

‘SHELTERS FOR THE HOMELESS IN DELHI’

REPORT

ON

‘THE ASSESSMENT OF PERMANENT SHELTERS IN NEW DELHI’

2009

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"Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health & well-being of himself and his family, including food, clothing, housing & medical care, and necessary social services..."

These words, from Article 25 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, were written almost six decades ago. Yet, millions of the families around the world continue to live without a proper home to live in...

Contents

- i) Submission Letter
- ii) Introduction to the Study
- iii) Theoretical Discussion on Homelessness and Destitution
- iv) Approach and Methodology
- v) Report: Findings of the assessment.
 - a) Key findings:
 - b) Recommendations
- vi) Important Linkages with:
 - a) Food
 - b) Health
 - c) Mental Health
 - d) Counseling Facilities
 - e) Banks
 - f) Postal/Address
 - g) Basic Entitlements at Shelters
- vii) Limitations of the Study
- viii) Annexure
 - a) Guide for Focus Group Discussion
 - b) Terms Of Reference
 - c) List of Shelters with Locations
 - d) List of shelters with Average Usage
 - e) Map of Delhi

From:

Dated: August 22, 2009

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**To,
Ms Deboshree Mukherjee,
Secretary,
Social Welfare Department,
Government of Delhi**

Sub: Report on the ‘Assessment of Shelters’ run by Delhi Government.

Ref: Letter dated 21/07/09 from Deputy Director (SD).

Ma'm,

On behalf of Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai, I am happy to present herewith the report on the Assessment of Permanent Shelters done by us as per your request.

1. The team made visits to all seventeen permanent shelters separately; discussing and assessing the various issues referred to it by the Department and allied matters. The team visited all homes run by Slum Department as well as by the NGO to acquaint themselves with the working of the shelters and to observe the environment at the shelter.

2. As the purpose of this assessment is to help in effective planning to improve the quality and scale of services for homeless people in Delhi, the team treated Homeless people as important stakeholder in the process and made sure their active participation during the assessment.

Team held focus group discussions with the homeless people at every shelter and discussed about their expectations and aspirations.

It also held discussions with the care takers at each shelter to understand the functioning of the shelters and their ideas of running these shelters.

Discussions were held with social scientists working on homelessness and workers in the field.

3. The team has given its recommendations on all the 14 areas covered under three broad areas, referred to it.

4. The team strongly felt the need to continue and upgrade the existing shelters along with opening of new facilities. The shelters, most of which were started decades ago in the buildings originally meant to be used as community centers, are not adequate at all to be run as the shelters, in not renovated to meet the specific requirements that useable shelter must have. The committee, has therefore recommended that all the shelters must be renovated and redesign to suit the needs of the users. The team has given its reasons

for recommending the renovation of existing ones and creation of new shelters. In the same chapter, the specific requirements and facilities that every shelter must provide for are also given.

The committee hopes that the Department of Social Welfare will give due consideration to these recommendations.

5. I wish to thank our volunteer friends Anwar, Pradip Ramavath, Sajjad Hasan, Nirbhay Pathak, Shahbaz Sherwani and Deepak. Without their help it would have been very difficult to complete the assessment in time.

6. I take this opportunity to express our gratitude for entrusting this work to us. I'm also thankful for individual experts, field workers and the managing staff who cooperated with the Assessment team and helped in completion of this assessment.

I must also thank the officers of the Social Welfare Department for extending their full cooperation.

With regards,

Mohd Tarique,
Koshish,
Tata Institute of Social Sciences,
Mumbai.

REPORT FOR SHELTER ASSESSMENT

INTRODUCTION:

The Steering Committee for the Homeless of the Government of Delhi, and the MCD, Delhi propose to consider proposals to improve the quality and scale of services for homeless people in Delhi, especially night shelters and community kitchens.

In order to plan these services and their improvement effectively, the Steering Committee for the Homeless of the Government of Delhi, and the MCD, Delhi, requested Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai to undertake a rapid assessment of permanent homeless shelters operating in Delhi.

TISS was requested to assess the following aspects in the shelters:

1. Quality and utilization of existing services:
 - a. Infrastructure: Space adequacy; building, repair and maintenance; toilets, bathing paces; fans; coolers; ventilation etc
 - b. Facilities: purified and regular supply of clean drinking water; clean and adequate beddings, sheets and blankets; lockers; food;
 - c. Hygiene and cleanliness of toilets, bathing places, beddings and overall facility.
 - d. Recreational services: TV, indoor games etc
 - e. Health services: first aid kit; medicine kit; health camps; de-addiction services; mental health services
 - f. Miscellaneous services: small savings; post box; livelihood counseling; legal aid; and other
 - g. Management systems; is there self management by homeless people; training of managers and service providers
 - h. Timings: level of flexibility to enter late; possibility of occasional over-stay in emergency situations like bad weather or illness; whether 24 hour shelters are available in the areas where night-time jobs/labor is huge.
 - i. Usage: average daily attendance; age, gender, livelihood and social profile of the residents
 - j. User costs
 - k. Satisfaction levels of users

1. Suggestions by users for improving services
2. Plan for expanding coverage of night shelters to needy areas, and vulnerable groups like women, the infirm and aged
3. Plan for improving services, with costs, management systems, quality and financial audit systems etc

Committee will also recommend or suggest the manner in which existing facilities could be linked up with very basic and crucial services, which may not be available in the shelters at present.

