

**Report of the Committee constituted under the
direction of the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India by
Judgment dated August 11, 2017**

in

Writ Petition (Civil) No. 659 OF 2007

November 27, 2017

**Report Submitted by the Committee
Constituted under the Direction
of the
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A Committee was constituted by the Hon'ble Supreme Court in Writ Petition (Civil) No. 659 OF 2007 vide order dated August 11, 2017.

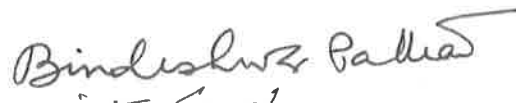
The Committee Members were given copies of the reports by the Hon'ble Supreme Court. The members met several times in the last three months at the NCW Office and perused all the reports.

The present report is a summary of all the findings and recommendations in various reports and also includes a detailed work plan with suggested time lines for implementation.

The Committee Members are grateful for the opportunity given to them to prepare this report and hope that the same would benefit and empower widows in the country.

The Committee Members would like to record their appreciation to the Joint Secretary, National Commission of Women and concerned staff who provided administrative support to the Committee during their meetings.

Signed by:

Ms. Suneeta Dhar, Jagori 
Ms. Meera Khanna, Guild of Service 
Ms. Abha Singhal Joshi, Lawyer 
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I. BACKGROUND AND GENERAL OBSERVATIONS

A. METHODOLOGY

The present report is being submitted pursuant to the judgment of the Hon'ble Supreme Court dated August 11, 2017 directing the Committee to study the various reports filed before the Court and provide a common working plan.

The Committee convened at the office of the National Commission for Women on September 4, 2017 and held several meetings thereafter. During these meetings, the Committee examined and consolidated the findings from the reports. A list of the key issues were tabulated and individual members, as per their expertise, added to the content. The Committee felt that, given the experience of some members on the practical aspects of welfare and empowerment of widows, work that has already been done could be included as annexures to the recommendations, to enable agencies to execute the directions which may be passed by the Hon'ble Court.

B. GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The fundamental factor which has guided the recommendations of the Committee is that the subject matter of the recommendations are impoverished and mostly illiterate older women, who are lost in the complex web of administrative structures, and thus deprived of benefits due to them.¹

Expecting the widows described above to navigate through the labyrinth of the multiple agencies designated for distribution of benefits is an unreal expectation and scripted for failure.

The approach of the state needs to change drastically for benefits to percolate to this deprived class of citizens. Rather than wait for the widows to knock at the doors of the state, it is the state which needs to proactively reach their door steps and pre-empt destitution. Therefore, much emphasis has been laid on preventive measures to ensure that widows do not necessarily need to be on the streets to receive the attention of the state.

Also there needs to be a paradigm shift in the attitudes to interventions from the welfare approach, that views the widows as recipients of doles, to an entitlement approach. The destitute widows should be able to claim the required services from the state as a matter of right. These women are entitled to live with dignity, with help from the family, the community and the state. It is a "Many Hands" approach that will create the enabling climate for widows to be aware of

¹ Summary Report of the Situation Analysis of Widows in Religious Places of West Bengal prepared by Jayaprakash Institute of Social Change, Report No. 1; Study by the NCW in 2009-10 on widows in Vrindavan. Report No. 3; Status Report on widows in Swadhar Homes in Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, West Bengal and Odisha by the NCW in November, 2016; Report No.16.

their rights, have the support to access the rights and the necessary skills and environment to earn a livelihood.

Unfortunately, no effort is made to empower the widows in their own right or integrate them with the community. This negative approach leads to continuous increase in the number of dependents which in turn puts additional stress on the resources of the state.

Even the limited services and benefits on offer are unable to reach the recipients due to poor implementation, non-existent coordination and indifferent monitoring process. The benefits actually distributed are also disbursed intermittently and are invariably delayed due to bureaucratic hurdles.

The objective of the recommendations is to ensure easy access to services and benefits through coordinated mechanisms comprehensible to beneficiaries.

To this end, a Single Window System is the key to coordinated implementation of the schemes. E-governance in the form of common helpline and digitalisation of data, records and reports are the other tools that could ensure easy access to benefits and seamless coordination among the multiple agencies tasked with the implementation of the various schemes.

Multiple options for access to benefits would act as a safety net and is therefore imperative for successful implementation of the schemes. Active involvement of the local community is also important as it would help in independent monitoring of implementation.

C. GENERAL OBSERVATIONS

1. Widows are not a Homogeneous Group

It is important to emphasize that widows are not a homogeneous group concentrated in the shelter homes alone. More than half the widows surveyed reside independently and constitute the most neglected category.² Therefore implementation schemes should be designed keeping this distinction in consideration. Depending on their living environment, the widows may broadly be classified into three categories:

- Widows living at home or in families.
- Widows living independently in communities.
- Widows in shelter homes.

1.1 Widows living at home or in families

Certain measures may be needed for preventing widows from being forced out of their own homes and families. Given the dependence of the average woman on her husband, sons and male relatives for sustenance, most widows continue to

² Status Report filed by Ms. Renuka Kumar on 16th April, 2015 Report No. 10; Summary Report of the Situation Analysis of Widows in Religious Places of West Bengal prepared by Jayaprakash Institute of Social Change, Report No. 1; Study by the NCW in 2009-10 on widows in Vrindavan. Report No. 3

face discrimination and deprivation even while continuing to live with their families.³ The Committee has, therefore, suggested some measures to identify such widows and bring them within the outreach of the concerned agencies, if required. This outreach may stem the exodus of widows from their homes and familiar environments.

1.2 Widows living independently in communities

More than fifty percent of women live independently and are among the most deprived in terms of access to state sponsored schemes.⁴ It is crucial that welfare and other support services reach out to them. Measures needed to help link them to government agencies and schemes have been suggested.

1.3 Widows in shelter homes

The immediate concern raised in the studies is of destitute widows who are living in shelters such as government-run homes and Ashrams. All the studies point to the fact that widows throng to places where there is likelihood of getting some form of shelter and sustenance⁵. The studies suggest that despite the spirit of the interventions being altruistic, the condition of these homes is miserable⁶.

Several measures have already been suggested for improvement of shelter homes in the judgment of August 11, 2017 passed by the Hon'ble Supreme Court.

Copy of the "Standard Operating Procedure for Swadhar Homes" drafted by the Expert Committee on the Status of Widows constituted by the National Commission for Women submitted to the Ministry of Women and Child Development is annexed for reference as Annexure 1.

2. Prevention of Child Marriage & Early Widowhood

Child marriage has been identified as a major factor which leads to early widowhood and resultant destitution and vulnerability. In one study, almost 100% of the widows surveyed were married below 18 years of age and there existed a huge age difference between the women and their husbands.⁷ Programmes for strengthening systemic interventions through the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006 need to be strengthened to minimise these incidents. The judgment of the Hon'ble Supreme Court in the case of Independent Thought vs. Union of India⁸ is a significant step in this direction.

³ Summary Report of the Situation Analysis of Widows in Religious Places of West Bengal prepared by Jayaprakash Institute of Social Change, Report No. 1.

⁴ Study by the NCW in 2009-10 on widows in Vrindavan. Report No. 3.

⁵ Summary Report of the Situation Analysis of Widows in Religious Places of West Bengal prepared by Jayaprakash Institute of Social Change, Report No. 1; Study by the NCW in 2009-10 on widows in Vrindavan. Report No. 3;

⁶ Status Report on widows in Swadhar Homes in Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, West Bengal and Odisha by the NCW in November, 2016; Report No.16.

⁷ Summary Report of the Situation Analysis of Widows in Religious Places of West Bengal prepared by Jayaprakash Institute of Social Change, Report No. 1.

⁸ 2017 SCC Online SC 1222 (Writ Petition (Civil) No. 382 of 2013, decided on October 11, 2017)

3. Financial Inclusion

All the studies and reports suggest that destitution of widows stems from the complete lack of financial security after the death of the spouse. In order that women may be protected from this situation of extreme destitution, the schemes and programmes for independent financial security for all women, in particular women from economically and socially disadvantaged class, need to be implemented through simple measures like ensuring universalisation of banking, small savings, simple livelihood options, skill development, access to loans and financial literacy through the concerned agencies.

4. Access to Property

One of the factors common to women/widows of all classes is lack of control over property, and deprivation from property of husbands and fathers through subversion of the succession process. Unless this trend is controlled and reversed, the situation of women in general, and widows in particular, will continue to be vulnerable.⁹

5. Skill Development and Access to Sustainable Livelihoods

A major deficiency in the current framework of skill development is that the widow is left to her own resources after training without any access to credit, market linkage or job placement despite existence of government schemes designed for the purpose. There is also no effort to organise the widows into cooperatives under the various schemes which has proved to be a successful model for self employment. Implementation of these schemes in letter and spirit would go a long way in rehabilitation of the widows and creation of a skilled workforce.

6. Social Empowerment

The most important aspect of rehabilitation, often completely overlooked, is empowerment of the widows by recognising them as worthy individuals in their own right, and not mere dependents on the family and the system. It is imperative to restore and respect the dignity of widows by integrating them into the community, rather than treating them as objects of pity. This should be done through programmes designed to enhance participation of widows in all walks of life through social and cultural organisations such as Rotary and Lions Clubs, Self Help Groups, Single-Women's Networks (EKAL Nari Sanghathan), Mahila Mandals and other social networks. This would help the widows find a voice to access rights and entitlements and secure emotional and peer support. Widows should also be involved in the management of shelter homes and have a say in running of the homes.

⁹ Status Report on widows in Swadhar Homes in Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, West Bengal and Odisha by the NCW in November, 2016; Report No.16; Summary Report of the Situation Analysis of Widows in Religious Places of West Bengal prepared by Jayaprakash Institute of Social Change, Report No. 1.

