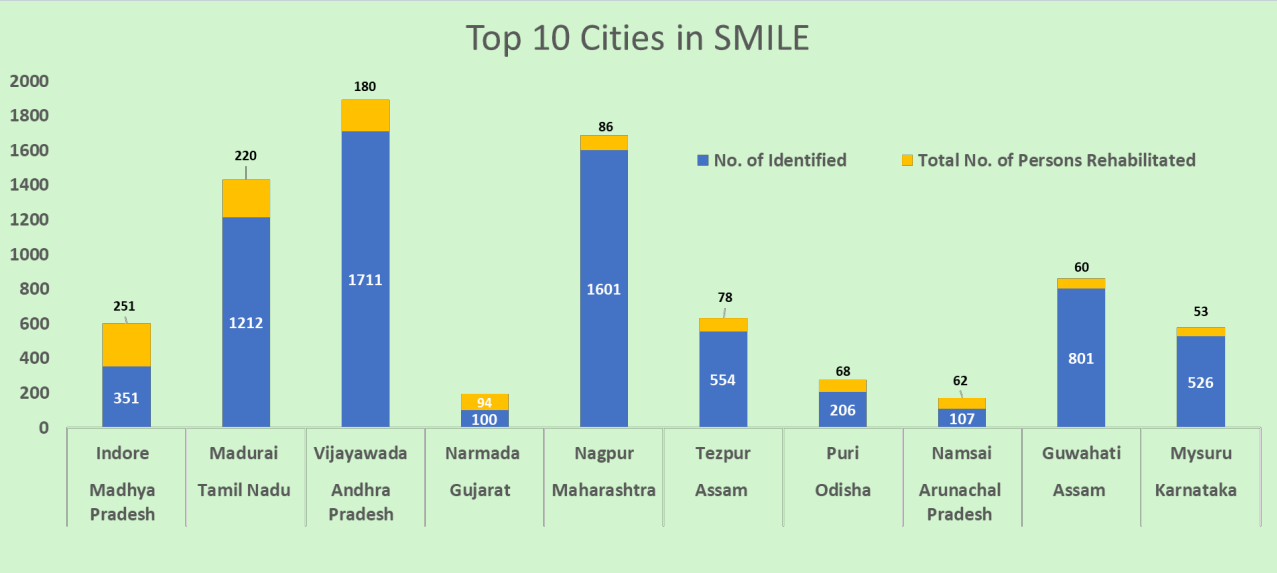


Phase-2

Current Performance

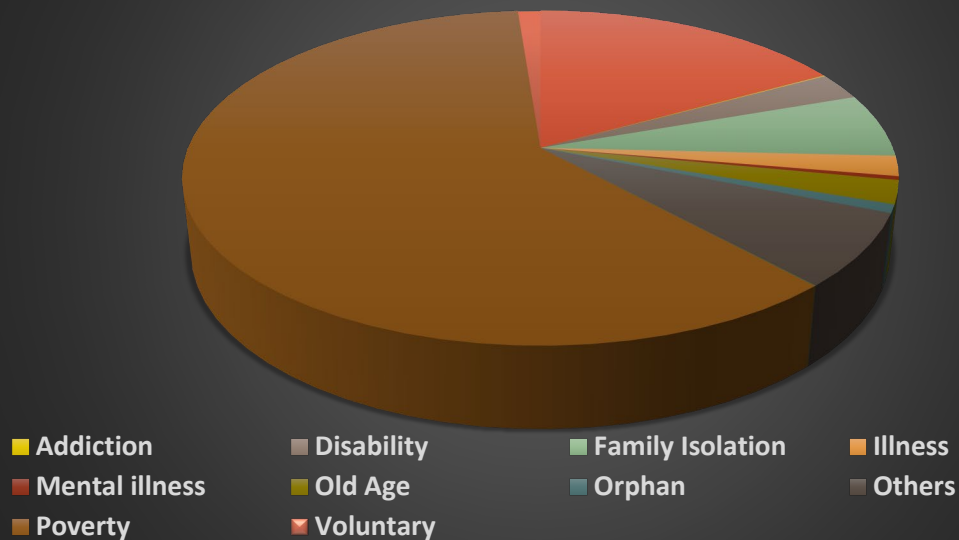
S No.	States/UTs	Name of District	No. of Identified	Total No. of Persons Rehabilitated
1	Andhra Pradesh	Vijayawada	1711	180
2	Arunachal Pradesh	Namsai	107	62
3	Assam	Hojai/Doboka	142	15
4	Assam	Guwahati	801	60
5	Assam	Tezpur	554	78
6	Gujarat	Panchmahal	92	10
7	Gujarat	Narmada	100	94
8	Gujarat	Gir Somanath	240	17
9	Himachal Pradesh	Shimla	27	1
10	J&K	Srinagar	904	50
11	Karnataka	Mysuru	526	53
12	Kerala	Kochi	106	0
13	Kerala	Kozhikode	202	36
14	Kerala	Thiruvananthapuram	252	30
15	Madhya Pradesh	Khajuraho	140	0
16	Madhya Pradesh	Indore	351	251
17	Madhya Pradesh	Ujjain	281	1
18	Maharashtra	Nagpur	1601	86
19	Odisha	Cuttack	300	32
20	Odisha	Puri	206	68
21	Pudhucherry	Pudhucherry	64	30
22	Punjab	Amritsar	120	7
23	Tamil Nadu	Tirunelveli	1168	23
24	Tamil Nadu	Dindigul/Palani	918	19
25	Tamil Nadu	Erode	1800	14
26	Tamil Nadu	Kanyakumari	627	8
27	Tamil Nadu	Coimbatore	1748	28
28	Tamil Nadu	Madurai	1212	220
29	Telangana	Warangal	580	20
30	Uttar Pradesh	Ayodhya	169	20
31	Uttar Pradesh	Kushinagar	141	6
	Total		17190	1519