Theoretical Discussion of the Problem

Homelessness can often lead to a vicious circle of suffering which gets exaggerated with the question of their identity / or rather the lack of it. This further makes them vulnerable to abuses of many kinds - physical, sexual, and substance abuse is a few of the apparent and visible forms of abuse. The fact that most homeless people are migrants makes it imperative to understand the trends, reasons and outcomes of their decision. The decision which is often based on economic instability, gets further aggravated by the insecurities of living in an “unknown terrorizing city” full of unfamiliar and hostile faces.

In India, the census defines the ‘houseless population’ as the persons who are not living in the ‘census houses’. A ‘census house’ is referred to as a ‘structure with roof’. The enumerators are instructed ‘to take note of the possible place where the homeless population is likely to live such as on the roadside pavements, in hume pipes, under staircases or in the open temples, platforms and the like.

However, the phenomenon of homelessness is not just about lack of housing or accommodation. It is not a purely housing based concept but has significant emotional, social and psychological dimensions as well.

Thus, loss of family and community bonds might be central to homelessness. It is this feeling of being ‘not wanted’ that might go unattended even when the measures are taken to address the problem.

Personal drug use, familial drug use, family conflict and in some cases family breakdown could also be contributing factors.

Poverty is seen as the most influencing factor. Homelessness and poverty are inextricably linked. Poor people are frequently unable to pay for housing, food, child-care, health care, and education. Difficult choices must be made when limited resources cover only some of these necessities. Often it is housing, which absorbs a high proportion of income that must be dropped.

The police see drugs and begging as the two inseparable aspects of a homeless person's life. Very often, they are seen as people who do not want to work and are happily making their living out of begging.

Members of the public refer to them in words which have a negative connotation - thief, beggar, criminal, nuisance, problem, social disease, dirt, burden on society and so on. Even the system has not been able to keep itself away from such perceptions.

Their appearance becomes a key factor for people to dislike them. Since they do not have regular access to the basic facilities, they do not look 'clean'. Also, many a times, the reason for their dirty appearance is the fact that they do not have more than one set of clothing at a time. Failing to realize that for his situation, more than him, circumstances might be responsible, society makes already hard and troubled life of homeless even more difficult with its biased attitude towards the homeless person.

In most of the places that they come from, social structures are quite rigid and probably that could be one of the reasons for moving out of their homes. To a great extent, the caste system that is very strongly rooted in our villages is responsible for their present state of homelessness. A person from an upper caste background cannot work as labor in his village due to his high social status whereas when he comes to city; he readily works even under somebody who is from a lower caste.

It is extremely difficult to ascertain specific reasons for these people leaving their homes. But lack of employment opportunities in the native place and seemingly better options in bigger cities like Delhi is one of the most prominent reasons for out-migration. The economic background of these people is quite poor. Had enough employment opportunities been present, most of them who are homeless today may not have left home in the first place.

Addiction disorders and mental illness have also emerged as the factors leading to homelessness. People who need the care and support of their family get rejected. Such a person when faced with negligence feels low and constrained and chooses to move out of home, even if that means living the life of abuse and exploitation on the streets.

Opening of shelters in various locations of the city could be one effective ways of addressing the problem of homelessness. The crux of most of the problems that homeless people face when they live on streets lies in people's perception towards them. Starting shelters presents an opportunity to the general public to interact with the homeless in designated spaces and help change pre-conceived notions about them.

The general perception about homeless stems primarily from their instable living patterns and appearance. Living on street, forced to move from one place to other, they have little or no access to bathing, washing and toilet facilities. Without bath and unwashed for days on end produces a repulsive image about them. By opening of more shelters, this situation could be improved. If they begin to appear clean and look 'regular', hostility towards them will reduce. It will also enhance the interaction between the two groups, thus reducing the biases against each other.

When on street, they have no means to save their money. It either gets stolen or forcefully taken away. But in the shelter, they will have the option of saving some money with the management and even get help in opening bank accounts. Over a period of time, this saved money could help them in moving out of the situation of homelessness. While staying together, groups of people may come together and rent out a room. Also, during their stay in the shelter, they could be made responsible for day-to-day management of the shelter

In case of illness, they have people to look after. This prevents minor ailments from getting worse, as normally happens with the people on streets and prevent them from getting exploited by the local moneylenders. The group can develop a system where the needs of sick person are taken care of by the entire group. This would not be burden on any one person and at the same time, prevent the person himself from going for work in that condition of illness.

Not everyone on the street is an addict or a beggar. But public perception tends towards such biases. The reason for such misconceptions is that the visibility of such persons on the streets is high. Others, who form the majority, work and as such we do not take notice of them. The painter, who is called for white washing work, might be a homeless. The

rickshaw puller that everyone sees might be homeless. Many fruits and vegetable sellers are also homeless. Opening of shelters will help remove such biases. People will get to see the larger population of homeless people that work hard like any other responsible person.