7. Widow Remarriage

Studies seem to suggest a reluctance on the part of widows to revert to a family atmosphere due to a variety of reasons, ranging from worries about children from earlier marriage to social ridicule. Many widows are possibly experiencing independence and freedom from regular abuse. However, a gradual shift in attitude is visible.¹⁰ Therefore it is important that widow remarriage should be destigmatised. Counselling, wherever done, should encourage discussion on marriage and like relationships, including emotional needs in order to create a supportive environment for the widow to remarry or enter into a relationship, should she wish to. Where a widow wants to remarry or settle down with a partner, she should be facilitated to do so and be guided through the full legal consequences of marriage. If there are children, the status of the children qua the new spouse should be clarified. Where a widow remarries out of a shelter home, or starts to reside with a partner, she should have the option of returning without undergoing fresh formalities in case the marriage or relationship fails, or the spouse or partner dies.

8. Absence of Data on Widows

Finally, the differing forms of violence against widows are known. Yet there is, astonishingly, very little data available. This is probably due to the myth that widows are taken care of by the familial households and so the deprivations of widows are well hidden in economic and social statistics. Since the poorest segment of a population usually comprises female-headed households, it is probable that households headed by widows face greater economic hardships than most. The lack of income data desegregated by headship and marital status prevents the direct documentation of the economic vulnerability of widows and widow-headed households. Without adequate data, it will be impossible to underscore the economic, social and political vulnerabilities of widows. Dearth of data renders the widows invisible in the discourse on poverty. Data on the status of widows across a large sample size, indicating both core and relative deprivations, can be both a management tool and a report card for conceptualizing, implementing and monitoring interventions to empower widows.

D. WAY FORWARD

Widows are, perhaps, the lowest in the rung of the endemic vulnerability of women. This vulnerability needs to be addressed by long-term measures which would ensure that widowhood does not throw a woman into distress, in addition to short-term or on-going measures to support the widows in distress.

The long term measures for prevention from destitution include:

- Focus on prevention of child marriage and early widowhood.

¹⁰ Summary Report of the Situation Analysis of Widows in Religious Places of West Bengal prepared by Jayaprakash Institute of Social Change, Report No. 1

- Identification of vulnerable widows and pro-active outreach to them.
- Financial literacy and inclusion
- Protection of property.
- Protection from domestic violence.
- Access to affordable legal interventions.
- Promotion of community-based single-women networks.

The short-term or on-going measures for homeless, destitute women include:

- Ease of access to Social Security Schemes/Health Services/Legal aid.
- Social integration and rehabilitation including skill development.
- Protection from exploitation, abuse and offences.
- Availability/Upgradation/Maintenance of shelters homes.
- Allocation of sufficient funds for shelter homes and systems for proper disbursal and expenditure.
- Systematic monitoring of shelter homes/schemes.

II. COMMON WORKING PLAN

Sl. No.	Issues Identified in the Reports	Recommendations	Executing Agency	Timeline
1. ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE FOR COORDINATED SERVICES				
1.1	Single Window System for access to services/ Schemes ¹	a) A dedicated "Widows' Cell" to be constituted at the district level consisting of 1) Secretary, DLSA, 2) Sub Divisional Magistrate, 3) Additional Superintendent of Police, 4) Deputy Chief Medical Officer, 5) District Project Officer 6) District Social Welfare Officer and 7) A Chief Executive Officer – to be nominated by the Department of Women and Child Development (State), to execute the services and schemes relating to widows.² A note on the suggested structure and functions of the Widows' Cell is annexed herewith as <u>Annexure 2.</u> b) The Ministry for Women and Child Development (MWCD) has already formulated a One Stop Centre Scheme (OSC) to converge services for women affected by violence³. OSC scheme could be integrated with the present recommendations to specifically cater to the needs of widows. c) All shelter homes, whether maintained by the Centre, State or an NGO, should be registered with the Widows' Cell. d) Widows' Cell should register all the destitute/vulnerable widows of the area through Help Desk/Registration Desk and surveys.	Ministry for Women and Child Development (MWCD) Department of Women and Child Development at the State Level	3 months from date of approval

¹ Study by the NCW in 2009-10 on widows in Vrindavan, Report No. 3; A Report dated 10th September, 2012 and Few Ground Realities by Secretary DLSA, ACJM, Mathura, Report No. 6.

² Status Report filed by Ms. Renuka Kumar on 16th April, 2015, Report No. 10.

³ Affidavit filed by the Ministry of Women and Child Development on 2nd June, 2017. Report No. 18.

1.2	Monitoring Mechanism for Shelter Homes/ Widows' Cell/ Schemes ⁴	a) A Monitoring Committee consisting of 1) Chairperson, DLSA 2) District Magistrate 3) Chief Medical Officer and 4) two members from local citizens' group to be constituted at the district level to inspect the shelter homes and the implementation of the schemes on a quarterly basis. The inspection reports to be uploaded on the MWCD database immediately after every inspection, which would be accessible to all the concerned agencies simultaneously including the State level and the National level Monitoring Committee. b) At the State Level, a committee consisting of 1) Member Secretary, SLSA, 2) Secretary, Department of Women and Child Development, 3) Secretary, Department of Social Welfare, 4) Chairperson, State Social Welfare Board, and 5) Chairperson, State Commission for Women to be constituted to review the report of District Monitoring Committee and take appropriate action. The State Monitoring Committee to conduct annual inspection of shelter homes to review the implementation of the schemes. c) At the National level, a Committee comprising 1) Member Secretary, NALSA, 2) Secretary, Ministry of Women and Child Development, 3) Chairperson, Central Social Welfare Board, 4) Chairperson, National Commission for Women and 5) Secretary, Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship to be constituted to review the report of District Monitoring Committee and take appropriate action. The Committee to conduct periodic inspection to review the	Ministry for Women and Child Development Department of Women and Child Development at the State Level	3 months from date of approval
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⁴ Status Report on widows in Swadhar Homes in Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, West Bengal and Odisha by the NCW in November, 2016, Report No.16; A Report dated 10th September, 2012 And Few Ground Realities by Secretary, DLSA ACJM, Mathura, Report No. 6.

		implementation of the schemes. MWCD is already exploring the possibility of a web based IT enabled monitoring system.⁵ The Ministry has developed a similar scheme of web based real time monitoring for its One Stop Centre Scheme which could be adapted for the present recommendation.⁶		
1.3	Centralised collection of donations by the Widows' Cell ⁷	a) Centralised collection of donations for widows through the Widow's Cell. b) Monetary donations from donors should be collected at Help Desks/identified spots for specific purpose like food, clothing etc.⁸ c) Distribution of material to widows by donors should also be regulated by the Widows' Cell to ensure equitable distribution at every home.⁹	Department of Women and Child Development at the State Level Widows' Cell	3 months from constitution of the Widows' Cell
2. IDENTIFICATION AND OUTREACH				
2.1	Common Database of widows	a) On registration of the death of a male, the name, age and contact details of the widow should also be recorded. The Registrar General of India should issue a direction to the States to this effect. b) Census data collection should be upgraded with additional indicators on widows. c) This data should be uploaded on the digital database of the Ministry of Women and Child Development, keeping in mind privacy of the widows. The achievement booklet of MWCD 2014-2016, states that the ministry is working with the office of the Registrar General of India as well as the State Governments to ensure that the name of the widow is compulsorily mentioned in the death certificate of her husband.	Registrar General of India Registrar of Births and Deaths at State level Ministry of Women and Child Development Department of Women and Child Development at the State Level Widows' Cell	3 months from date of approval Uploading of data on creation of digital database system

⁵ Affidavit filed by the Ministry of Women and Child Development on 2nd June, 2017, Report No. 18.

⁶ <http://wcd.nic.in/sites/default/files/ProposalforOneStopCentre17.3.2015.pdf>

⁷ Study by the National Commission for Women in 2009-10 on Widows in Vrindavan, Report No. 3.

⁸ Report of the Member Secretary, NALSA dated 14th January, 2014 filed in W.P. No. 133 of 2012 on 12th September, 2014, Report No.8.

⁹ A Report dated 10th September, 2012 And Few Ground Realities by Secretary DLSA, ACJM, Mathura, Report No. 6.

2.2	Proactive Intervention	a) An assessment of the financial, legal and health requirement of the widow should be conducted within 60 days of registration of death of the spouse. b) The widow should be made aware of her legal rights including the right to the family property and the right to reside in the family home.¹⁰ c) The widow should also be made aware of her right to access the beneficial government schemes. d) The widow should be provided assistance in accessing legal, health or any other service by connecting her with the concerned agency. e) Threat of eviction, violence or any other abuse to be monitored and referred for legal aid to DLSA. f) This outreach should also be done through telephonic calls to the widows A checklist of the suggested outreach action to be undertaken by the Widows' Cell is annexed herewith as Annexure 3.	Widows' Cell	3 months from constitution of the Widows' Cell
2.3	Protection from Offences	a) Local police stations must have an outreach programme for widows in homes, community or shelter homes. b) Mahila Police Volunteers Scheme of MWCD to create awareness and report incidence or threat of violence, eviction or other abuse of widows to the police. c) Local police stations to include shelter homes in the periodic patrolling/beat with specific reporting to the Women's Help Desk/SO on the status and grievances received, if any. The Senior Citizen Cell model of the Delhi Police can be adopted for this purpose¹¹.	Ministry for Women and Child Development Department of Women and Child Development at the State Level District Magistrate Senior Suerintendent of Police Widows'Cell	For Shelter Homes - 3 months from date of approval For widows' residing independently, on constitution of the Widows' Cell

¹⁰ Status Report on widows in Swadhar Homes in Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, West Bengal and Odisha by the NCW in November, 2016, Report No.16; Summary Report of the Situation Analysis of Widows in Religious Places of West Bengal prepared by Jayaprakash Institute of Social Change, Report No. 1.