Current Performance

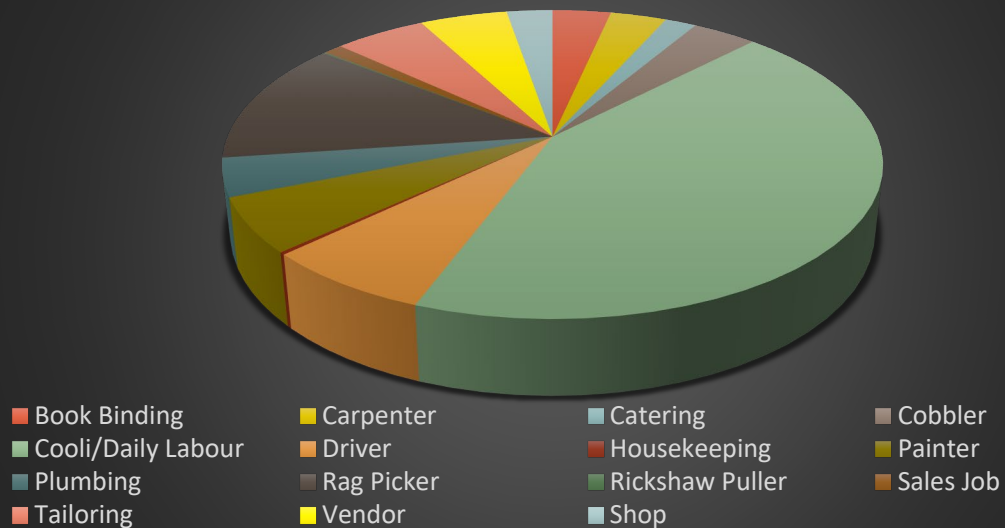


Key Insights

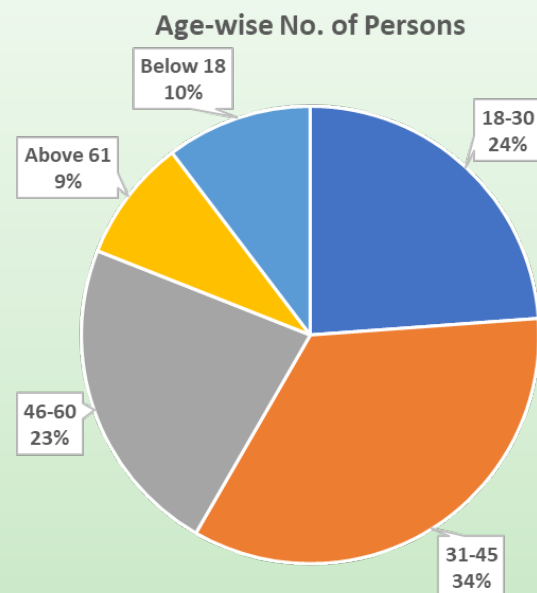
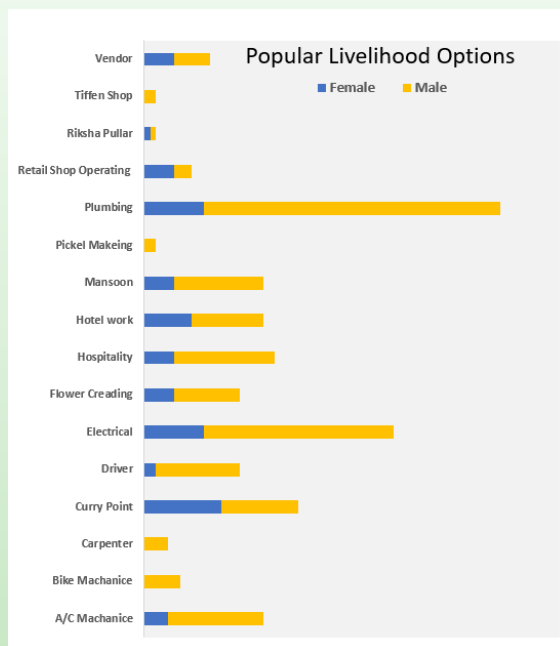
Major Reasons for Begging



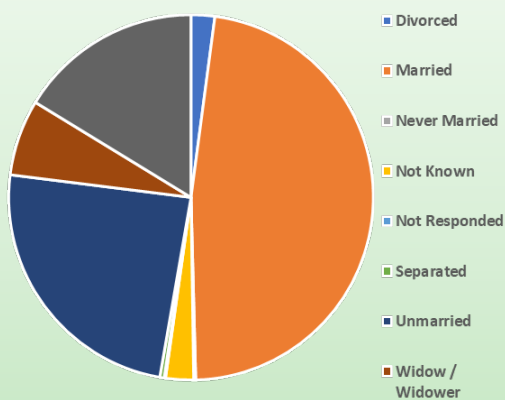
Part time engagements of People Engaged in the Act of Begging



