

# A Multi-partnership Approach Towards Self-Sustainable Homeless Shelters

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**Abstract**—A decent home is fundamental to people's well-being. Many people live in accommodation that is run-down, overcrowded or dangerous. Others have lost their homes altogether. Lack of housing makes people to lose their security, health, and opportunity of better life. Homelessness has been linked to the circumstances, personal characteristics and practices of people who experience it.

In India homelessness continues to be a national problem as per Census 2011 there are total 1.77 million people that experience homelessness in India. About 10000 people experiences homelessness in Bhopal majority of them staying on Pavement, Parks, Railway station, Bus stop outside shops places of worship, night shelter etc. Growing shortage of affordable housing poverty, migration, mental illness, alcoholism and dysfunctional families are major contributing factors to this problem. With the growth of cities in Madhya Pradesh after independence due to industrialisation and migration the percentage of homeless population gradually increased from 1940 to present day.

The paper focuses on what homelessness is, how it is defined by law, and how it impacts on people's lives, particularly in the areas of health and education. It also looks at what can be done to tackle the crisis, and how homeless Shelters can be made self-sustainable by developing multi partnership approach with convergence model and various recommendations for provision of shelter for homeless in Madhya Pradesh.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

As per census, Homeless are defined as those who do not live in buildings or census houses but live in the open or roadside, pavements, in hume pipes, under fly-overs and staircases, or in the open in places of worship, mandaps, railway platforms, etc.

A homeless person is defined into three categories

- Live and sleep at pavements, parks, railway stations, bus stations and places of worship, outside shops and factories, at construction sites, under bridges, in home pipes, other places under the open sky at places unfit for human habitation.
- Spend their nights at the night shelters, transit homes, short stay homes, beggars' homes and children's homes

- Live in temporary structures without walls under plastic sheets or thatch roofs on pavements, parks, nallah beds and other common spaces.

Within this group there are multiple degrees of vulnerability, for instance single women, infirm and old, disabled, and persons who have special needs such as floating migrant populations unable to find labour or food, those involved in substance abuse and patients of debilitating diseases [3].

Bhopal being the capital city of the state experiences major migration of homeless population coming in search of employment and other opportunities. It is One of the target cities In Madhya Pradesh National Urban Livelihood Mission, having population more than 10 lakh, among the four most populated city in the state namely Indore, Bhopal, Jabalpur and Gwalior with homeless[1].

Three trends are largely responsible for the rise in homelessness over the past 20-23 years, it includes growing shortage of affordable rental housing, increase in poverty and migration. Homelessness and poverty are inextricably linked.

Poor people are frequently unable to pay for housing, food, childcare, health care, and education. Homeless are often seen as an extension of squatter settlement, those which spring up illegally on vacant lots or stretches of land. Homelessness is an inevitable consequence of urbanization-migration from rural to urban areas, usually in search of work as urbanization has increased in Bhopal, so has homeless[3].

The most vulnerable people are street children, single women, physically handicapped persons. Bhopal has a homeless population of 9281, as per census 2011 Hence it is necessary to study the factors contributing to this condition so as to address the issue of homelessness.

This study will provide various factors contributing to homelessness with a detailed survey of homeless group, those belonging to the lowest level like destitute and underprivileged homeless and steps taken by government through policies and non-government initiatives taken by NGOS for homeless. It will also provide some optimize way regarding how to cater facilities for homeless population

## 2. HOMELESSNESS: A GLOBAL ISSUE

A United Nations global survey in 2005 found that an estimated 100 million people are homeless worldwide and as many as 1 billion people live as squatters, refugees or in temporary shelter, all lacking adequate housing. Countries including Malawi, Egypt, South Africa, New Zealand, Australia, U.K, U.S, Spain, china and Bangladesh are dealing with the similar challenge of homelessness [3].

The percentage of homeless population varies from 18-0.02%. Among which countries like Egypt South Africa and Russia has the maximum % of homeless, while Israel, Switzerland and japan has least percentage, Whereas India has 0.15% of homeless. Table 1 below shows percentage of homeless population of major countries in the world [3].

### 2.1. Causes of homelessness

The causes of homelessness are varied and complex. Homelessness is likely to result from the complex interplay between structural and personal factors.

