



FACTSHEET

HOUSING: HOMELESSNESS



Photo credits: IGSSS

The Homeless in Delhi, not only suffer from a lack of shelter, but as the poorest of the Urban poor, also suffer from public and government apathy and misunderstanding, are denied their rights to entitlements, healthcare and education, basic sanitation services, identity markers, citizenship rights, democratic participation and the opportunities and choices that come with it.. The homeless ending up on the streets of Delhi are often from the marginalized section of our society which is further reinforced by caste and class prejudices that operate alongside physical marginalization.

Main Bhi Dilli is a people's campaign aiming to envision and enable a more inclusive city. It is a collective of civil society organisations, activists, researchers and others who work on diverse issues of housing, livelihood, gender and other rights.

HOMELESS IN THE CITY

The official figures as per Census say that Delhi has 46,724 homeless people in Delhi. Census has been underenumerating the homeless. It did it in 2001, as well as 2011 (*Singh, pp. 27-39*). However, an independent survey conducted by IGSSS in 2008 puts the number close to 1,60,000 in the city. And the Supreme Court Commissioners Office maintains that 1% of any city comprises the homeless population (*Commissioners, p.vi*).



59% of Shelters don't have the provisions of Bathrooms



7% of Shelters are providing a space for kitchen within the shelters



18% of shelters in Delhi are friendly for People with Disabilities (PWD),

82% of Homeless population work throughout the year, 8% find work occasionally

39% of Homeless belong to Schedule caste, 36% are OBC and 6% are ST

85% of the homeless migrate to Delhi in search of employment and livelihood.

According to a data collected by Housing and Land Rights Network (HLRN) in 2017, govt. authorities demolished over 53,700 homes hence evicting minimum 2.6 lakh people

A majority of the Homeless earn 200-300 per day.
Females find jobs more regularly than men but they are paid less in comparison with men

KEY ISSUES

Majority of homeless are not satisfied with the shelters in Delhi

- The problem of overcrowding
- The problem of lack of categories of shelters like there are a very few shelters for families
- Shelters are the only option available to Homeless
- No focus on the location of shelters

Evictions are a daily disaster for Homeless in Delhi

- From the place of stay and the place of work both
- majority of the evictions are a result of police / land owning agency action and here too, women suffer disproportionately

Food is the biggest expenditure for Homeless in Delhi

- Major daily expenditure followed by water and sanitation services
- Because of this, majority reported saving 500 per month which is a meagre amount

Problems faced by Homeless in Delhi

Fear of various kinds of harassment

- Cases are lower than the fear of sexual harassment amongst homeless
- The cases get unnoticed and unreported
- Cases of harassment by Civilians are very high

Harsh living conditions

- Lack of availability of basic services like clean water, food, education and health etc
- Unavailability of toilets / bathing spaces, safe drinking water and kitchen space.

Homeless do have Identity proofs but not made in Delhi

- The ID proofs are from the native places and not from delhi
- This inhibits their access to basic services and entitlements in Delhi
- Getting an ID proof is fraught with huge harassment and nonchalance

The category of homeless further marginalises

- Having the word homeless on Identity proofs alienates them from accessing services
- The homeless should have alternatives such as Ashray Griha.

WHAT CAN MPD '41 DO FOR HOMELESS?

1 MORE SHELTERS ARE NEEDED IN THE CITY

- an assessment is needed so that we can know what we require and in what quantity and quality.
- To remove the space issue, 50 sq. meter space as per the NULM SUH guidelines should be provided.
- If we look at the Homeless population, we need 1000 shelters each on an average being of 5000 sq. ft. which will accommodate 100 people as per the NULM norm and thereby catering to 1,00,000 CityMakers (homeless residents)

2 A PROPER STUDY HAS TO BE DONE FOR THE HOMELESS HOTSPOT

- Spatial hotspots according to the population of the homeless can be mapped
- The important places like hospitals, religious institutions, and homeless concentration areas should be mapped
- The major emphasis should be given to the migration rate in the city and the areas where industrial and trading work is increasing rapidly.

3 TERMS AND CONTENT FOR HOMELESS IN MPD 2021

- The term like 'Night shelter' and *Raen basera* should be replaced with the term 'Shelters' and *AshrayGriha*, as these are for 24 hours.
- should come as a subsection separately under the section of 'Housing'
- Specific consideration to the detailing and specification should be given.

6 PROVISION FOR BASIC FACILITIES

- Food, adequate toilets, bathroom/ washing spaces, safe drinking water, crèche, recreational spaces and storage should be there in the Shelters.
- For this, existing models of other places can be studied and bought in place. For example, Soup Kitchens can be set up in hotspot locations where the homeless populations can avail of food

5 SHELTERS SHOULD NOT BE THE ONLY OPTION AVAILABLE

- Just DUSIB shelters are available for homeless currently in Delhi
- We should also consider people who can pay a nominal rent for the accomodation (towards rental housing)
- In Kerala, Bhawana Foundation in its project 'Apna Ghar' has designed and constructed rental housing for its migrants residents.
- Housing Continuum is the way: Starting with shelters, to workers' hostels, to rental, to insitu, to incremental, to legal title for housing.

6 MORE DIVERSITY TO THE CATEGORIES OF SHELTERS

- For the Intersectional society, different categories of shelter are needed
- Transgender, Women, elderly, children and People with disabilities & mental illness should recieve full consideration
- Temporary/ Porta cabin shelters should be converted into permanent ones. No shelter should ever be demolished by any agency.It will be treated as an offence.

References:

- Commissioners of the Supreme Court. 2014. **Shelters for the Urban Homeless: A Handbook for Administrators and Policy Makers**. New Delhi: Books for Change. P. vi.
- Indo- Global Social Service Audit Report IGSSS Understanding Homeless in Delhi**
- Indu Prakash Singh. 2016 & 2017. "**CityMakers: Tribulations & Triumphs - A Saga of Heroic Struggle of the Homeless Residents of India**". New Delhi: Mukul Prakashan, p. 601.