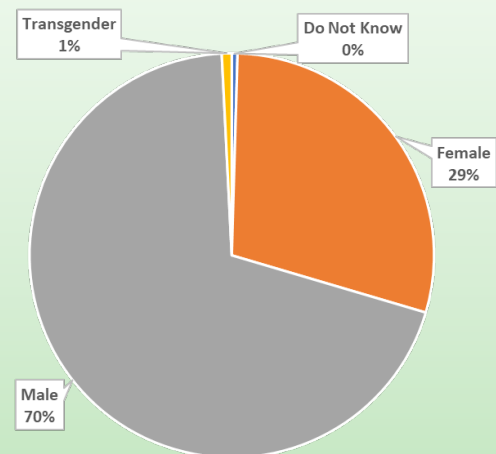
Key Insights



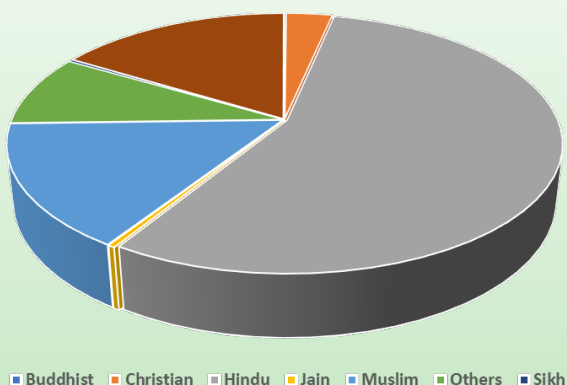
Marital Status of No. of Persons



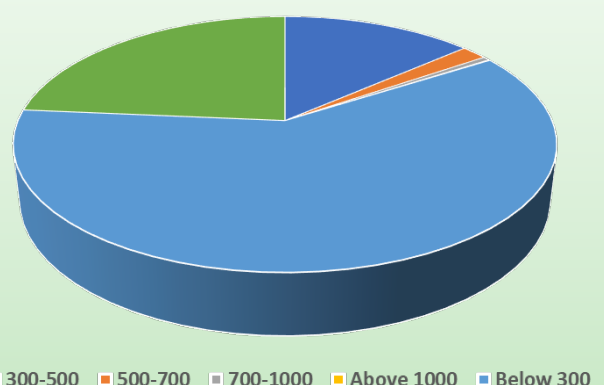
Gender-wise No. of Persons



Religion-wise No. of Persons



Daily Alms Collection



Orientation/Outreach Efforts

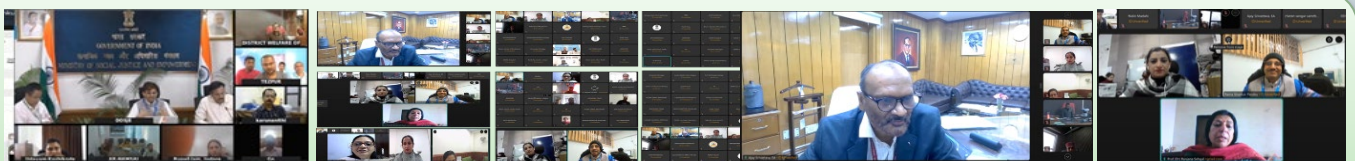
National Workshop at Ayodhya



Orientation Program at NISD-New Delhi



On-Line trainings every 3 Months



Success Stories



1. Sunil Mahawar: From Addiction to Stability

Background: Sunil, a former businessman, fell into severe drug addiction, leading to homelessness and begging.

Outcome: Sunil is now drug-free, reunited with family, and advocating against substance abuse



2. Jyoti Prajapati: A Mother's Fight for Survival

Background: Victim of domestic violence; left to care for her two children alone, eventually forced into begging.

Outcome: She plans to rent a home for her family and continue her daughter's education.



3. Raju & Rajan: Rescued from the Streets

Background: Brothers who worked as cobblers; Raju developed cataracts, forcing them into begging.

Outcome: Now living independently and earning a sustainable income.

Success Stories



4. Jayalakshmi: From Mental Illness to Caregiver

Background: Originally from Sri Lanka, Jayalakshmi lost her parents and suffered from untreated mental illness.