#### 2.1.1. Structural factors

Structural factors includes unemployment, poverty, housing market shortages and lack of affordable housing, how the national housing system operates, the extent of people's housing rights. Social trends, such as the increasing incidence of relationship breakdown, and rising numbers of people living alone, the structure and administration of Housing Benefit, Wider policy developments, such as the closure of long-stay psychiatric hospitals [3].

#### 2.1.2. Personal factors

Personal and social factors relate to the individual, family or community. They play a key role in people's vulnerability to becoming homeless.

#### 2.1.3 Individual factors

It Includes drug and alcohol misuse, difficulties at school, lack of qualifications, lack of social support debts, especially mortgage or rent arrears; poor physical and mental health and getting involved in crime at an early age.

#### 2.1.4 Family background

Includes family breakdown and disputes, sexual and physical abuse in childhood or adolescence; having parents with drug or alcohol problems and previous experience of family homelessness.

#### 2.1.5 Institutional background

Being in legal care, the armed forces, or in prison.

### 2.2. Tackling and preventing homelessness

The obligation of local authorities to prevent as well as to respond to homelessness is long-standing, both in law and good practice. Since the Housing (Homeless Persons) Act

1977, authorities have been legally required to assist people under the threat of homelessness by taking reasonable steps to prevent them from losing their existing homes. Since the introduction of the Homelessness Act 2002, central Government has increasingly encouraged local authorities to take a more proactive approach to tackling homelessness [4].

One of local authorities' specific responsibilities is to develop a strategy to assess and prevent homelessness in the local area. There is a duty on each local authority to produce a homelessness strategy and to review and update it at least every five years. 'Strategies must aim to prevent homelessness and ensure that accommodation and support will be available for people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. The most widely adopted approaches to homelessness prevention are the provision of housing advice, a deposit for private sector accommodation and similar schemes to increase access to private tenancies, family mediation, domestic violence support and tenancy sustainment [4].

## 3. HOMELESSNESS IN INDIA

According to the 2011 Census, there were 1.77 million homeless people in India, or 0.15% of the country's total population, Figure 2 and 3 given below shows the difference in homeless population of India as per census 2001 and 2011.

### 3.1. Definition of Homelessness

The census of India defines "houseless population" as the persons who are not living in census house. Where, a census house is a structure with the roof. Census enumerators are instructed "to take note of the possible places where the houseless population is likely to live such as "on the road side, pavements, in hume pipes, under staircases or in the open, religious buildings or platforms. There are 1.77 million homeless in India as per census 2011.

### 3.2. Legislation

Laws and legislative provision for homeless includes National and state level policy on shelter less. Permanent shelters for urban homeless people-2011, National Programme for shelter and other services for urban homeless, there is National advisor on homeless on the commissioner of Supreme Court.

### 3.3. Intervention by Government

[1] Intervention by government includes National shelter policy, National urban livelihood mission and different interventions by NGOs.

### 3.4. Homelessness in Madhya Pradesh

According to the 2011 census, there are 37,822 homeless families in the state with the average size of per family being 3.9. The total number of homeless people in the state is 1,46,435. Over half of this houseless population lives in remote areas. In rural areas, there are 19,314 houseless households, with a population of 80,380. The average size of such

households in rural areas is 4.2 rest majority of the homeless population is found in cities like Indore, Bhopal, Jabalpur, and Gwalior [7].

**3.5. Government Interventions for Homeless at state level**

At present there are two programs working in Madhya Pradesh for homeless including PMAY, housing for all and NULM (National Urban Livelihood Mission).

*3.5.1 The scheme of shelter for urban homeless-(SUH):*

[1] National Urban Livelihoods Mission (NULM) is jointly being implemented by Government of India (GoI), Government of Madhya Pradesh (GoMP) and the Urban Local Bodies (ULBs) of the State. SUH (Shelter for Urban homeless) is the 5th component out of total 6 components of NULM.

**4. IMPLEMENTATION AT STATE LEVEL**

[1] The Mission is being implemented in 55 ULBs of State in the starter phase by Urban Administration and development department, Govt. of Madhya Pradesh. Table 1 below shows the coverage of NULM in the state.

**Table 1. Cities covered under state NULM**

Population	City	Numbers
10 lakh and above	Indore, Bhopal, Jabalpur, Gwalior	4
5-10 lakh	Ujjain	1
3-5 lakh	Sagar	1
1-3 lakh	Dewas, Satna, Ratlam, Reva, Katni, Burhanpur,	26
Below 1 lakh	Balaghat, Shahdol, Panna, Narsinghpur etc.	23
	Total	55

**4.2. Components of implementation**

Component of implementation includes Social mobilization and institutional Development, Employment through skill training and placement, Self-Employment Programme, Capacity Building & Training, Support to Urban vendors [1].

