

Evaluation Study of Short Stay Homes for Women and Girls - An Interim Report

1. The Study

The development of women in India has been in the centre stage of development planning right from independence. But the atrocities on women are still going on. Since rapid industrialisation, urbanisation and break-up of the institution of joint families had given rise to social problems and exploitation of women and girls. In view of this, the scheme of Short Stay Homes (SSH) for Women and Young Girls was started in 1969 for providing temporary shelter to the distressed women and girls by rendering them a package of facilities of medical care, psychiatric treatment, case work services, occupational therapy, educational-cum-vocational training, etc.

At the instance of Department of Women and Child Development, the Programme Evaluation Organisation undertook the study to assess the operation of the scheme and its impact on women with regard to their rehabilitation.

2. Objectives of the Study

The main objectives of the study were as under:

- i) to assess whether the facilities required to be provided to the inmates such as boarding, lodging, medical, psychological, counselling, recreational, etc. are made available to the inmates in accordance with the scheme parameters,
- ii) to examine the role of the Short Stay Homes in the rehabilitation of the inmates,
- iii) to assess the quality of vocational training facilities in the Homes and to examine whether they are contributing towards the economic rehabilitation of the inmates,
- iv) whether the background, experience, qualifications and initiatives of the personnel and NGO running the SSH are affecting the successful running of the Homes, and
- v) The nature and extent of involvement of state and the local governments and community in the affairs of the Homes.

3. Sample Size/Criteria for Sample Selection

A sample of 37 SS Homes spread over 13 States was randomly selected for the study. 5 inmates and 3 ex-beneficiaries were selected from each Short Stay Home for assessing the impact of the scheme on the target population

4. Reference Period

The reference period for the study was from 1994-95 to 1996-97.

5. Main Findings

1. It was observed that out of a sample of 37 Homes, 6 Homes were found to be non-existing/non functional.
2. The accommodation and the basic facilities like, living space, toilet and bathrooms were inadequate in most of the SS Homes due to the reason of low rental provision.
3. It was found that out of 37 Homes, 18 were located within the cities/towns and 10 were located in outskirts/ newly developed areas.
4. The expenditure on establishment ranged between 45 per cent to 49 per cent. This appeared to be on a higher side in so far as the welfare oriented scheme was concerned.
5. A staff of 8 members appeared to be quite large for the maintenance of an average of 20 inmates per SS Homes.
6. Most of the SS Homes reported that the amount of funds provided for the home was too meagre to run these Homes satisfactorily and also difficult to maintain the staff on the current salary structure.
7. It was found that most of the Short Stay Homes had very little linkage with the local departments. The linkages with other government programmes were very weak.
8. 69.13 per cent of the inmates stayed for a duration of one year and only a 3.88 per cent of inmates stayed for a duration of above three years.
9. It was found that the SS Homes were giving admission to women, girls and children outside the target group.
10. Almost all the homes reported delay in release of government funds.

6. Major Suggestions

1. The Department of Women and Child Development should review the position in order to find out the number of non-functional homes and the reasons thereof
2. The Department of Women and Child Development should take steps for arranging the suitable accommodation and basic facilities like, living space, toilet and bathrooms.
3. There is need to be given more emphasis on funds allocation for the welfare of the inmates.
4. Either the strength of the inmates in the Homes should be increased or existing staff reduced in order to maintain a reasonable balance between the two.
5. The Department of Women and Child Development should look into the present salary structure and also other remunerations/allowance. The ration cards may also be issued to SS homes so that they could get the foodgrains etc. at the subsidised rates.
6. The linkages with the local Departments need to be developed and strengthened for optimum utilisation of the available infrastructure. The Department of Women and Child Development should involve the state Governments in the implementation as well as monitoring of the scheme.
7. The stipulated maximum period of stay of the inmates upto three years is not necessary as only 3.8 per cent of the inmates stayed for a duration of above three years.
8. The Department of Women and Child Development should exercise restraint in granting admission to the present target group only. Moreover, the institutes should not be misused to cater as vocational Training Centres.
9. Greater publicity of the scheme is essential to create greater public awareness about the homes through Panchayati Raj Institutions.
10. The Social Welfare Departments of the State Governments should be closely associated with the Home Committees and influential members of the local community should also be involved for the smooth functioning of the SS Homes.