Staying in the shelter, as identified, has controlled and minimized the extent of problems, which in turn, has given them opportunities to explore more options. Shelters provide a platform for interactions between the homeless and the police. Stable and fixed accommodation also means less suspicion. Further, people staying in the shelter could be issued Identity Cards. This will enable them to get those jobs, which they do not get due to their homeless status.

At present, the number of shelters being run in the city is too less to meet the requirements. Few shelters are started during the winters only. Thus more shelters are required on a permanent basis.

Shelters can be instrumental in providing them a platform to change society's perception about them. Shelters have not only reduced the problems that these people face when they are on streets, it has also given them an opportunity to get together and move out of the street life.

Shelters, certainly, are much more than places for night time sleeping. Therefore, serious efforts are required to design and develop these shelters in a manner that they not only fulfill the most basic requirements of an individual but also serve as the ground from where person could begin to plan his life beyond the hostile and unfriendly streets.

It was with this objective of assessing the current status of the shelters being run in the city and to identify the areas for improvement and ways to do that, that this study of shelter assessment was carried out.

Approach and Methodology

In the first meeting with the Secretary and other officials from Social Welfare Department, the general need to improve upon the facilities at the existing shelters was discussed. Quality of services at the shelters became crucial as it was assumed that existing shelters are not occupied to their full capacity because people do not need those places. This obviously was misplaced assumption and therefore it was decided that actual visits be paid and assessment be done.

Within the limited time available for this purpose, we decided to adopt the following procedure and took necessary steps for the purpose.

1. Discussion with the Social Welfare officials about the general functioning and management of the shelters.
2. Understanding the locations and profile of the users.
3. Visits to all the shelters were made. Within shelters, the methods used during the assessment were participatory observation, inspection of the physical features of the facility as per the terms of reference provided and focus group discussions.
4. Unstructured interviewing was done with the staff along with the Focus Group Discussion with the users of the facility. Some of the times, caretakers at the shelters also participated in these groups.
5. Lot of significant understanding was acquired through the observation at the shelters.

The team paid visits to the shelters for the purpose of the assessment. Interview guides were prepared which were based on the research questions.

The team also spent number of days out in the streets during nights, meeting and interacting with homeless people in order to understand why were they not using the shelters and opting to sleep in the open. To get the closer experience of what the homeless life is, we spent few nights at the street simply observing what all happens on streets when rest of the city goes to sleep. This certainly helped in developing an understanding regarding the issue and to visualize what kind of shelters do we need to ensure that people use them.

FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

(PART 1: TOPICS REFERRED TO TISS BY THE SOCIAL WELFARE DEPARTMENT)

1. Quality and utilization of existing services:

a. Infrastructure

i. **Space adequacy:** For the estimated population of around 1,25,000 homeless people in the city, there are only 17 permanent shelters. These shelters have the capacity of around 22 hundred people only. As such, the space available, when compared with the space required is highly inadequate. It hardly covers even 2% of the homeless population. Majority have no alternative but to sleep in the open, becoming prone to constant abuse and exploitation. Undoubtedly, there is a huge gap with the actual number of shelters and that of required.

ii. **Building:** These shelters are mostly run from Community Halls meant for functions like marriage, parties' etc. These buildings are not designed to be run as shelters and therefore, the facilities/structures available are not in tune with the requirements of the people. Very basic illustration that can be given to explain this point is the numbers of toilets available. While 2-3 toilets are sufficient for usage of guests at Community Centre; same cannot meet the need of 200 odd people staying there regularly.

Design of the shelters is crucial determinant of how shelters would be utilized. For e.g.: 2 shelters that are built with space for carts, cycles etc, have high use. (Above 70%). This is because people don't have to worry about parking their carts while they sleep in the shelters. We saw large number of people sleeping on their cycle rickshaws or carts, though the shelters were available close by. This was due to the absence of any parking space at the shelter. People obviously cannot leave their rickshaws and carts outside unattended; therefore, they are forced to sleep outside only.

iii. **Percentage Used :** 63.5% of estimated capacity(Over All)

Shelter's Occupancy(all approx)

0-30% : 1 shelter

31-50%: 4 shelters

51-70%: 9 shelters

71% & above: 3 shelters

- iv. **Repair and maintenance:** Shelters need to be renovated suiting the usage by high number of people. More toilets and bath rooms need to be constructed and also place has to be made properly ventilated. In almost all the shelters, people complained of dampness and seepage during rains.
- v. **Toilets:** In 3 shelters, no toilets. People are forced to use the nearby private facility at additional cost or use the open space. At 2 places, arrangement made with Sulabh. Organization running these shelters have entered into arrangement with the Sulabh International group that the users of the shelter facility are allowed to use the toilet and bathing facility at Sulabh complex. Payment is made by the NGO directly to Sulabh group.
- vi. **Bathing Spaces:** In 6 shelters, there is no functional bathing facility at all. Others too face regular water shortage. In 2 shelters, water connection is yet to be done. At 3 shelters, bathing space is simply absent.
- vii. **Fans/Coolers:** 25% shelters don't have coolers. In all the shelters it was found that even when the coolers were available, not all were in working conditions. Fans were also non functional with minor faults.
- viii. **Ventilation:** Only 2 shelters can be said to be adequately ventilated. Here, ventilation is being understood as a place with windows that can be opened for some fresh air. Most of the shelters are actually big dark halls where there is very little chance of any fresh air or cross ventilation.