**4.3. Scheme of shelter for homeless**

[1] Under this component community shelters will be constructed (50-100 people/shelter) in location proximate to railway stations and bus stands, markets etc. Management of shelter will be done by management committee and full time management staff.

**5. INITIATIVES AT LOCAL LEVEL**

Some of the NGOs working in the city are Jeevodaya, Ekjut, Muskaan, Arushi. The funds for Operations & Management of the shelters should be released to the ULBs post completion of the construction/refurbishment preferably in instalments. The

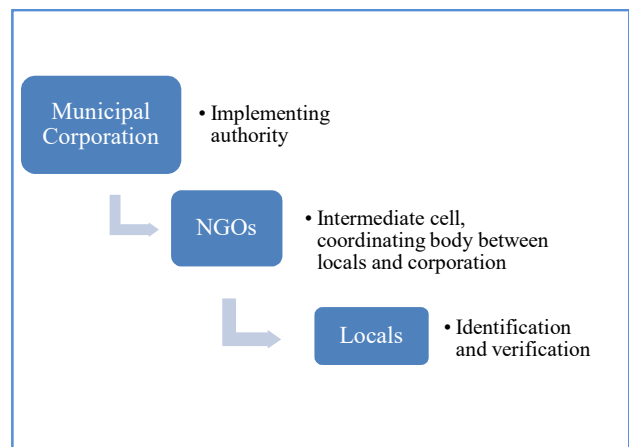
instalments of O&M funds should be released well in advance in order to ensure smooth operation and maintenance of the shelters. The necessary procedures for verification of utilization of funds released for O&M may be finalized by the SULM (State Urban Livelihood Mission).

**6. UNDERSTANDING GAPS BETWEEN PROPOSAL AND IMPLEMENTATION.**

Despite the number of initiatives taken by state and central authorities, the state of homeless in the state still remains unaffected at certain level. Lack of awareness, reluctance towards moving to the night shelters, Lack of medical and basic aids, Indulgence in Drugs and other addictive are some of the reasons increasing the rate of homeless in the state. Only constructing night shelters and provision of food at some of them shall not be the solution adopted for this challenge. This gap between proposal and implementation should be filled and given attention

**7. PROPOSAL FOR IMPLEMENTATION**

With such an alarming rate of homeless population in the state, eradication of such situation needs intensive initiatives working in different dimensions of homelessness. These dimensions can be defined in three categories, Mental rehabilitation, Employment generation, self sustainability. The initiative taken by the state and central government in state is unable of triggering these dimensions. Identification of a homeless to providing him or her a sustainable life shall be the target of authorities. Working for only one dimension is not the solution for the problem, which state and country are facing today. Figure 1 below shows the multipartnership approach.



**Figure 1: Showing Multipartnership Approach**

Various stakeholder and a multi partnership approach with assurance of self-sustainability to a homeless should be adopted. This multi partnership approach shall comprise of various stakeholders from government to Non- government sector. Namely, state authority/ central authority as funding

and sanctioning authority, municipal corporation as implementing authority, NGOs working together along with Municipal corporation in implementation by identifying homeless and providing them labour card, ID card, Bank Accounts etc.

Local residents of any city or area shall play a vital role in ground implementation by forming a community for identifying homeless from different parts of their residential areas and cities, later on taking them to NGOs for registration and identification. Locals of the city instead of simply feeding and providing clothing to homeless can contribute through identifying and providing aid through I card, labour card and other identity provision.

## 8. RECOMMENDATION FOR EXISTING SHELTER

Recommendations for existing shelters includes revision of present standards and norms as per given TSS and NULM standards. Relocation of chaandbad and transport nagar's community shelter home as it has zero occupancy, provision of standards for toilet and basic facilities as per given standards. Special provision of cooking for family staying in idgah hill's shelter and Ram roti yojana should be made available at all the shelters assessing their needs.

Shelter for labour should be located in commercial areas, upcoming commercial project of corporation should include shelters on top floor, making it accessible for those who work in those areas or shops. This will result in good occupancy of shelters.

## 9. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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