Outcome: Now employed as a **trainer at a school for special children**, regaining purpose and dignity.



5. Mohan: From Chains to Stability

Background: Struggled with severe mental health issues; villagers **chained him due to violent behaviour**.

Outcome: Successfully reintegrated into society with a **stable job**.



6. Kalpana Mura: Reuniting with Family

Background: Substance abuse led Kalpana to mental instability; she ran away from home and ended up begging.

Outcome: Reunited with her family and reintegrated into society.



7. Girija: Rescued from Exploitation

Background: Struggled with **Borderline Personality Disorder**; nearly **forced into begging by traffickers**.

Outcome: Regained **mental stability and financial independence**



8. Thimmamma: A Senior Citizen's Second Chance

Background: A widow suffering from **wandering behaviour and loneliness**, eventually found **begging**.

Outcome: Now living in a **safe home with her family**.

Best Practices

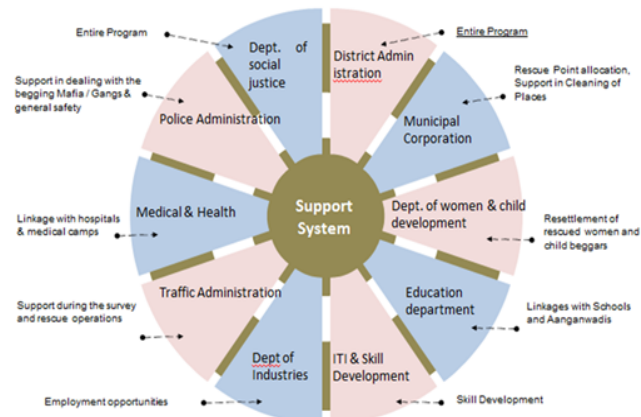


Best Practices – Constitution of Task Force



Location – Indore

Heads of all Religious trust & Local heads of all concerned departments came together to constitute a local support system in the leadership of District Administration and real time mission mode tracking & monitoring of identification, mobilisation to shelter home and rehabilitation started.