b. Facilities

- i. **Drinking water:** Though all the shelters, whether run by NGO's or the state authorities are required to be providing purified and regular supply of clean drinking water, 8 shelters do not have adequate and clean drinking water. At 6 shelters, earthen pots have been kept which are not sufficient to meet the requirements of the large number of people using the shelter. As a result, many people shared that they carry their water bottles from outside. At 2 shelters, there was complete absence of water facility.
- ii. **Beddings:** Shelters are supposed to be providing clean and adequate beddings, sheets and blankets to all its users. However, due to non- appointment of the contractor for the laundry services, all the Slum Department run shelters are providing the beddings that haven't been washed for almost a year. Every day all the sheets and carpets are kept together after people leave and same are redistributed in the evening. As many of the people could be carrying infectious diseases like skin infection, it is huge error on part of the management.
- iii. **Lockers:** None of the shelters have any locker or storage facility. People carry their belongings with them. However, in the NGO run shelters there is provision of keeping the belongings with the care taker in the store but it comes at an additional payment of Rs 2 per shift of 12 hours. Lack of storage facility means there are frequent issues of stealing of one's belongings, difficulties in washing and cleaning the clothes etc.
- iv. **Food:** People are not allowed to bring food inside the shelter. However, in the shelters where occupancy is not very high or the people who have been

staying in the same shelter for a long period, people are occasionally allowed to bring their food in.

It was told that this is done to ensure the cleanliness and discipline in the shelters.

This came out as one of the major deterrent for people to use the shelter, especially during rains when people can't move out to get their food.

c. Hygiene and cleanliness:

- i. **Toilets:** Below satisfactory. No regular cleaning. Lack of water. It was observed that in 3 shelters, there was no facility for the toilet.
- ii. **Bathing Places:** Most of them are non-functional so there is no regular cleaning also. At 6 shelters, there is no functional bathing facility while others face regular shortage of water supply. In 2 shelters, water connection is yet to be done.
- iii. **Beddings:** Contractor yet to be finalized for Slum Department run shelters (10). In NGO shelters, beddings have not been changed for 5 months.

d. Recreational services:

- i. **TV:** Except for shelters at Nabi Karim and Nizamuddin, all other shelters are equipped with the television set. At Nizamuddin shelter, people shared that television was kept for few days and then the care taker fixed it in his room. (This care taker stays there only with his family). On asking care taker, he shared that television needs to be repaired but it has not happened for many months now.
Also, in many shelters care takers informed that they do not use the television regularly as the money in the pre-paid cards for the cable network has got over. So, all they can play is National Channel which people don't seem to be very interested in watching. At 5 shelters, television sets were not functioning.
- ii. **Indoor games/Library:** There are no games available indoors. However, shelters run by NGO have small library with subscription of newspapers and magazines. Users of the shelter are allowed to get the books issued against their names.

e. Health services:

- i. **Medical facilities:** Falling ill brings with it a host of related problems for homeless people. A small sore could turn into bad infection or mild fever could turn into severe pneumonia, as most of the times these people fail to receive medical help on time. Falling sick means loss of work. As most of them are daily wages earners, absence at work, often means 'no food'. Falling ill also means taking loans from local moneylenders or fellow workers at high interest or eating into hard earned savings.

- ii. **First Aid and Medicine kit:** First Aid box is maintained only at the shelters run by NGO and shelters run by Slum Department have no medical facility at all.
 - iii. **Health camps:** Weekly clinic is held at Fatehpuri shelter (run by NGO). There are no other camps held at any other shelter.
 - iv. **De-addiction services:** None of the shelters have any de-addiction services. Though there is good number of people into drugs using the shelter, care taking staff has not even basic training on how to handle such people, especially if they get violent. In such situations, with the help of the other users, care takers remove these people from the shelters.
 - v. **Mental health services:** There is complete absence of any mental health service in all shelters. None of the shelters have any preparation to take in mentally ill wandering person.
- f. **Miscellaneous services:**
- i. **Small savings:** At present, there is no mechanism for savings with the shelters. People are required to either deposit the money with the places where they work, or carry the money on them all the time. Both these situations are quite risk prone and very often result in people losing their money.
 - ii. **Post box:** Their most common work engagements are all in the unorganized sector - cart pulling, loading-unloading in market area, painting, plumbing, masonry, carpentry, etc. It is not that they are not skilled for more stable and regular work. Some of them are even well educated but their homeless status raises doubts in the minds of the employers to recruit them for such jobs. The probable fear that employers have, as it came out in one of the discussions, is about these people disappearing. Their concern is what would they do if person runs away? Absence of any permanent address deprives them of permanent work.
 - iii. **Livelihood counseling:** There is no counseling or livelihood guidance services in the shelters.