¹¹ <http://www.delhipolice.nic.in/seniorcitizen/objectives.htm>

2.4	Protection of Property Rights ¹²	Transfers, release deeds, No Objection Certificates or other conveyance documents and mutations of widows' property should be endorsed by the Sub Divisional Officer (or any other officer of like profile) that such officer has personally satisfied herself or himself that the conveyance and mutation is not done by the widow under coercion or undue influence. The following template is suggested for verification: <i>"Certified that the contents and effect of the above transaction/Power of Attorney in respect of property have been explained to xxxxxx, W/O late xxxxxx, aged xxxxx, Resident of xxxxxxxx, and it has been verified that she is entering into the same with her full and free consent, without being under any duress or coercion.</i> <i>Signature, Date & Seal</i> <i>SDM "</i>	Department of Revenue at the State level	3 months from date of approval
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3. RESPONSE MECHANISM FOR WIDOWS IN DISTRESS

3.1	Common Help Line ¹³	a) A Common Helpline Number to provide single window access to Police Help/Shelter/ Health Services/ Legal aid/ Government Schemes/ Grievance Redressal. b) The MWCD has already developed "Universalisation of Women Helpline Scheme" with common helpline number 181 which can be integrated with the specific needs of the widows¹⁴. c) The helpline number would forward the request to the concerned agencies for required action. d) The widows contacting the helpline should be integrated into the system through registration with the Widows' Cell. e) The Common Helpline Number, list of services and shelters available to widows should be displayed at bus stations, railway stations,	Ministry for Women and Child Development with the concerned agencies. Widows' Cell	3 months from date of approval
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¹² Plight of Foresaken/Forlorn Women – Old and Widows Living in Vrindavan & Radhakund, dated 10th November, 2012 by DLSA, Mathura, Report No. 7; Summary Report of the Situation Analysis of Widows in Religious Places of West Bengal prepared by Jayaprakash Institute of Social Change, Report No. 1.

¹³ A Report dated 10th September, 2012 and Few Ground Realities by Secretary DLSA, ACJM, Mathura, Report No. 6.

¹⁴ <http://www.wcd.nic.in/schemes/women-helpline-scheme-2>.

		temples, premises of panchayats, municipalities and other local bodies prominently. f) Common Helpline Number should be advertised widely in all media. g) Apps should also be developed for this purpose to enable individuals/ organisations access services for a widow needing support.		
3.2	Maintaining digital case file of each widow ¹⁵	a) Create a secure digital file of the widow on registration with shelter homes/Widows' Cell that documents her health, legal, financial and other issues (in addition to the physical file), so that it can be accessed by the concerned agencies when needed and with consent of the widow. b) Link to the data could be provided to other related agencies (DLSA, Social Welfare Department, Hospital) to facilitate access to all the services. c) The same exercise should be carried out for widows residing independently by the Widows' Cell.	Ministry for Women and Child Development, Department of Women and Child Development at the State Level Widows' Cell Shelter Homes	On creation of digital database system by the MWCD (MWCD has stated that it would develop the system within 6 months on 11.8.2017)¹⁶
3.3	Access to Identification Documents ¹⁷	a) The following identification and other necessary documents should be arranged by the shelter homes or Widows' Cell within 45 days of registration: i) Ration Card (where eligible) ii) Aadhar Card iii) Rashtriya Swasthya Beema Yojna Card/Health Card iv) Jan Dhan Yojna Bank account facility v) PAN Card vi) Voter ID Card b) For widows living independently the Widows' Cell to carry out the same exercise. c) Aadhar Card issued to the widow could be the common identity document to access all services	Shelter Home Widows' Cell	Ongoing for Shelter Homes. For widows' residing independently, on constitution of the Widows' Cell

¹⁵ Affidavit filed by the Ministry of Women and Child Development on 2nd June, 2017, Report No. 18.

¹⁶ Recorded in the Judgment of the Hon'ble Supreme Court dated August 11, 2017.

¹⁷ Status Report filed by Ms. Renuka Kumar on 16th April, 2015, Report No. 10.

		such as legal aid, counselling, health care, grievance redressal. ¹⁸		
3.4	Counselling ¹⁹	a) The widow and her family should be provided immediate counselling on registration at the shelter home or Widows' Cell with the aim to reintegrate her with the family. b) The counsellor should record all the relevant particulars and upload it on the digital file of the widow. c) Counselling, wherever done, should encourage discussion on marriage and like relationships, in order to create a supportive environment for the widow. d) Widows can also be counselled through telephone. e) Social Welfare Boards should devise incentivized internship programmes in consultation with the Schools of Social Work. The Internship to include a fixed number of visits and documentation of the Widows' issues.	Family Counselling Centre under Central/State Social Welfare Board Resident Counsellor at shelter homes. Widows' Cell	3 months from date of approval (MWCD has stated that it would develop a module within 6 months on 11.8.2017)²⁰
3.5	Access to Legal Aid ²¹	a) DLSA should have a dedicated panel of lawyers/Para Legal Volunteers (PLVs) for widows. b) Immediately on registration at shelter home or Widows' Cell, the widow should be counselled on her legal rights and efforts should be made to reintegrate her with the family through mediation. c) Issues concerning a widow should be recorded with all the relevant particulars, uploaded on the digital file of the widow and submitted to DLSA for further action. d) DLSA to send PLVs preferably women to every home once a week. [The Vrindavan experience	DLSA	Ongoing at Vrindavan 3 months from date of approval

¹⁸ A Report dated 10th September, 2012 and Few Ground Realities by Secretary DLSA, ACJM, Mathura, Report No. 6.

¹⁹ Status Report on widows in Swadhar Homes in Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, West Bengal and Odisha by the NCW in November, 2016, Report No. 16

²⁰ Recorded in the Judgment of the Hon'ble Supreme Court dated August 11, 2017.

²¹ Report of the Member Secretary, NALSA dated 14th January, 2014 filed on 12th September, 2014, Report No.8.

		can be adapted and scaled up across the country.] e) The PLVs should adequately document each visit with details of the widows met, and issues raised by them. The panel lawyers should review the information recorded and recommend necessary action to DLSA. f) Panel lawyers should visit the shelter homes once a month to discuss the reported issues and report recommended action to the Secretary DLSA. g) Similar outreach should be undertaken for widows living independently. h) Litigation pertaining to widows should be identified and, where appropriate, be referred to Lok Adalats or mediation to facilitate early resolution. i) Cases related to widows should be fast-tracked and monitored by the Secretary, DLSA. j) DLSA should involve law students by devising incentivized internship programmes in consultation with the Law Schools. The Internship to include a fixed number of visits and documentation of the Widows' issues with the help of the PLVs.		
3.6	Access to Health Care ²²	a) Health check-up of the widow on registration. The Master Sheet with medical report should be retained by the hospital and a Health Card should be issued to the widow. b) The medical report should be uploaded to the digital file of the widow so that all her medical records are accessible. c) All the widows should be provided Health Insurance under Rashtriya Swasthya Beema Yojna.²³ d) The Aadhar Card/ Smart Card under Rashtriya Swasthya Beema Yojna/Health Card should provide easy and expeditious access to health	Ministry for Women and Child Development, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, UOI Department of Women and Child Development at the State level District Social Welfare Board Department of Health at State	3 months from date of approval

²² Report on the medical facilities for widows and destitute women in Vrindavan by Ms. Renuka Kumar on 8th November, 2016, Report No. 17.

²³ Affidavit filed by the Ministry of Women and Child Development on 2nd June, 2017. Report No. 18.

		services/hospitals. e) Assignment of a designated Social Worker/NGO at the hospital to ensure timely and need based service to the widows.²⁴ f) In cases of emergency, a call to the common helpline should activate the emergency response. g) Scheduled visits by Doctors at the shelter home. h) Widows living independently should be linked to the hospital through the Widows' Cell. i) Provision of ambulances in shelter homes, which can also be used for all the widows in the area. j) Mobile Medical Units/ Mobile pharmacies should visit designated areas at fixed schedules. Free medicines should be made available.²⁵ k) Monthly Medical Camps with fixed calendars in designated area to ensure maximum participation. l) District-wise mapping of all the available Government and private hospitals for creating a network of referral linkage for specialty, super-specialty and emergency services.²⁶ m) Private hospitals to be engaged to provide voluntary and CSR health related services especially in cases of specialty, and super-specialty treatment. The model submitted in the report of Ms. Renuka Kumar on medical facilities could be adopted for the present recommendations. A suggested format for Health Record provided by HelpAge India is also annexed herewith as <u>Annexure 4.</u>	level District Chief Medical Officer ASHA workers Widows' Cell	
3.7	Ease of access to Banking ²⁷	a) Ensure that eligible widows have a bank account under Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojna. b) Direct Benefit Transfer of pension/benefits to the	Ministry for Women and Child Development,	3 months from constitution of Widows'

²⁴ Study by the National Commission for Women in 2009-10 on widows in Vrindavan, Report No. 3; Minutes of the Meeting held on 10th May, 2011 by the Secretary, MWCD, Report No. 4.

²⁵ Minutes of the Meeting held on 10th May, 2011 by the Secretary, MWCD, Report No. 4.

²⁶ Report on the medical facilities for widows and destitute women in Vrindavan by Ms. Renuka Kumar on 8th November, 2016, Report No. 17.

²⁷ Study by the National Commission for Women in 2009-10 on widows in Vrindavan, Report No. 3.

		Widow's account on a monthly basis.²⁸ c) Bank counters should be opened in areas densely populated by widows as it is difficult for older women to access banks or ATMs, which can result in misappropriation of funds.²⁹ d) Distribution of pension in shelter homes once a month.³⁰ e) Mobile Banking for old and bedridden women.³¹ f) Periodic joint review of the pension accounts by the Bank and Social Welfare Department.³²	Department of Women and Child Development at the State level District Social Welfare Board Widows' cell Shelter Homes	Cell
3.8	Livelihood / Skill Development ³³	a) Self-Help Group of widows to be formed for self employment. ³⁴ b) Coordination with designated agencies for training, placement and market linkage under the existing government schemes: • Support to Training and Employment Programme for Women (STEP) by MWCD run through NGOs to build self-employability skills of women. • Rashtriya Mahila Kosh scheme by MWCD provides loans to women self-help groups as well as NGOs to establish market linkage for the products of self-help groups. • Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY) aims to develop similar skills and arrange appropriate placements of the trainees. • National Urban/Rural Livelihood Mission schemes under Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs and Ministry of Rural Development respectively. c) Additionally, skill building in non-traditional skill-sets like driving, computer training, care giving, medical assistance and micro-entrepreneurship should be encouraged.	Ministry of Women and Child Development Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship/ Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs/ Ministry of Rural Development (UOI) Widows' Cell Designated NGOs	3 months from date of approval

²⁸Affidavit filed by the Ministry of Women and Child Development on 2nd June, 2017. Report No. 18.

