

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:4517

ANSWERED ON:21.02.2014

CONDITION OF WOMEN

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

- (a) whether the Government has noticed that the number of widows, divorced and deserted women has increased in the country during each of the last three years and the current year;
- (b) if so, the details thereof, State/UT-wise
- (c) whether the Government has conducted any survey regarding pitiable and economic condition of such women;
- (d) if so, the details thereof;
- (e) the details of the schemes run by the Government to protect the interests, welfare and rehabilitation of such women alongwith the funds allocated and released under the schemes and its utilization reported by the States/UTs during the above period; and
- (f) the other steps taken/being taken by the Government in this direction?

**Answer**

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

(a) & (b): Office of the Registrar General, India conducts decennial Population Census wherein data on all persons including widowed and divorced/separated females residing in the country at the time of enumeration are collected. Data specifically on deserted women is not collected in Census. The latest Population Census has been recently concluded in the year 2011 and the previous one in the year 2001. The Census 2011 data on widowed and divorced/separated female have not yet been released. A Statement giving State-wise figures of widows, divorced and separated women as per Census 2001 in the country is annexed.

Number of widows and divorced/separated women as per 1991 and 2001 Census is as under:-

	1991	2001
Widowed	2,62,05,118	3,42,89,729
Divorced/separated	14,26,700	23,42,930

(c) & (d): In compliance of the Order of Supreme Court dated 14.11.2008 in Writ Petition (Civil) No.659 of 2007, (Environment & Consumer Protection Foundation Vs. Union of India and others), National Commission for Women (NCW) conducted a detailed study to enquire into the plight of widows living in Vrindavan of Mathura District in Uttar Pradesh. The study report was prepared and filed before the Hon'ble Supreme Court in April 2010.

(e) & (f): The Ministry of Women and Child Development is implementing following schemes for women in difficult circumstances to improve their living conditions.

i. Swadhar Scheme : Swadhar Scheme was launched in the year 2001-2002 for rehabilitation of women in difficult circumstances. The schemes provides primary need of shelter, food, clothing and care to the marginalized women/girls living in difficult circumstances who are without any social and economic support. The beneficiaries include widows deserted by their families and relatives left uncared near religious places where they are victims of exploitation, women prisoners released from jail and without family support, and similarly placed women in difficult circumstances. At present 311 Swadhar Shelter Homes are functioning across the country.

ii. Short Stay Home Scheme: Recognising the need to prevent women from exploitation and to support their survival and rehabilitation, the scheme of Short Stay Home for women and girls was introduced as a social defence mechanism, by the then Depaartment of Women and Child Development in 1969. The scheme provides 24 hours residential temporary accommodation, maintenance and rehabilitative services to women and girls rendered homeless due to family discord, crime, violence, mental stress, social ostracism etc. 293 Short Stay Homes are functioning across the country. The scheme is being implemented by Central Social Welfare Board.

Both the schemes are Central Sector Schemes and funds are released to the implementing agencies which are mainly NGOs. The

funds released under these schemes during the last three years and current year are as under:-

( Rupees in lakhs)				
Name of the Scheme	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014
(as on 18.2.2014)				
Swadhar	3421	2462	2363	1653
Short Stay Home	24450	3330	2860	2424
TOTAL	5866	5792	5223	4077

NCW 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.