Result: Highest no. of Rehabilitation for Adult (150) and Children (146) completed in Phase 1



Best Practices – Civil Society Participation

Location – Erode

Continuous campaign mode awareness programs to sensitise more than 2 Lac citizens to discourage alms giving, participate in comprehensive rehabilitation, has successfully rehabilitated 1310 persons and could counsel more than 11K Persons engaged in the act of begging through Citizen led movement in the city.



Mr. G. JAWAHAR IPS, Ms. S. Shanmugavadivu-Erode Dt. Social Welfare Officer, Ms. VALLI SATHYAMOORTHY-Dean/Perundurai Medical College Hospital, Ms. P. KOTHASELVI- Erode Dt. Differently Abled Welfare Officer.



Thiru S. MUTHUSAMY, the Ministry of Housing and Urban Development, and Minister for Prohibition and Excise

Erode District Collector, Thiru. RAJA GOPAL SUNKARA

Mr. AZIM PREMJI, Chairman- WIPRO

Mr. SRIDHAR VEMBU - CEO of Zoho Corporation,

Result: >400 Volunteers working for Implementing Agency. 545+ Awareness Program Completed

Best Practices



Best Practices – Re-integration with Society

Location – Lucknow

Regular participation & Celebration of rehabilitated persons to bring pride and respect to secure their integration with society. This has also resulted to obtain sufficient CSR funding to make the program self sustainable in Lucknow.



Result: 150 Adults and 100 Children Rehabilitated



Best Practices – Financial Inclusion & Health Benifits

Location – Nagpur

Aadhar Card, Voter ID, Bank Accounts, PM Insurance etc. were made free of cost to all the beneficiaries in Aastha Shelter Home. 24X7 in-house medical clinic available with ICU Ambulance & Access to deaddiction center.



Result: 563 people got rehabilitated

Website at a glance

Website screenshot of <https://smile-b.dosje.gov.in>

Government of India
Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment
Support for Marginalized Individuals for Livelihood & Enterprise
Comprehensive Rehabilitation of Person Engaged in Begging

Home | About | Guidelines | Gallery | Success Story | Contact Us | List of Cities

**Sabka Saath
Sabka Vikas
Sabka Vishwas
Sabka Prayas**

75 Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav

9946 IDENTIFIED (NO.)
970 REHABILITATION (NO.)

Skill and Training
Indore Pilot city on Women Beneficiaries
Indore Pilot city on Women Beneficiaries

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An orientation programme for effective implementation of scheme : SMILE- rehabilitation of persons engaged in the act of begging was inaugurated by Shri Amit Yadav, Secretary @DoSJE, in the temple town of Ayodhya.

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Open Government Data (OGD) Platform India

Total visitors: 6110

Cities rapidly moving towards achieving the goal of “Bhiksha Vriti Mukh Bharat”



Indore has implemented a comprehensive strategy to become a **beggar-free city**, focusing on legal enforcement, public participation, and rehabilitation efforts. Starting January 1, 2025, giving alms is discouraged with violators facing legal action. The administration encourages citizens to report begging

activities through a dedicated helpline and offers rewards for verified information. Additionally, thousands of people engaged in the act of begging have been rescued through an umbrella Central Sector Scheme called “Support for Marginalized Individuals for Livelihood and Enterprise (SMILE) and are receiving shelter, medical care, education, and skill development training to facilitate their reintegration into society. Indore is known for its clean streets and urban initiatives.



Chandigarh is actively working towards becoming a beggar-free city through a comprehensive, multi-departmental approach. The Police Department, District Child Protection Unit, Anti-Human Trafficking Unit,

Labour Department, and UT Child Protection Society work together to rescue and rehabilitate individuals involved in begging. The Social Welfare Department is implementing SMILE sub scheme to provide essential services, including healthcare, shelter, and counselling, and leads awareness campaigns like "Neki Ki Deewar," encouraging citizens to donate items instead of giving alms.