²⁹ Report filed by National Legal Services Authority dated 14th July, 2012, Report No. 5.

³⁰ A Report dated 10th September, 2012 and Few Ground Realities by Secretary DLSA, ACJM, Mathura, Report No. 6.

³¹ Study by the National Commission for Women in 2009-10 on widows in Vrindavan, Report No. 3.

³² Study by the National Commission for Women in 2009-10 on widows in Vrindavan, Report No. 3.

³³ Status Report on widows in Swadhar Homes in Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, West Bengal and Odisha by the NCW in November, 2016, Report No. 16.

³⁴ Study by the National Commission for Women in 2009-10 on widows in Vrindavan, Report No. 3.

3.9	Housing facility ³⁵	Low-cost housing schemes to be made available to the widows under Pradhan Mantri Awaas Yojna and other similar schemes which would encourage them to move out of shelter homes.	Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs, UOI	3 months from date of approval
3.10	Social and Community Support ³⁶	a) Social and cultural events with fixed calendars should be organised with the help of local community and citizens' group like Rotary, Lion's Club, etc. Funds could be raised for this purpose with private partnership.³⁷ b) Widows desiring to remarry or find partners should be linked to appropriate agencies/NGOs. c) Mass Marriages with consent to be organised by DM / Local community. d) At the time of remarriage from a shelter home, the widow should have the option of returning to the home without undergoing fresh formalities in case the marriage or relationship fails, or the spouse or partner dies.	Widows' Cell Local citizen groups NGOs	3 months from constitution of the Widows' Cell
3.11	Grievance Redressal ³⁸	a) Common Helpline Number for grievance redressal in relation to all the services including pension, health services, legal aid and banking which should be forwarded to the concerned agencies. b) Help Desk/Complaint Box to be set up by Widows' Cell. c) Quarterly Inspection by Monitoring Committee. d) Online Complaint system on the model of She Box scheme by MWCD. [http://www.shebox.nic.in/]	Ministry for Women and Child Development, Department of Women and Child Development at the State Level Widows' Cell Monitoring Committee	On activation of common helpline number On constitution of the Widows' Cell
3.12	Last Rites ³⁹	Last rites of the widows to be carried out by the shelter home/Widows' Cell according to the rituals. Till the Widows' Cell is constituted this exercise	Shelter Homes Widows' Cell Chief Medical	Ongoing at Vrindavan. Immediately from date of

³⁵ Summary Report of the Situation Analysis of Widows in Religious Places of West Bengal by Jayaprakash Institute of Social Change, Report No. 1.

³⁶ Study by the National Commission for Women in 2009-10 on widows in Vrindavan, Report No. 3.

³⁷ Status Report on widows in Swadhar Homes in Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, West Bengal and Odisha by the NCW in November, 2016, Report No. 16.

³⁸ Status Report on widows in Swadhar Homes in Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, West Bengal and Odisha by the NCW in November, 2016, Report No. 16.

³⁹ A Report dated 10th September, 2012 and Few Ground Realities by Secretary DLSA, ACJM, Mathura, Report No. 6; Report of the Member Secretary, NALSA dated 14th January, 2014, Report No.8.

		should be carried out by the Chief Medical Officer.	Officer	approval
4. SHELTER HOMES				
4.1	Common digital database of Shelter Homes ⁴⁰	The Widows' Cell should upload the details of the shelter homes on the common database of the MWCD to facilitate the placement of widows at the nearest shelter home and movement of residents to more suitable/familiar living environment in future.	Ministry for Women and Child Development, Department of Women and Child Development at the State Level National Commission for Women	On creation of digital database system by the MWCD
4.2	Timely disbursement of grants ⁴¹	a) Grants should not be withheld on the ground of procedural delays. (Presently, inspection report of the Swadhar Homes is prepared by the District Project Officer and forwarded to the District Magistrate who in turn forwards it to the State WCD. The State WCD then recommends it to the MWCD ⁴² .) b) Grant could be released on the basis of quarterly inspection report of the proposed Monitoring Committee.	Ministry for Women and Child Development, Department of Women and Child Development at the State Level State Monitoring Committee	Immediately from date of approval
4.3	Sanctioned expenditure needs to be commensurate with the cost of living index	a) In a survey conducted by Mahila Kalyan Nigam, Uttar Pradesh with Helpage India the food requirement of per resident was calculated at Rs. 4050 per month. However the food allowance under Swadhar Scheme is Rs. 1300 per month/resident and thus needs revision. b) The revised scheme of the Government of Uttar Pradesh, increasing the food allowance of residents to Rs. 4700 per month and medicine	Ministry for Women and Child Development, Department of Women and Child Development at the State Level	3 months from date of approval

⁴⁰ Status Report on widows in Swadhar Homes in Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, West Bengal and Odisha by the NCW in November, 2016, Report No. 16.

⁴¹ Status Report on widows in Swadhar Homes in Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, West Bengal and Odisha by the NCW in November, 2016, Report No. 16.

⁴² Status Report on widows in Swadhar Homes in Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, West Bengal and Odisha by the NCW in November, 2016, Report No. 16.

		allowances to Rs. 800 per month can be followed after appropriate adaptation. ⁴³ c) In the Swadhar Scheme, Rs. 175 per month per resident for medicines is meagre and needs revision.		
4.4	Provision for maintenance of Shelter Homes ⁴⁴	There is no provision under the Swadhar Scheme for maintenance of the building, electricity charges, water charges and related expenses. Till provision is made under the Swadhar Scheme, the concerned Public Works Department should be made responsible for maintenance of the building. HUDCO should take up renovation of shelter homes under its CSR funding. ⁴⁵	Ministry for Women and Child Development, Department of Women and Child development at state level National Commission for Women HUDCO Public Works Department	3 months from date of approval
4.5	Appointment of Staff	Appointment of trained and adequate staff at shelter homes. There is no provision of cook, cleaner or sanitation worker in Swadhar Scheme. ⁴⁶ Appointment, Service and termination norms should also be framed for the personnel employed at the Homes/Institutions ⁴⁷	Ministry for Women and Child Development, Department of women and child development at state level Shelter Homes	3 months from date of approval
4.6	Common Mess ⁴⁸	There should be a common mess in shelter homes. However there is no provision of cook in the Swadhar Scheme. (Presently, women cook on their own and are not agreeable to the idea of community kitchen. ⁴⁹) The Swadhar Scheme transfers the food allowance to the Shelter Homes. Two views were expressed on this issue by the members of the committee. One view	Ministry for Women and Child Development, Department of Women and Child Development at state level	On constitution of the Widows' Cell

⁴³ Status Report submitted by Ms. Renuka Kumar on 31st August, 2016, Report No. 15.

⁴⁴ Study by the National Commission for Women in 2009-10 on widows in Vrindavan, Report No. 3.

⁴⁵ Minutes of the Meeting held by the Secretary, MWCD on 2nd September, 2015, Report No. 11.

⁴⁶ Status Report on widows in Swadhar Homes in Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, West Bengal and Odisha by the NCW in November, 2016, Report No. 16.

⁴⁷ Study by the National Commission for Women in 2009-10 on widows in Vrindavan, Report No. 3.

⁴⁸ A Report dated 10th September, 2012 and Few Ground Realities by Secretary DLSA, ACJM Mathura, Report No. 6; Report of the Member Secretary, NALSA dated 14th January, 2014, Report No.8.

⁴⁹ A Report dated 10th September, 2012 and Few Ground Realities by Secretary DLSA, ACJM, Mathura. Report No. 6

		was that food allowance should be directly transferred to the widows' account and they could pay the common mess charges at the end of the month. The other view was that the ground experience shows that this tends to make the widows vulnerable to machinations of greedy family members. The committee could not reach a consensus on the issue so both the views are being included in the report and annexed as <u>Annexure 5</u> .		
4.7	Sanitation ⁵⁰	a) The Swadhar Scheme should include provision for sanitation workers. b) Municipal Corporation should take over the sanitation of shelter homes till the appointment of sanitation workers.⁵¹ c) Sulabh has offered its services as the nodal agency for inspection of sanitation.	Ministry for Women and Child Development, Department of Women and Child Development at state level Municipal Corporation Widows' Cell	Immediately from date of approval
4.8	Duration of stay in Shelter Home ⁵²	a) The duration of stay in Swadhar Homes should be increased from 3 to 5 years during which period the rehabilitation of the widow must be ensured through skill development and employment. b) Widows on attaining 60 years of age should be accommodated in old age homes.⁵³ c) Widows' Cell should ensure education for the children accompanying widows. d) Male child should be permitted to accompany the widow till the age of 12 years instead of the present ceiling of 8 years, and thereafter can be shifted to Children Home under Juvenile Justice Act 2015.	Ministry for Women and Child Development, Department of Women and Child Development at the State Level Widows' Cell	3 months from date of approval
4.9	Empowerment of Widows through	a) Constitution of Management Committee of the residents on rotational basis for management and	Ministry for Women and Child	3 months from constitution

⁵⁰ Status Report on widows in Swadhar Homes in Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, West Bengal and Odisha by the NCW in November, 2016, Report No. 16.

⁵¹ A Report dated 10th September, 2012 and Few Ground Realities by Secretary DLSA, ACJM, Mathura, Report No. 6; Report of the Member Secretary, NAISA dated 14th January, 2014 filed on 12th September, 2014, Report No.8.

⁵² Status Report s by Ms. Renuka Kumar on 31st August, 2016, Report No. 15; Status Report on widows in Swadhar Homes in Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, West Bengal and Odisha by the NCW in November, 2016, Report No. 16.