- iv. **Legal aid:** There is no provision of any legal assistance in the shelters. In fact, there are few shelters where reports were shared by the people about police visiting the shelters and harassing people in the name of the security check or verification of the people staying in the shelters.

In fact, at the Delhi Gate shelter, it has been made a rule that every new person coming to the shelter should produce some form of identification proof like Voter ID, Residence proof, PAN Card, Driving License etc. Of course, most of the homeless people do not have these documents.

As an alternative they are asked to go the police station and get them verified and bring a written note from the police station instructing the care taker to allow an entry to the person. For very obvious reasons, homeless person who doesn't have identity proof opts for sleeping on the street rather than going to the police station.

g. Management systems:

- i) Is there self management by homeless people:** Out of 17 permanent shelters, 10 are run by Slum Department and 7 are run by NGO.

In the Slum Department run shelters, there are care takers and sweeper appointed with the department and homeless people have no say in the management of the place.

In NGO run shelters also, the facility is run by the appointed people only. However, some of these people might be from homeless community earlier. No where the management is run by the homeless people themselves.

- ii. **Training of managers and service providers:** Though care providing is specialized task, there is no training provided to the people managing the shelters. It is absolutely necessary that the relevant training is provided so that these care takers understand that shelters are supposed to be much more than merely the place to sleep.

h. Timings:

- i. **level of flexibility to enter late:** Almost all the shelters (except the ones at Fatehpuri and Chandni Chowk) are locked up after 11 p.m. In case the entrant after 11 p.m. is a regular user of the shelter, he is allowed to enter else turned away. Also, if the person informs in advance, of his late return on particular day, he is allowed the entry. This, as shared by the care takers, is done in order to keep the drunkards and drug addicts out of the shelters.

However, this is against the principle of these shelters which are supposed to be open for anytime between 7 pm to 7 am.

ii. **Possibility of occasional over-stay in emergency situations like bad weather or illness:** It is absolutely not permitted for anyone to stay beyond 7 am. Even if the person is critically ill, he is asked to leave as in words of care takers, ‘It is not allowed in our rules and we are helpless as rules are framed by seniors’.

Even during rains, people have to leave the shelter and wait outside in the open before they could go for their work. (Usually markets, where majority of these people work in different roles, open around 10).

3 shelters are 24 hour shelters but one has to buy another coupon.

iii. Whether 24 hour shelters are available in the areas where night-time jobs/labor is huge:

i. **Usage:**

j. **Average daily attendance:** At present, all the shelters witness the occupancy below their capacity. There are several factors responsible for this.(which are discussed separately)

However, the shelters which are more users friendly have higher occupancy. Shelters like the ones at Delhi Gate or Sadar Bazar are always occupied to their strength. Though these shelters also have same limited facilities, people were found to be happier in these places as the management supposedly was friendly to the homeless people.

ii. **Age:** Homeless people are from all age groups, starting from 18 to very aged persons. There were people who have been living on the street since their childhood.

There is huge number of people in their twenties and thirties. There are also the people who have been using these shelters for 20-30 years.

iii. **Gender:** All the shelters were only ‘Male’ shelters. Shelters for the women are opened only during the winters.

However, on the streets both males and females were found. It appears that the number of female homeless is far less as compared to males. Though a vast majority of homeless population is male, the actual number of women tends to be grossly underestimated. Thus the homeless women are not only exposed to the increased risk of illness and starvation associated with life on the street but also heightened vulnerability to physical and sexual abuse. It may be possible that women on the streets get pulled into exploitative relationships also.

v. **Livelihood:** Work at construction sites, rickshaw pulling, selling toys, stationery, or fruits, work at tea stalls and hotels, coolie work, rag picking and occasional begging are some of the most common work that the people get engaged in. On an average they earn around 3000-4000 rupees a month. Some do manage little more as well. These people are under a constant search for finding work. In

their search for work, they are helped by the people from their native place or nearby areas that refer these people to the places where they might be working. Many of them also get work through contractors. There are certain locations where the contractors come and pick these people for various kind of work. These people go and sit in such locations with their tools. The contractor keeps a good amount of their earnings. But this amount is not fixed and depends on how the homeless person is able to negotiate with the contractor. Apart from contractor, people also come individually to hire these people.

vi. Social profile of the residents:

People in Delhi do not oppose the presence of ‘outsiders’ in the city as strongly as it is done in some other big cities of the country. Most of the people the team met and interacted with were staying without families. These are the people whose families are in their native places. The situation back home is very poor and entire family is dependent on one person’s income. Apart from those who have been on streets for a very long period, most of them are in regular contact with their families. They may not visit their families very frequently because of financial compulsions but they send home money regularly. We did not meet a single person who did not want to return if the situation allows for it.

iv. User costs:

a) These are all paid shelters. Person is required to pay Rs 6 each day. This amount is for twelve hours period. In 3 shelters i.e. at Fatehpuri, Chandni Chowk and Nand Nagri, where facility is open 24 hours, person is required to buy another ticket of Rs 6 if wanting to use it in day time also.

b) However, for the senior citizens, the facility is being provided free of cost and c) therefore, they are not required to purchase the ticket.

