



SMILE Scheme

Why in News

Recently, the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment has formulated a scheme “**SMILE - Support for Marginalized Individuals for Livelihood and Enterprise**”.

- It includes a subscheme - ‘[Central Sector Scheme](#) for Comprehensive Rehabilitation of persons engaged in Begging’.

Key Points

▪ About:

- It is a **new Scheme after the merger of existing Schemes** for Beggars and Transgenders.
- Scheme provides for the use of the existing shelter homes available with the State/UT Governments and Urban local bodies for rehabilitation of the persons engaged in the act of Begging.
 - In case of non-availability of existing shelter homes, new dedicated shelter homes are to be set up by the implementing agencies.

▪ Focus:

- The focus of the scheme is extensively on **rehabilitation, provision of medical facilities, counselling, basic documentation, education, skill development, economic linkages** and so on.
- It is estimated that an **approximate 60,000 poorest persons would be benefited** under this scheme for leading a life of dignity.

▪ Implementation:

- It will be implemented with the support of State/UT Governments/Local Urban Bodies, Voluntary Organizations, Community Based Organizations (CBOs), institutions and others.

▪ Scheme for Comprehensive Rehabilitation of Beggars:

- It will be a **comprehensive scheme for persons engaged in the act of begging**.
- The scheme has been implemented in the selected cities on pilot basis having large concentrations of the Beggar community.
- During the year 2019-20, this Ministry had released an amount of Rs. 1 Crore to **National Institute of Social Defence (NISD)** and Rs. 70 Lakh to **National Backward Classes Finance & Development Corporation (NBCFDC)** for skill development programmes for beggars.

▪ Status of Beggars In India:

- According to the [Census 2011](#), total number of beggars in India is 4,13,670 (including 2,21,673 males and 1,91,997 females) and the number has increased from the last census.
- **West Bengal tops the chart followed by Uttar Pradesh** and Bihar at number two and three respectively. Lakshadweep merely has two vagrants according to the 2011 census.

- Among the union territories, **New Delhi had the largest number of beggars** 2,187 followed by 121 in Chandigarh.
- Among the northeastern states, Assam topped the chart with 22,116 beggars, while Mizoram ranked low with 53 beggars.
- Recently, the Supreme Court has agreed to examine a plea for **decriminalising begging** which has been made an offence in various states under Prevention of Begging Act.

National Backward Classes Finance & Development Corporation

- NBCFDC is a Government of India Undertaking under the aegis of Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment.
- It was incorporated under **Section 25 of the Companies Act 1956** on 13th January 1992 as a **Company not for profit**.
- Its objective is **to promote economic and developmental activities** for the benefit of **Backward Classes** and to assist the poorer section of these classes in skill development and self-employment ventures.

National Institute of Social Defence

- The NISD is an **Autonomous Body** and is registered under **Societies Act XXI of 1860 with the Government of National Capital Territory (NCT), Delhi**.
- It is a **central advisory body** for the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment.
- It is the nodal training and research **institute in the field of social defence**.
- The institute **currently focuses on human resource development** in the areas of drug abuse prevention, welfare of senior citizens, beggary prevention, transgender and other social defence issues.
- The mandate of the institute is **to provide inputs for the social defence programmes** of the Government of India through **training, research & documentation**.

Source: PIB

PDF Reference URL: <https://www.drishtiias.com/printpdf/smile-scheme>