⁵³ Recorded in the Judgment of the Hon'ble Supreme Court dated August 11, 2017.

	participation in Management of Shelter Homes/ Programmes	administration of Shelter Homes. ⁵⁴ b) Establishing a network of residents of shelter homes. c) Building strong collective of widows by organising them into self-help groups through various Government schemes and programmes. ⁵⁵ d) Widows to be linked to national network of single women. ⁵⁶	Development, Department of Women and Child Development at the State Level Widows' Cell Shelter Homes NCW/SCWs NGOs	of the Widows' Cell
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⁵⁴ Report of the Member Secretary, NALSA dated 14th January, 2014, Report No. 8.

⁵⁵ Study by the National Commission for Women in 2009-10 on widows in Vrindavan. Report No. 3.

⁵⁶ Status Report on widows in Swadhar Homes in Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, West Bengal and Odisha by the NCW in November, 2016, Report No. 16.

**STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES
FOR SWADHAR GREH**

A Scheme that caters to primary needs of women in difficult circumstances (2015).

MINISTRY OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT,

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

Vision:

The scheme envisions a supportive institutional framework for women victims of difficult circumstances so that they could lead their life with dignity and conviction. It envisages that shelter, food, clothing, and health as well as economic and social security are assured for such women. It also envisions that the special needs of these women are properly taken care of and under no circumstances they should be left unattended or abandoned which could lead to their exploitation and desolation.

Under the Scheme, Swadhar Greh will be set up in every district with capacity of 30 women with the following objectives:

- . a) To cater to the primary need of shelter, food, clothing, medical treatment and care of the women in distress and who are without any social and economic support.
- . b) To enable them to regain their emotional strength that gets hampered due to their encounter with unfortunate circumstances.
- . c) To provide them with legal aid and guidance to enable them to take steps for their readjustment in family/society.
- . d) To rehabilitate them economically and emotionally.
- . e) To act as a support system that understands and meets various requirements of women in distress.
- . f) To enable them to start their life afresh with dignity and conviction.

For big cities and other districts having more than 40 lakh population or those districts where there is a need for additional support to the women, more than one Swadhar Greh could be established. The capacity of Swadhar Greh could be expanded up to 50 or 100 on the basis of need assessment and other important parameters.

Purposes

The SOPs, describe clear procedures, roles, and responsibilities for each institution involved in the establishment of Swadhar Homes and in supporting the women residents and their children.

The SOPs reflect a rights-based approach to the problems that women are facing. They need to be used together with the established guidelines of the Scheme and other documents as developed by the MWCD.

The SOPs detail the procedures that would be used by the organisations who run the Shelter Homes and be responsible for actions in the following key sectors of support: women's health, women's psycho-social support, support to legal/justice and safety measures and economic and social empowerment and reintegration.

1.Scope of the SOPs

These SOPs describe the roles, responsibilities, guiding principles, and procedures for supporting women in Swadhar Grehs and empowering them to access their rights and safety and rehabilitation with dignity

These SOPs while based on the present structure also incorporate changes and recommendations made by the Expert Committee on Status of Widows, that will enable the SOP to work and will enable Swadhar Homes to achieve the mandate that was envisioned in the scheme

The SOPs may be updated and expanded on a regular basis to reflect more comprehensive services and interventions needed for women.

2.Guiding Principles

All institutions who have a role to play in this scheme agree to adhere to the following guiding principles:

a. Guiding principles for all actions

- i. Understand and adhere to the guidelines in the Swadhar Greh (see scheme, 2015).
- ii. Extend the fullest cooperation and assistance to each other in ensuring support to women in the homes, ensuring their safety and dignity.
- iii. Establish and maintain coordinated multi-sectoral and inter-organisational actions that will enable the scheme to be effectively run.
- iv. Engage the women residents in understanding the key issues that are disempowering them and creating enabling conditions to protect and respect the rights of women and children (girls/boys).
- v. Ensure active participation by women residents in assessing their needs and requirements and designing their rehabilitation, development and empowerment processes.

- vi. Address centrally the violence faced by women/children and ensure their safety and security at all times within the homes.
- vii. Ensure accountability of all staff and partner institutions engaged in the process.
- viii. All staff involved should understand and sign a Code of Conduct that will ensure adherence to the norms of the Shelter Home in keeping with the standards set by the Scheme.

b. Guiding principles for working with individual women residents

- i. Ensure the safety of every woman resident and her accompanying children at all times.
- ii. Respect the confidentiality of the affected person(s) at all times.
 - 1. If the resident gives her informed and specific consent, share only pertinent and relevant information with others (i.e. Counsellor, legal officer, police, other professional supporting her) for the purpose of helping her, such as when referring for counselling and legal and other services.
 - 2. All written information about the women residents must be maintained in secure, locked files and not be discussed with anyone else in the shelter home.
- iii. Respect the privacy, rights, and dignity of the resident
 - 1. All interviews about her problems and road to recovery be conducted in private settings – separate room by female staff.
 - 2. Be respectful of the woman and ensure a non-judgmental attitude. Staff must not show any disrespect for the individual or her specific circumstances whether in her family or elsewhere
 - 3. Be very patient with the woman: do not demand for more information than needed and if she is traumatised, and does not want to speak, do not pressurise till she is ready to open up and speak about her experience.
 - 4. Ensure that relevant questions are asked. Do not probe to woman's life situations, choices, and at no point attribute blame to her for being abandoned and/or experiencing destitution.
- iv. Ensure non-discrimination and respect in all interactions with women residents (survivors/victims) and in all service provision settings.
- v. Ensure that rights of all children are respected and they are engaged in contributing to decisions that will affect them. If a decision is taken on behalf of the child, the best interests of the child shall be the overriding guide and the appropriate procedures including consent of parent/guardian as applicable should be followed. (Refer to Child protocols as developed by the MWCD).
- vi. Women and girls accessing shelter services have a right to receive information that is required for them to make informed decisions about

what is best for them and their children, where relevant. This includes decisions about whether to stay in the shelter, and access services related to their health, well-being and future. This requires understanding their rights, the general and security guidelines of the shelter, and what they can expect from shelter service providers. Providing this information is a form of empowerment as it promotes women's right to self-determination and capacity to decide for themselves.

3.Ensuring Quality Standards of Services:

These could include:

- Confidentiality
- Safety, security and respect for residents and staff
- Accessibility (including child care services)
- Availability
- To stay on if no other arrangement available
- Work within a gender analysis with the principles of empowerment and self-determination
- Qualified and trained staff on specific forms of abuse and specific situations to promote a knowledgeable and skilled response
- Provision of holistic set of services with dedication.

4. Standard Operating Procedures to be followed

4.1 Key institutional stakeholders

Primary

- Central Ministry of Women & Child Development (Granting/ Disbursing agency)
- State Ministries of Women & Child Development (Granting/ Disbursing agency)
- Social Welfare Boards/Departments (Inspecting/ Recommending agency)
- Civil society organizations and Other Agencies implementing the Swadhar Greh scheme (Implementing agency)

Secondary

- Enforcement agencies (such as Helplines, Police, MOH, Anti-Trafficking Cell, others)
- Health Sector Agencies - Government hospitals/Clinics

- Legal Sector - Government aided/supported free Legal Aid Centres; Women's Counselling centres, One Stop Crisis Centres
- Development Sector - District Development Office and their programmes
- Skill Development – Specialised Agencies under the NSDC, NGOs providing skill and vocational training
- NACO/SACS

4.2 Role of the Granting/ Disbursing Agency

4.2.1 Grant Sanction & Disbursement

- Review and revise the Swadhar Greh Scheme to take into account how convergence can take place between the various homes/schemes in the Ministry viz. Short stay Homes; Home for Women in difficult circumstances; and Widow Homes and Old Age Women's Homes.¹
- Restructure the Swadhar Greh Scheme in light of the much-needed convergence of staff and services from across the many schemes and allow for incorporation of an effective, appropriate and qualified number of staff and facilities for a home that can house at least 50 women inmates.²
- Review and re-structure the grant amount in line with present inflation index and salary structures for staff of the homes.³
- Reach out to Civil society organisations that are willing and capable of running Swadhar Grehs effectively and efficiently with a rights based approach.

¹The Expert Committee on widows had recommended to the Honourable Supreme Court that there should be a convergence of the various homes since they all cater to women undergoing difficult circumstances either as victims of violence, or widowhood or abandonment or excruciating poverty and deprivation

² This needs to be done through a process of discussion and consensus with appropriate governmental and civil society representatives

³ This needs to be done through a process of discussion and consensus with appropriate governmental and organisations with experience in running a Swadhar home. If there is a convergence of the homes then the resource available becomes larger and more cost efficient as the limited resources will not be spread over so many different homes

- Undertake a thorough due diligence process of the implementing agency with the following criteria:
 - a/ Structure of the organization including the voluntary and salaried office bearers
 - b/ Past programs and projects of the NGO including performance assessment
 - c/ Financial records of the last three years
 - d/ Reference letters from two civil society persons of repute vouching for the authenticity and integrity of the society
 - e/ Full detail of one successful program/best practice of the society
 - f/ Inspection of the society's office premises and records by the appropriate local authority
- Sanction of grant to be made and communicated to the applying agency within 90 days of the application.
- Disbursement of 50% of the grant to be made within 30 days of the grant letter .
- Ensuring that the society kick-starts Swadhar Greh within 60 days of receipt of the grant letter.
- The second disbursement of the grant to be made within 30 days of receipt of utilization certificate of the first instalment.
- A quadrennial report be asked from implementing agency indicating best practices challenges and suggestions for effective functioning.
- Review of grant amounts be done every five years to keep pace with changing needs and rising prices.