Whatever money is being collected through the sale of the tickets is used for the management and running of the shelters.

d) Rs 6 that individual pays to sleep at the shelter, includes the facility for safe and clean drinking water, clean bathing space and toilets. However, at least in 6 shelters there is absolutely no functional facility for bathing.

These shelters are:

- 1) Nizamuddin
- 2) S.P.M. Market Rani Jhansi Road
- 3) Property No. 10788-89 Jhandewalan Road
- 4) Gali Tel Mill Wali
- 5) Nand Nagri

6) G.T. Road Shahdara.

Also, there are 3 shelters where even toilets are not functional. These shelters are:

- 1) Gali Tel Mill Wali
- 2) Nand Nagri.
- 3) Nizamuddin

While the management of the shelter is permitted to collect Rs 6, it is their responsibility to ensure that the user gets the basic facilities of drinking water, bath room and toilet, as promised in return for the money that he pays. If for any unavoidable reason, shelter management fails to provide for these basic facilities of toilet, bath rooms and drinking water, they should arrange it from an alternative source and make the payment. If shelter is still unable to do it, minimum it must do is to reduce its own charges. Unfortunately, in all these shelters people were made to pay full 6 rupees charge along with the money they were spending outside for facilities.

In this way, poor helpless people were made to pay double amount. This came across as a major factor for many people refusing to use shelters and opting to sleep in the open on the streets.

Also, though unverified, at few shelters, there were complaints from the users that they were made to pay extra by the care-takers in situations like rains or late nights.

k. Satisfaction levels of users:

1. Suggestions by users for improving services

What Constitutes Good Shelter (from the Perspective of Homeless)

- No Harassment from Police. Identity card not demanded.
- Friendly Care Taker
- Interactive environment
- Provision of drinking water and clean toilets
- Flexibility to come in late if out for work
- Possibility of keeping belongings in store
- Absence of any outside disturbance

What Constitutes a Bad Shelter (from the Perspective of Homeless):

- Lack of Safe Drinking Water
- Ill- tempered Staff
- Over charge for the coupon
- Presence of too many addicts and pick pockets
- Outside goons coming in. Lack of security
- Dirty toilets
- Absence of space to keep tools, belongings etc.
- Strict timings.

2. Plan for expanding coverage of night shelters to needy areas, and vulnerable groups like women, the infirm and aged:

It is absolutely necessary that a detailed survey or a mapping is conducted to determine the locations that have huge presence of homeless populations. Also, an assessment must be carried out with regard to the occupations that these groups are generally involved in. All efforts must be made to provide the shelter facilities in the neighbourhoods where availability of those specific occupations is higher. This will certainly result in greater use of the shelter facility.

At present, there is not even a single shelter run for the women. It is only during the winter period that temporary shelters for women are created. Are we trying to say that women need the shelter only during the cold season?

Women being one of the most vulnerable group among the homeless population, it is not a comfort but a necessity to have shelters for women. Shelters will not only protect from the harsh weather but also from the abuse that a woman undergoes while on street.

Similarly, there are no possibilities for infirm or aged citizens. Though there is a provision of free stay for elderly in the current shelters, environment is not really encouraging. Until things like care taker's attitude, basic facilities etc are improved, aged will stay away from the shelters.

3. Plan for improving services, with costs, management systems, quality and financial audit systems etc

It has obviously been established through the status of the shelter that there is huge improvement that is needed to bring the shelters to a level where a homeless person would be willing to use the facility with dignity.

However, it is also felt that to suggest what exact management and audit systems are required, there is a need for more detailed and focussed assessment. It is suggested that government nominates a team of experts who can then develop a framework for the cost relevance, management systems, quality assurance and audit mechanisms.

This team could be asked to develop the 'Minimum Standards for Every Shelter to maintain' and this could then be used as the reference point for the auditing and monitoring purposes.

Part . Recommendations:

- No of Shelters is highly inadequate. More shelters must be built.
- Shelters have to be designed suiting the needs of different groups within homeless population.
- Homeless survey must be done to locate homeless concentrations. Shelters must be built in areas closer to these locations.
- Need For Linkages with the Necessary Additional Facilities/ Services
- Concessional Passes must be issued to the regular users of the shelter.
- Issuing of photo id for regular users of the facility.
- Link with de-addiction services.
- Shelters must be equipped with basic Aid facility with preparedness to move the patient to the hospital, if need arises.
- Linkages with hospitals for times of severe illnesses.

- Banking services should be made available to the users of the shelters. Since there is a huge number of people using the specific shelter for number of years, shelter itself should be taken as the residence.
- Shelters should also serve as the postal address for the users to receive their posts and letters etc..