Cities rapidly moving towards achieving the goal of “Bhiksha Vriti Mukh Bharat”



Kozhikode once had a very high number of people engaged in beggary. The district administration came forward to address it & added “Comprehensive Rehabilitation of persons engaged in the act of Begging” to the objective of Udayam project in 2024 to ensure these people lead a life with dignity and self-confidence.

City’s shelter homes ensure sustainable

livelihood through vocational training and skill developments. Under this initiative, approximately 2,000 beggars have been rehabilitated and reunited with their families.



Nagpur has launched the 'Beggar-Free City' initiative, aiming to eliminate begging through enforcement and rehabilitation. The Nagpur City Police, in collaboration with the Nagpur Municipal Corporation (NMC), have issued a

notification under Section 144 of the CrPC to prohibit begging in public spaces. Special arrangements have been made to accommodate homeless individuals in NMC shelters, with transportation provided by buses and ambulances.



'Bhiksha Mukh Bharat': How Modi govt plans to make Ayodhya and other cities across India beggar-free

ET Online - Last Updated: Jan 29, 2024, 12:00:00 PM IST

Synopsis

The government targets 30 cities for a nationwide survey and rehabilitation effort to eliminate beggary, emphasizing adults, women, and children. The Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment collaborates with local authorities, aiming to create beggar-free zones by 2026. The initiative, part of the 'Support for Marginalised Individuals for Livelihood and Enterprises' sub-scheme, includes a national portal and mobile app for real-time updates. While 25 cities submit action plans, Sanchi reports no beggars.



Officials indicate that more cities might join the list over the next two years.

In a big move aimed at addressing the issue of beggary across the nation, the Centre has identified 30 cities from Ayodhya in the north to Guwahati in the east and Trimbakeswar in the west to Thiruvananthapuram in the south for a comprehensive survey and rehabilitation initiative, focusing particularly on adults, including women and children, a TOI report stated. As per the report, the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment is set to collaborate with district and municipal authorities to pinpoint 'hotspots' in these cities, with the ambitious goal of making them beggar-free by 2026. Officials indicate that more cities might join the list over the next two years.

आजीविका एवं उद्यम के लिए स्माइल योजना

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आजीविका एवं उद्यम के लिए 'स्माइल' योजना

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Vij-based NGO's SMILE initiative gives new lease of life to beggars

Madhu.Rasala
@timesofindia.com

Vijayawada: In a remarkable initiative aimed at transforming lives, Vijayawada-based NGO Healthcare and Welfare Society has taken the lead in rescuing, rehabilitating, and reintegrating individuals engaged in begging under the central govt's SMILE (Support for Marginalized Individuals for Livelihood and Enterprise) Scheme.

The NGO identified 1,867 beggars in Vijayawada city, of whom around 200 — many suffering from mental health issues and unable to identify themselves — were successfully rescued so far. Several individuals were counselled and reunited with their families, while those without family support were taken under the NGO's care for further rehabilitation. Among the rescued, 72 individuals with basic education received counselling and assistance in securing employment.

A 43-year-old man from Bhimavaram, who was mentally distressed due to marital disputes, ended up living on the streets near Vijayawada railway station for nearly three years, surviving through begging. In 2024, the NGO rescued him and provided medical attention, helping him regain his mental stability. A graduate by qualification, he is now employed as an IT re-

cruiter in a private company, earning nearly Rs 35,000 per month. In another case, a 35-year-old man from Bapatla, who struggled with multiple failed attempts to clear sub-inspector and police constable exams, suffered from mental distress and left his home. He was found living on the streets of Vijayawada before being rescued and rehabilitated. After counselling, he is now working as a food delivery agent

while actively seeking job opportunities in private companies. About a year ago, a woman in her 60s was abandoned by her son at the Vijayawada railway station following her husband's death. The NGO rescued her and facilitated her employment in a home care service, giving her a fresh start. Anil Kumar, project director of the NGO, stated that the ministry of social justice and empowerment chose their or-

ganisation to implement the SMILE project, aimed at rescuing and rehabilitating homeless beggars. The NGO operates a 25-bed facility for rescued individuals, providing counselling, rehabilitation, and job placement assistance. For those unwilling or unable to reunite with their families, the organisation ensures their resettlement according to their individual needs and aspirations.

लखनऊ में भीख मांगकर गुजारा कर रहे सात जिलों के लोग

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