

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT  
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1437

ANSWERED ON:13.12.2013

ABANDONED WIDOWS

Das Gupta Shri Gurudas;Jakhar Shri Badri Ram ;Panda Shri Prabodh

**Will the Minister of WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:**

- (a) whether the Government has conducted any survey to identify the number of abandoned widows and divorced women in the country;
- (b) if so, the number of such women in the country, State/UT-wise and if not, the reasons therefor;
- (c) whether the Government has formulated /proposes to formulate any schemes/programmes for rehabilitation of such women and to improve their living conditions;
- (d) if so, the details thereof; and
- (e) the other steps taken/being taken by the Government in this direction?

**Answer**

MINISTER OF THE STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI KRISHNA TIRATH)

(a) & (b) As per 2001 Census, there were 34.29 million widows and 2.34 million divorced/separated women in the country. State/UT wise number of widows and divorced women is annexed.

(c) & (d) The Ministry of Women and Child Development is implementing following schemes for rehabilitation of destitute women and women in difficult circumstances to improve their living conditions, which can be availed by abandoned widows and divorced women fulfilling the schematic requirements:-

- i. Swadhar Scheme to provide primary need of shelter, food, medical care, counseling etc. to women in difficult circumstances.
- ii. Short Stay Homes to rehabilitate women who are facing social , economic and emotional setback due to family problems, social ostracism etc. being implemented by the Central Social Welfare Board.
- iii. Support for Training & Employment Programme (STEP) under which skill upgradation training is provided to assetless and Below Poverty Line (BPL) women.

Apart from these, Ministry of Rural Development is administering the following three schemes:

- i. Indira Gandhi National Widow Pension Scheme (IGNWPS) under which pension is provided to a widow in the age group of 40-59 years from Below Poverty Line households.
- ii. Indira Gandhi National Old Age Pension Scheme under which pension is provided to persons between 60-80 years and above belonging to BPL households including women; and
- iii. MNREGA, under which willing persons including women are entitled to guaranteed 100 days employment during a year. Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment is also administering an Integrated Programme for Older Persons (IPOP) which is being implemented since 1992 with the objective of improving the quality of life of senior citizens including women by providing basic amenities like shelter, food, medical care etc.

(e) The National Commission for Women has entered into an MoU with Housing and Urban Development Corporation (HUDCO) on 7th May 2013 to improve the living conditions of destitute women on the identified areas for facilities like women hostels, remand homes etc. or anything which is related to women welfare or development by enhancing quality of their habitat. The first initiative is being undertaken at Vrindavan for renovation and reconstruction of the shelter homes for the widows.