QUALITY MANAGEMENT

- A minimum standard of Quality has to be developed.
- Process for Regular Monitoring of Services at Shelter must be evolved
- Periodic Assessment/ Auditing should be done by An Appointed Committee.
- Need to utilize available structures, schemes, resources
- Priced/ Free/ Subsidized? Different systems could be developed for different type of Shelters used by different population groups.
- Start up Cost could come from Government for setting up of the place.
- Recurring Cost may be Non- Subsidized.
- Vulnerable Groups Must Be Fully Supported By Government.

Need For Linkages with the Necessary Additional Facilities/ Services

Some of these could be:

- a. There is large number of people who have been using the same shelters for many years. In most of the cases the shelters have evolved as a home for these people with period of regular stay going as long as 35-40 years in few cases. It is ironical that these people are seen as new comer every day, just because he is required to buy the coupon every day. It is recommended that concessional passes be issued which can be renewed every month. This pass must carry the date when the person used the shelter first time.
- b. Issuing of photo id for regular users of the facility. This would double up as at least basic identity proof in the absence of any other identity document for most of the people.
- c. Link with de-addiction services:

d. Linkages with hospitals for times of severe illnesses: At present shelters do not have adequate medical facilities. While basic first aid is available at the shelters run by NGO's and they also make referrals, any such facility is completely absent in shelters run by Slum Department.

It is strongly recommended that each shelter has its own primary care unit and is linked with hospital in the close proximity for more serious situations or for cases needing specialized treatment.

e. Banking services made available to the users of the place.

f. It is recommended that Shelters serve as the postal address to receive mails/letters for its users. People should be allowed to give the address of the shelter as their postal address and required systems be developed to ensure that the letters/ mails are not lost or delivered to wrong person.

g. Counseling facilities.: Not in terms of illness or mental instability only but to assist people in planning their future. Like guiding in vocational trainings, on need to save, chalking out plans for long term planning with regard to work, family etc. This could possibly lead them coming out of state of homelessness.

h. Peer support groups could be formed.

i. Management committee must comprise of representatives from among the users.

j. Small reading room/library kind of facility with newspapers, magazines etc: It was heartening to see library at 2 shelters ,both run by NGO. Though there is lot left to be desired when it comes to actual operations of these libraries, it was welcoming to see library as part of the program.

It is recommended that every shelter must have its own library or small reading room with subscriptions of daily newspapers as well as weekly or monthly magazines of people's choice. This facility should be run by users themselves.

k.Small room or place to meet guests/visitors etc: As shelters are the only places that homeless people can call as their own, it is suggested that every shelter also has a room or some independent space to serve as guest lounge or visitor's place etc. There could be apprehensions about misuse of this place by people forming groups or sitting there without work or for wrong reasons, this facility may be extended only to the regular users of the shelter.

Thinking Together: There are certain questions that came up while covering the shelters for the assessment which needs government, civil society organizations and various groups working on issues related to homelessness and related areas, to come together and think over.

- Gate keeping: will there be selection of clients who can access shelter, or will it be open to all?
- Formation and training of SHGs of homeless man/women to run shelters
- Can there be space for private sector partnership with SHGs of homeless men/women with modest profit
- Branding

Limitations of the Study

In the course of visiting shelters and time spent in the field, the team realized there were certain limitations.

This was for the first time that an assessment of this nature was carried out. There were very moving, at times, heart breaking experiences shared by the people staying in the shelters. Lot of emotions was involved and relations were built while interacting with the users of the shelters. There was a possibility of people seeing the team as their chance to speak about their grievances and possibly getting bit more critical. But the team was required to get out of those emotions and feelings and complete the assessment rationally with objectivity.

External limitations came in the form of time available for the exercise. It proved to be a severe constraint as assessment had to be finished in limited time.

As a consequence of the fact that this assessment is done during the month of July-August, we did not get to see the extent of problem at its peak, i.e. during winters. Although homeless people shared their experiences, there is always a gap left over in what is told and what you actually see.

All in all, it was a productive experience.

GUIDE FOR FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION WITH HOMELESS PEOPLE

1. Socio-Economic Situation

- a. Can you share the economic background of your family?
- b. What is the social environment in your native place?
- c. What is the nature of your current occupation/job?
- d. What is your income from your current occupation/job?
- e. How often do you go home /visit your family?

2. Understanding Homelessness

- a. What is your understanding of homelessness?
- b. What was that immediate cause that made you leave home?
- c. Did you envisage the present situation while leaving home?
- d. Have you ever been denied job/work for being 'homeless', even if you were otherwise skilled for that work?
- e. Can you share your life experiences before coming out of your native place?

3. Experience of Homelessness

- a. Have you ever stayed in other cities? What has been your experience in other places?
- b. How were the conditions different from this place?
- c. Can you share your life experience as a 'homeless'?