4.2.2 Role of the Inspecting/ Recommending Agency

- Grant review and recommendation to be done every two years.⁴
- Inspection to be conducted by competent Government Officer accompanied by one member of civil society of repute (academician, women's rights activist, lawyer, doctor, etc).
- Report to be filed within two weeks of the inspection and sent to the disbursing authority

⁴ The present system calls for a review and inspection every two years resulting in inordinate delays, overlaps and delayed sanctions resulting in inefficient running of the Swadhar Greh

- In the event of failure to recommend, the implementing agency of Swadhar Greh be informed within two weeks of the inspection.
- In the event of failure to file the recommendation or withholding of recommendation an explanation be demanded by the disbursing authority.
- During inspection, one to one confidential interactions with the inmates to assess the efficacy and security of the home.
- Inspection of premises and facilities as per the sanction and the standard operating procedure.
- All records to be inspected.

4.2.3 Role of the Implementing Agency and Minimum standards of operation:

i) Board Overview and Governance Issues:

- Constitution of a Local Advisory Committee(see Scheme) which will meet every quarter to oversee the functioning and work of the Swadhar Greh, including all admissions, expenditures, grant receipts, and implementation of work plan of the staff
- All meetings to be held at the home itself, so interactions with women residents is possible and a physical verification is undertaken as well.

ii) Staff Recruitment and Facilities:

- **Staffing Recommended:** To run a Home for 50 women under difficult circumstances catering to the need of reintegrating them into society the following personnel are required:

Full time

- a/ Home Supervisor (Preferably a woman MSW/ Psychologist/ Post Graduate with at least 10 years of experience in working with women or administering a home, hostel, etc.)
- b/ Warden (Preferably a woman graduate with 5 years of experience in a similar capacity)
- c/ Counsellor (Preferably a woman with a degree in counselling and 5 years of experience in similar capacity)

d/ Skill Development Officer (Social Worker with adequate experience in skilling, developing entrepreneurial skills, and working on marketing tie ups

e/Nurse (Qualified Nurse)

f/ Guard

Part time/On call

g/ Doctor

h/ Physiotherapist

i/Legal Officer

j/Psychotherapist

- **Recruitment of staff:** Consideration of professionals who not only have the required academic qualifications and experience, but also the inclination, commitment and sensitivity for this job.

iii. Ensure jobs are assigned to the competent and appropriate personnel

iv) Operations and Finance:

- **Operation procedures:** The norms and guidelines on child protection, women protection and physical security, procedures for counselling, referrals to helpline, reporting sexual abuse cases must be in place and staff oriented.
- **Salary disbursement:** In the first week of the month and make available the resources every fortnight for running the home.
- Conduct periodic visits at least once a month to ensure the smooth functioning
- Inspect all records.
- Appraisals of staff to be done every six months and recorded. Records to be made available to inspecting/recommending authority.
- Keep complete accounts documentation and ensure annual audit of accounts by auditors of the organization and obtain utilization certificates and submit to relevant authorities.
- Maintain complete documentation of the home including number of inmates, expenses incurred, health legal and adult literacy classes, counselling sessions held, tie ups for skill development, legal cases being handled, reintegration of inmates and the best practices.

- Ensure quarterly meetings of the Advisory Committee and minute the proceedings.
- Provide all information to the disbursing authority.
- Rotating roster of duties to be created for shopping, preparing, cooking, serving and cleaning.
- Explanation to be demanded from those inmates who shirk work without adequate reason. Two verbal warnings followed by two written warnings documented in the personal file. This can be followed by terminating the stay of the inmate post a review by the advisory committee of the NGO.

4.2.4 Responsibilities of Resident Beneficiaries

- Ensuring correct and authentic information is given to the Home Supervisor with all needed attachments, if available.
- Abiding by the rules and regulations of the Home.
- Fulfilling to the best of their ability the jobs on the rotational roster of duties.
- Attending all adult literacy, health awareness, legal awareness, training classes.
- Working diligently at acquiring a livelihood and other skills that will facilitate reintegration in society.
- To work voluntarily to keep the atmosphere of the home pleasant and dignified and support other women and their children.
- To ensure that the home, rooms and other areas are kept clean.
- To work and stay in harmony with other women inmates and avoid quarrels, fights and confrontations. Deal with concerns and issues without anger and rude behaviour.
- To follow the protocols, timings, and instructions of the Home as issued by the relevant authorities.

5. Responsibilities of the Staff

5.1 Admission Guidelines:

- Admission is open to women in difficult circumstances including:
 - a/ Victims of violence in the private space, including domestic violence
 - b/ Victims of violence in public space including victims of communal riots, natural disasters, armed conflict
 - c/ Widows and women who have been deserted and abandoned
 - d/ Old women who have no family or have been abandoned by the families
 - e/ Victims of sexual assault and gender based crimes

Accompanying children may be admitted provided they are girls below the age of eighteen and boys below the age of 12. Girls over the age of eighteen will be treated as separate inmates

- Admission to be done by filling the complete details of the inmate as per the standard pro forma. A file to be opened for each inmate. Attachments will include:
 - Recommending Authority's letter to be attached, if inmate referred to the Home by Police, District Hospital, District Authorities or other referrals by women's /human rights groups/organisations and/or by CBOs.
 - For filing purposes: Copy of Aadhar card/ Voter Id/ BPL/Widow Pension/Ration card to be provided if available. Photographs of the woman inmate and her children staying with her to be attached.
- Once admitted, she should be issue an identity card as inmate of the Home, with address, name of supervisor, contact nos., emergency nos., etc. She should be given complete information of all facilities of the Home, rules and regulations, timings, introduced to staff and how long she can stay at the home.
- Once admitted, the counsellor can take a full case profile of the woman after she has rested and in confidence and file all her papers.
- NOTE THE EXCEPTION: The ceiling of five years of stay for a woman inmate may be waived for the following reasons: a/ *Older women above the age of 65 who have no family support and are not in a position to support themselves.* b/ *Boarding and lodging to be provided for inmates below 60 years for 5 years during which time they should be rehabilitated. Older women to be kept in the home or transferred to old age homes.*

5.2 Record Keeping and Information Storage

Responsibility Focus: Overall Home Supervisor overseeing individual departments

- As the safety and empowerment of women in shelter is of paramount importance, the amount, timing and method of information collection should follow ethical guidelines and prioritize, respect and be sensitive to the needs of women and children in the shelter.
- Record keeping should be done meticulously
- There should be registers for every service (medical register, stock register, doctor's visit, etc.). For example the following records need to be maintained:
 - a/ Record on the admission and leaving of inmates with attendance
 - b/Gate entry and exit
 - c/ Attendance register of inmates
 - d/ Inventory list on all equipment, beds mattresses, kitchen equipment etc
 - e/ Stock register of food items
 - f/Issue of food items and corresponding number of women and children at every mealtime
 - g/Medical register listing inmate health issue, treatment, hospital visit if any, medicine prescribed etc.
 - h/Medical record of weekly examination of inmates
 - i/Medical stock register
 - j/ Record of judicial cases, hearings verdicts, court fees if any and transport to and from the court
 - k/ Skill development register recording the vocational training classes attended by inmates, the follow up in terms of employment
 - l/ Record of counselling sessions, the impact and changes
 - m/ Attendance register of staff with time of entry and exit
 - n/Visitors register
 - o/ Accounts register recording the daily expenses, petty cash, etc.
 - j/ Self appraisals and appraisals by the board of implementing agency
- Records need to be updated on a daily basis and be authentic and reflecting actual transactions.

- Records must be kept confidential and women's personal information (including rights related to access and confidentiality) must be maintained.

5.3 Design and Maintenance of Infrastructure

Responsibility Focus: Home Supervisor

5.3.1 Accessibility: The Building should be easily accessible and preferably within accessible distances for women from bus/ train stations

5.3.2 Adequate privacy and security including

a/ Manned gates

b/Secured boundary walls

c/Doors and windows that have panes, grills and bolts

5.3.3 Spacious enough to house 50 women and children:

- All rooms should be spacious, well-lit and well ventilated.
- Rooms should not be overcrowded. For example, in a 10 ft by 10 ft room, not more than 3 inmates should be housed. Also, the rooms should have an attached bathroom for the convenience of the elderly.
- There should be not more than 6 inmates per bathroom.
- Storage space should be adequate in that each inmate should be entitled to at least one storage cabinet.
- Every inmate should be provided with a bed, mattress, 2 pairs of bed sheets with pillow and pillow cases and a blanket, quilt. Rubber sheets for the elderly and children.
- In case of dormitory style rooms, there should be provision of chairs for each inmate to sit on when they are not sleeping.
- A sit-down dining room to accommodate 20 women for a meal. This room can double up as a recreational room/common room for the women (with TV/radio)
- Well ventilated kitchen with running water, separate wash area and storage facilities
- Easily accessible bathrooms/toilets with piped water facilities, buckets, mugs that can be shared by a group of 10 women inmates
- A water pump in the premises for stocking the water tankers, if available. Where piped water is not available, ensuring handpump on the premises for water.
- Rotating roster of duties on the wall to ensure cleanliness of the premises

5.3.4. Accessibility within the Home:

- Floors should be non-slippery and elderly-friendly
- Rods should be fixed on the walls (at regular intervals) and in the bathrooms for support to move freely
- There should be adequate space for wheelchairs and walkers in every part of the home, especially at the entrances
- Provision for an in-house vehicle in case of emergencies
- Access to local markets and other facilities for young inmates
- Provision of an intercom facility

5.4 Hygiene and Sanitation

- All the rooms and toilets should be cleaned on a daily basis
- Linen should be changed and cleaned at least bi-monthly
- Every room should have a waste bin and waste disposal should be done in a hygienic manner and on a regular basis
- Every washroom should have provision to dispose used sanitary napkins
- The kitchen space, sink and utensils should be cleaned on a daily basis
- Vegetables and other raw food materials should be thoroughly washed before use
- Provision for pure and safe drinking water accessible to every inmate

5.4 Security and Visitation Procedures –

Responsibility Focus: Warden

- The main gate to be locked and manned at all times
- All exit and entry of inmates to and fro the home to be recorded and signed. Travel applications by residents to be kept on file
- If costs allow, CCTV cameras to be installed by the implementing agency at the entrance
- Facilitation of family visits must be ensured in the common area of the home and all visits by family members must be recorded

5.5 Services Provided:

Responsibility Focus: Warden

5.5.1 Food

- Adequate appropriate and nutritive food which is of good quality and meets needs of older women too (and is within the revised grant amount):

- *a/ Tea twice a day accompanied with rusk/ glucose biscuits/matri/ puffed rice, etc*
- *b/ Cooked Breakfast as per the local taste and habit*
- *c/ Lunch and dinner incorporating cereal, pulses and vegetables*
- *d/ Milk to be provided for the young children*
- *e/ Fixed timings may be fixed for the meals as per the local custom and habit*
- Flexible arrangements for sick inmates and those with special needs (for example, allergies, religious needs, etc.)