4. Quality and Dignity of Life

- a. What is your daily routine?
- b. Do you have access to basic services like toilet facility, medical help etc?
- c. How would you rate your access to these services?
- d. How do people look at you or treat you or your family (here as well as back home)

5. Onus of Responsibility

- a. What are the things, which you would like to do to improve the facilities here?
- b. What according to you need to be done to improve the conditions at the shelter?
- c. Who do you think should work for solving this problem of homelessness?
- d. What responsibility/role do you see for yourself in this process of managing the shelters?

Annexure -2

Terms of Reference
The terms of reference of the survey would be to assess the following:

1. Quality and utilization of existing services:

a) Infrastructure: Space adequacy; building, repair and maintenance; toilets, bathing places; fans; coolers; ventilation etc

b) Facilities: purified and regular supply of clean drinking water; clean and adequate beddings, sheets and blankets; lockers; food;

c) Hygiene and cleanliness of toilets, bathing places, beddings and overall facility

d) Recreational services: TV, indoor games etc

e) Health services: Medical facilities; First aid and Medicine kit; Health camps; De-addiction services; Mental Health Services

f) Miscellaneous services: Small Savings; Post Box; Livelihood Counseling; Legal Aid; and other

g) Management systems; is there self management by homeless people; training of managers and service providers

h) Timings: level of flexibility to enter late; possibility of occasional over-stay in emergency situations like bad weather or illness; whether 24 hour shelters are available in the areas where night-time jobs/labor is huge.

i) Usage: average daily attendance; age, gender, livelihood and social profile of the residents

j) User costs

k) Satisfaction levels of users

l) Suggestions by users for improving services

2. Plan for expanding coverage of night shelters to needy areas, and vulnerable groups like women, the infirm and aged

3. Plan for improving services, with costs, management systems, quality and financial audit systems etc

Annexure 3

PERMANENT NIGHT SHELTERS

Sr.	Name of Shelter	Location	Run By
	EAST DELHI		
1.	G.T.Road, Shahdara	Near Kabul Nagar Quarters	Slum Department
2.	Nand Nagri (PORTA CABIN STRUCTURE)	Back Side of Gagan Cinema, Near Subji Mandi,CNG Pump	Aashray Adhikar Abhiyaan(AAA, NGO)
	West Delhi		
3.	Jahangir Puri Sarai Peepal Thala	Near Mazar Sharif Fruit Mandi,Sarai Peepal Thala	Slum Department
4.	Raja Garden	Opposite DTC Bus Depot, Ring Road	Slum Department
5.	Mangol Puri	R- Block, Mangol Puri	Slum Department
	North Delhi		
6.	Katra Maula Baksh	Roshnara Road, Near Golechakkar,Roshnara Park	Slum Department
7.	Shahzada Bagh	Back Side of 220 KV Substation Industrial Area,Shahzada Bagh	Slum Department
8.	SPM Market Rani Jhansi Road	Rani Jhansi Road, Petrol Pump, Inside the Motor Repair Market	Slum Department
9	Fatehpuri (Railway Station)	T-Point, Church Road, Old Delhi,S.P.M. Marg	AAA
10.	Chandni Chowk	Near Bus Stand,Bhai Mati Das Chowk(Fountain)	AAA
	Central Delhi		
11.	Delhi Gate	Delhi Gate Bazaar Near Delhi Gate Telephone Exchange	Slum Department
12.	Lahori Gate	Qutub Road Bridge,Sadar Bazaar Station	Slum Department
13.	Property No. 10615Jhandewalan Road	Jhandelwala Road, Leading to Singhara Chowk	AAA
14.	Property No. 10788-89Jhandewalan Road	- do-	AAA
15.	Property No 160,Ravi Das Gali	Basti Ravi Das, Nabi Karim	AAA
16.	Gali Tel Mill,Katra Karim	Nabi Karim (Ram Nagar Inside)	AAA
	South Delhi		
17.	Nizamuddin	Nizamuddin Basti, Back Side of Dargah Sharif	Slum Department

Annexure 4.

List of Shelters with the number of users on an average against the capacity.

S.NO.	NAME OF THE SHELTER	CAPACITY	AVERAGE USER
	East Delhi		
1.	G.T.Road, Shahdara	40	35-40
2.	Nand Nagri (PORTA CABIN STRUCTURE)	100	30-40
	West Delhi		
3.	Jahangir Puri Sarai Peepal Thala	100	60-65
4.	Raja Garden	100	70-80
5.	Mangol Puri	100	60-70
	North Delhi		
6.	Katra Maula Baksh	250	60-65
7.	Shahzada Bagh	150	55-60
8.	SPM Market Rani Jhansi Road	60	15-20
9.	Fatehpuri (Railway Station)	500	350-360
10.	Chandni Chowk	200	135-140
	Central Delhi		
11.	Delhi Gate	80	40-45
12.	Lahori Gate	250	175-200
13.	Property No. 10615Jhandewalan Road	60	30-35
14.	Property No. 10788-89Jhandewalan Road	60	25-30
15.	Property No 160,Ravi Das Gali	70	12-15
16.	Gali Tel Mill Wali,Katra Karim	70	40-45
	South Delhi		
17.	Nizamuddin	100	45-50

Annexure – 5

MAP OF DELHI

Source – HelpDelhi.com