5.5.2 Clothing and Personal Hygiene:

- Availability of personal hygiene products like soaps, brush, toothpaste, sanitary towels, and washing soap, etc.
- Distribution annually of at least three sets of climate-appropriate sets of clothing

5.5.3 Health and Medical Services

Responsibility Focus: Part time Doctor Part time Physiotherapist and Nurse reporting to Home Supervisor

- A linkage with the local government hospital for medical emergencies, medical tests and admissions, if needed
- Homes should have an on-call GP who will be readily available and have linkages with local hospitals/health centres. A part time nurse, other specialists should also visit on a regular basis.
- Bi-Weekly visit of Part time Medical Doctor (preferably female doctor, as per scheme requirement) and be on call for any urgent needs of inmates. Doctor undertakes routine examination of all inmates once a month. All papers to be filed and referrals made need to be followed up with. Links to counsellors for mental health issues to be ensured.
- For older women, a physiotherapist could visit once a week
- Basic medicines should be kept at the home, checked regularly for expiry dates
- Ensure attendance of the inmates to local health camps, eye camps and dental camps held by other NGOs/ governmental hospitals, etc.
- Undertake health awareness, menstrual hygiene, personal hygiene classes on a monthly basis
- Medical records to be maintained by the administration unit for each inmate indicating hospitalization, medicines and intake register
- Doctor 's records must contain weekly examination results/readings of the inmates

5.5.4. Legal Support: Responsibility Focus

Legal Officer reporting to Home Supervisor

- All cases of inmates must be filed by the case worker and referrals made as needed to the DLSAs and police as needed.
- Appointment of a part time legal officer must be made who visits twice a week to take stock, advice, coordinate and follow up on the legal cases. The Legal officer should also accompany women to the court when needed. When abusive family members threaten women, legal and police actions may be taken as required. Compensation for those that are sexually abused need to be followed up with and referrals made to the One Stop Crisis Centres as needed.
- Partnerships with local legal aid centres and lawyers on a pro bono basis must be made and women given the information
- Legal literacy classes to be held once a month on laws related to women, enforcement process, etc.
- Standards of confidentiality and respect for the woman's decisions must be maintained at all times.

5.5.5. Psycho-social Counselling Support: Responsibility focus

Counsellor reporting to the Supervisor

- Appointment of a full time trained Counsellor who is at the Home on a regular basis
- Provision for psycho-social counselling services on a regular basis for all inmates
- Case records must be maintained and follow up plans made as per performa.
- Specialised support is needed for trauma counselling of victims of sexual assaults and crimes, those with depression and those feeling lonely and rejected by family. In some cases, the accompanied children may also suffer some form of distress, trauma and need to either be referred to child specialists or counselled with the mother. Utmost privacy and confidentiality standards to be maintained.
- Tie up with a local hospital for examination, diagnosis and treatment of psychological/mental health issues by psychiatrist/psychotherapist as per need

- Mentally ill inmates needing institutional care should be sent to appropriate mental health institutions until they have recovered.
- Regular supervision to ensure that inmates take the psychiatric medicines that are prescribed to them
- Synergies between the Legal Officer and Counsellor are needed in the cases of traumatized inmates who are facing judicial proceedings
- Group counselling for women is also therapeutic and must be undertaken once a month. Inmates give support to each other and gain strength from each others' experiences.

5.5.6.Training/Skill development support for Economic empowerment

Responsibility focus: Skill development Officer

- A Skill Development Officer needs to be appointed. The Officer could map the competencies, interests of women and set up training opportunities for skill development in other centres. In-house income generating activities could also be established with marketing linkages.
- Women can be encouraged to apply for job cards and undertake work under the Rural and Urban Livelihood Mission
- For older women, some joint activity to keep them occupied can be set up in-house
- Facilitating tie -ups with local NGOs, skill development Centres run under the aegis of NSDC must be made
- Further, tie-ups be made with local production centres, as well for home based work and service sector employment.
- Where necessary, for entrepreneurial work, access to finance and credit for deserving entrepreneurial ventures be made
- Access to adult literacy classes be set up for those who are non/semi-literate
- Tie ups with employment centres with government and non-government must be made to help place women in jobs according to their capacities

5.5.7. Referrals for Schemes for Women: Convergent Approach

Responsibility Focus: Supervisor

- Providing regular information and facilitating access to various governmental schemes for women like Jan Dhan Yojana, STEP, IGMSY, RSBY, etc. Making booklets available at the Centre. Inviting District agencies to share updates.
- Supporting women to enroll under various schemes and entitlements: Aadhar cards, bank accounts, Voter Cards, Widow pension cards, scholarships for children, etc.

5.5.8. Educational support:

- Educational support for the residents during their stay in the shelter is crucial. This involves continuing education programmes and building legal literacy and financial literacy
- Awareness classes on rights, entitlements, domestic violence, trafficking, personal health and hygiene, safe migration, confidence building, etc. are needed.
- Educational support for children under the RTE and ensuring scholarship support to those from minority and SC/ST communities and those with special disabilities.
- Support to children who need to be admitted to residential schools.

5.5.9 Protection and Rights based support:

- Adequate measures are needed for the resident's protection during their stay at the shelter. They should not harm themselves and others at the home.
- If and when family visits their safety and security is ensured and they should not be left alone with abusive family members. When they go for home visits, details need to be filled out and they should know they can call the helpline and the Supervisor, if they face any violence or threat.
- Visitation rights should be given to family of inmates on a bimonthly basis and provision made for inmates to be in regular touch with friends/family (telephone facility).

5.5.10. Reintegration Support

**Responsibility focus: Counsellor, legal Officer, Skill Development Officer
reporting to Supervisor**

- It is crucial to empower women residents to think about their lives post the shelter and build their new lives, either on their own or with family, wherever there are. Women inmates need emotional support and handholding support to make their choices about how best to reintegrate in the community
- A transition and support plan needs to be made to enable them to shift to their new realities.
- Imparting awareness on their rights and entitlements as a citizen and facilitating them access for reintegration, housing support, livelihood support as well as to other women's groups and networks that can provide them holistic support.
- Ensuring their awareness about vulnerabilities such as to trafficking, forced migration, stalking, sexual harassment, molestation, sexual assaults and how to seek redress and support.
- Efforts should be made in an easy and speedy manner to socially re-integrate those inmates who have families through counselling and legal intervention.

5.5.11.Recreational Support

Responsibility focus: Warden and Home Supervisor

- Providing a common room where women can meet and chat and do their work
- Provision of Television, newspapers and magazines
- Provision of board games, sports activity for women and children
- Collect donations of toys/ books for children
- Having a Yearly outing
- Screening of films, exhibitions of women's work, organising annual cultural programmes and celebrating some major festivals
- Yoga/ meditation/ exercise classes at the home
- Encouragement of music, art, theatre, dance at the home

6. Monitoring, Review, Evaluation:

- A regular internal system for staff supervision and monitoring should be in place
- An external system for staff monitoring should be in place at least once a year

- A system for appraisal on a yearly basis should be developed for every home
- Inter-inmate/ inter-staff and staff-inmate norms of behaviour must be developed
- Rules and regulations should be displayed visibly
- Every five years an external evaluation should be undertaken and performance of the home assessed;
- Women inmates should also provide feedback of services and interactions with the staff on a regular basis.

7. Code of Conduct

7.1 Staff

1. No verbal, physical or sexual violence is to be committed against any woman by the staff. Each and every woman coming to the home has to be treated with respect.
2. The staff to maintain personal boundaries with the women by not imposing anything on them.
3. The staff to work with each and every woman without any bias or discrimination.
4. The staff has to clarify the home's role with regard to a particular case and share beforehand the extent to which they can assist the woman.
5. The staff has to handle each case professionally.
6. The staff will not divulge any personal details about any woman to other women staying the home.

Staff may not discuss any woman's case in front of anyone except those staff members handling the case.

7. Staff may offer joint counseling only to those women who request for it in writing.

7.2 Residents

1. The home will not allow any activity by any woman or child which is injurious to self, others and the organizational environment.
2. Smoking and drinking is strictly prohibited within the organizational premises.
3. No physical, verbal or sexual violence is allowed to be committed towards women and children who come to the home.
4. Women to maintain mutual respect towards each other in their verbal and non-verbal communication.
5. Safe physical and emotional distance needs to be maintained between the women and the staff.
6. The women and staff must address each other respectfully
7. No verbal, physical or sexual violence is to be committed against any staff by the women. Each and every staff member of the home has to be treated with respect.

7.3 Rules with regard to non-compliance of norms:

Staff:

Non-compliance of norms by any staff has to be reported in writing with details of the instance (name (s) of staff, date of incident etc.) with name(s) and signature (s) of the woman / women submitting the report and sent to the supervising authority. The Supervisor will discuss the matter with the staff reported against and the woman registering the complaint and appropriate measures will be adopted.

Non-compliance for more than once may result in termination of services.

Residents

Non-compliance to norms by any woman, at the first instance would be communicated verbally and or in writing followed by a discussion. It may result in suspension of services for a specific period of time.

STRUCTURE AND FUNCTIONS OF THE WIDOWS' CELL

A Single Window System i.e. a Widow's Cell is recommended at the District Level, which is the most viable level of governance due to its infrastructure and location.

Composition

The Widows' Cell, located at District Legal Services Authority, would be responsible for ensuring that the required actions and activities for the widows are carried out in a timely and efficient manner. The cell would be constituted of:

- 1) The Secretary, District Legal Services Authority – Chairperson
- 2) The Sub-Divisional Magistrate
- 3) The Additional Superintendent of Police
- 4) The Deputy Chief Medical Officer
- 5) The District Project Officer (DPO)
- 6) The District Social Welfare Officer (DSWO)
- 7) A Chief Executive Officer - nominated by Department of Women and Child Development

The Chief Executive Officer, DPO and DSWO will take the required actions as directed by the Cell from time to time.

An Executive Assistant will man the physical desk located at the District Headquarters and ensure the timely forwarding of any information for action to the Chief Executive Officer/Chairperson and render other administrative support where necessary.

The Chairperson will convene regular meetings of the Cell to review actions taken by or through the individual members and address any cross-cutting issues which require inputs from and co-ordination with other members.

Functions of Widows' Cell

The Widows' Cell shall be collectively and individually responsible for planning, allocation and execution of work related to Registration of widows, Outreach to widows, Documentation, grievance redressal, response to Helpline and Help Desk, overseeing mechanisms for Shelter Homes, Health Services, Legal aid, Counselling, linking with livelihood and housing schemes, ensuring protection of the person, children and property of widows in their jurisdiction and networking with all the other district Widows' Cell, State and National mechanisms established for the welfare of widows.

Special Cell for Widows

District xxxxxx

Government of xxxxxx

Form xxxxxx

Checklist of Outreach/ Registration of Widow

Name:

Age/Date of Birth:

Address:

Date of Death of Husband:

Information received through: (tick the box)

- a) Registrar of Births and Deaths
- b) Self (Widow)
- c) Relative
- d) Social Service Organisation
- e) Swadhar Home/Ashram/ Other Shelter
- f) Other

Information to be Recorded	Action required	Cell Member Responsible For Action	Action taken	Date of completion	Checked by & Information Forwarded to
Documentation		SDM/ District Project Officer			
Has all the following Documents: -Voter ID Card -Bank Account -PAN Card -Aadhar Card - Death Certificate	NIL				

of husband					
Does not have the following or any of the following documents : Voter ID Card -Bank Account -PAN Card -Aadhar Card - Death Certificate of husband	Process applications for the documents required				
Domestic Condition		District Project Officer/ Secretary/ DLSA/ Additional SP			
Receives Care, is safe and secure	NIL				
Subject to any form of violence as defined under the PWDV Act 2005	-Inform Protection Officer -Refer to DLSA - Inform Police Station				
Evicted from House or under immediate threat of eviction	-Inform Protection Officer -Refer to DLSA -Inform Police Station				
Health & Medical		Dy Chief Medical officer			
No medical/health issues reported	Medical Master-sheet to be filled				
Wants to undergo medical examination/Health check	Refer to Hospital /Clinic				
Needs immediate medical treatment	Admit for required Medical Treatment				
Financial Security		District Project officer/ SDM			
Has sufficient means of income	NIL				
Has access to	NIL				

Banking					
Has Knowledge of savings and investments	NIL				
Has no means of Income	-Apply for appropriate livelihood, skill development and pension schemes -Refer to appropriate organisation/NGO for livelihood, skill development -Refer to DLSA for filing for Maintenance - Apply to Tribunal Under Maintenance of Parents and Senior Citizens Act in appropriate cases -Link with organisation for advising on				
Does not have a bank account	Open account in Bank having most convenient location and access				
Property		SDM/District Project Officer/ Secretary DLSA			
Owens property and has possession and control over it	NIL				
Owens property but does not have possession or control over it	-SDM to conduct inquiry -refer to DLSA				
Owens property but is under threat of being deprived of	-SDM to inquire -Refer to Protection				

It	Officer -refer to DLSA				
Awareness		SDM/ Secretary DLSA			
Posters, radio and TV spots about the Directions of the SC and setting up of the Special Cell with details of location and functions					

MHU Location.....Site:.....Patient ID.....

Name:.....Age.....Gender.....

Address.....

History						
Diagnosis		Medicine	Dosage	Days	No.	Pharmacy Batch Exp
BP:	Allergic To:(if any)					
Pulse:	BLOOD GLUCOSE					
Weight(Kg)	Fasting:					
Height (Cm):	PP:					
Temp(F):	Random:	Lab Investigations (if Any)			Referrals (if any)	

History:							Date (dd/mm/yyyy)
Diagnosis		Medicine	Dosage	Days	No.	Pharmacy Batch Exp.	
BP:	Allergic:(if any)						
Pulse:	BLOOD GLUCOSE						
Weight (Kg):	Fasting:						
Height(Cm):	PP:						
Temp (F):	Random:	Lab Investigations (if any)			Referrals (if any)		

Disclaimer:-

"Health service as well referral service suggested by HelpAge India has undertaken all required precaution however patients are advised to take all such services as purely voluntarily. Patients are free to choose the services and referral advises at their discretion and agree to assume all risks and to release and hold harmless the HelpAge India their officers, agents, employees, assigns and successors."

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History:						Date (dd/mm/yyyy)	
Diagnosis		Medicine	Dosage	Days	No.	Pharmacy Batch	Exp.
BP:	Allergic:(if any)						
Pulse:	BLOOD GLUCOSE						
Weight (Kg):	Fasting:						
Height(Cm):	PP:						
Temp (F):	Random:	Lab Investigations (if any)			Referrals (if any)		

History:						Date (dd/mm/yyyy)	
Diagnosis		Medicine	Dosage	Days	No.	Pharmacy Batch	Exp.
BP:	Allergic:(if any)						
Pulse:	BLOOD GLUCOSE						
Weight (Kg):	Fasting:						
Height(Cm):	PP:						
Temp (F):	Random:	Lab Investigations (if any)			Referrals (if any)		

History:						Date (dd/mm/yyyy)	
Diagnosis		Medicine	Dosage	Days	No.	Pharmacy Batch	Exp.
BP:	Allergic:(if any)						
Pulse:	BLOOD GLUCOSE						
Weight (Kg):	Fasting:						
Height(Cm):	PP:						
Temp(F)	Random	Lab Investigations (if any)				Referrals(if any)	

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

Mobile Healthcare Unit
Beneficiary Identity card

Card Holder ID:

Name: _____

Age: _____

Gender: _____

Address: _____

Contact
Number(Mob.)+91 _____

(Tel.) _____

Loss card should be reported
**Elder's Helpline no.: 1800-180-1253(Toll
Free)**

HEALTH DETAILS OF THE CARD HOLDER

Suffering from:

Emergency Contact Details:

Name : _____

Address : _____

Tel no. _____ M. no. _____

SULABH INTERNATIONAL SOCIAL SERVICE ORGANISATION

सुलभ इन्टरनेशनल सोशल सर्विस ऑर्गनाइजेशन

(NGO in General Consultative Status with the
Economic and Social Council of the United Nations)



Dr. Bindeshwar Pathak
Ph.D., D.Litt.

Action Sociologist & Social Reformer

Founder, Sulabh Sanitation Movement

Brand Ambassador, Swachh Rail Mission

Member, National Legal Services Authority

Member, National Committee for 150th

Birth Anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi,

Government of India

D.O. No./SIF/1197/2017

November 23, 2017

Hon'ble Members,

Besides other recommendations discussed during the meetings, I had emphasized that the food money should be transferred directly to the widows in their account so that they can use their money as per their requirement and preferences of their food. For the past five years we have been giving Rs. 2000/- per month directly in their hands, first by cash and later by RTGS. They feel very secure & happy about this and they want this to be continued.

The food money which they will receive from the Government will give them financial support and also give them an opportunity to live life with dignity. They will be able to use common mess facility and pay the mess bill by themselves. To draw an analogy, this system will work just like working women hostel where women pay their mess bill monthly.

So apart from other facilities and the recommendations that I have sent earlier, I recommend that the food money should be transferred to the widows directly in their account.

This will provide sense of financial security to the widows, it will also provide them immense psychological support, which they need in ample measure because of the traumatic fall out of there social condition.

With highest regards,

Yours sincerely
Bindeshwar Pathak
(Bindeshwar Pathak)

Hon'ble Committee Members
National Commission for Women
Plot-21, Jasola Institutional Area
New Delhi - 110 025

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GUILD OF SERVICE

NGO in Consultative Status with the Department of
Public Information & Economic & Social Council of the United Nations

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Dr. V. Mohini Giri

Advisor Emeritus

Diana Khambatta

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Aruna Dalmia

Zena Sorabjee

Chitra Gupta

Exec. Vice President

Meera Khanna

Gen. Secretary

Vasantha Raman

Iffat Hoda

Reshma Arif

(Law Secretary)

Joint Secretary

Prema Paul

Treasurer

Krishna Mohanty

Naz Mahmood

Co-opted Members

Asha Das

Meena Bhagchandka

Vimla Mehra

Mira Shiva

Sushila Sukumaran

Malashri Lal

Legal Advisor

G. R. Verma

(Advocate)

27th Nov'2017

Dear Committee Members

The Guild of Service is against the practice of giving dole to under privileged as it only reinforces the marginalized status of the widows pension is a social security intervention a Rs. 5000/ payment to widows to meet their boarding expenses is a dole which will be an obstacle to empowerment and self dependence.

Community kitchen run by an organization meeting the needs of all is a viable institutionalized intervention. Expenses are reduced in large scale cooking. If widows have to pay individually to eat at the home it will create huge problems. Many will eat and not pay. Many will compromise on nutritional health to save money. This will create implementation problems for the homes. The home needs to be run in a professional manner to enable the young widows to get skilled to earn the older ones need to be productively occupied.

The Guild is of the opinion that money needs ^{be} invested into empowering the widows to earn ~~for~~ themselves Too long have we put widows ~~t~~ in the lens of pity. We need to move to a rights based approach to give them the dignity.

Dignity comes with using the hands to earn not spreading to receive a dole.

Warm regards,

Dr. V. Mohini Giri