

DoSJE organized a National Workshop, Training Programme and Stakeholder's Consultation on SMILE Scheme at Indore

Senior Officers from Centre and States, along with representatives of Urban Local Bodies, NGOs, Experts and Stakeholders, discussed Best Practices and Strategies to realize the goal of a 'Begging-Free India'

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The Union Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment (M/o SJE) organized a National Workshop and Orientation Programme today at Indore, focusing on the SMILE Sub-Scheme for Comprehensive Rehabilitation of Persons Engaged in the Act of Begging (SMILE-B). The Inaugural Session was presided over by Secretary (D/o SJE), Shri Amit Yadav, along with participation from senior dignitaries from the Central and State Governments.



This one-day national workshop brought together State Nodal Officers, representatives from Urban Local Bodies, NGOs, and members of the Expert Network for a focused dialogue on strengthening the implementation of SMILE-B, with special emphasis on rescue, primary rehabilitation, and livelihood convergence.

Highlights of the Workshop:

- **Technical Sessions** covered various components of rescue and rehabilitation of persons engaged in the act of begging through real-life success stories and expert sessions of Livelihood opportunities

via skill development (NSDC presentation) and Counselling methodology by resource person of NISD, including a panel discussion with nodal officers from 6 States, sharing field experiences and the day programme was concluded with training on SOP and best practices by Ministry Officials.

- **Experience sharing by beneficiaries** who have successfully transitioned out of begging and undergone rehabilitation.
- **Stakeholder Consultation:** Stakeholders, led by Additional Secretary (D/o SJE), discussed revised SMILE guidelines, cost norms, and strategies for improved implementation and possible extension beyond FY 2025–26.

Shri Amit Yadav, Secretary, Department of Social Justice and Empowerment, delivered the keynote address at the One-day Workshop & Training Program on the SMILE-Beggary in Indore.

pic.twitter.com/6Ao70KK3Ni

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In his keynote address, Shri Amit Yadav emphasized the Government's unwavering commitment to the comprehensive rehabilitation of persons engaged in the act of beggary and highlighted the need for unified action, capacity building, and data-driven implementation for impactful outcomes.

Ms. Sonali Ponkshe Vayangankar, Principal Secretary, Social Justice & Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities Department, Government of Madhya Pradesh, addressed the gathering at the One-day Workshop & Training Program on the SMILE-Beggary. pic.twitter.com/jqkroCvMiU

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Ms. Sonali Ponkshe Vayangankar, Principal Secretary, Social Justice and Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities Department (MP) highlighted the initiatives towards inclusive rehabilitation and also stressed the significance of interdepartmental coordination for the effective implementation of the comprehensive rehabilitation of persons engaged in the act of beggary. In her address, AS (D/o SJE), Ms. Caralyn K. Deshmukh reaffirmed the Ministry's commitment to inclusive and dignified social support.

Ms. Caralyn Khongwar Deshmukh, Additional Secretary, Department of Social Justice and Empowerment, warmly welcomed the participants at the One-day Workshop & Training Program on the SMILE- Beggary in Indore. pic.twitter.com/J8Bme5e9CX

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Launched in October 2023, the SMILE Scheme (Support for Marginalized Individuals for Livelihood and Enterprise) is a landmark initiative aimed at achieving a '*Bhiksha Vritti Mukta Bharat*' – a Begging-Free India – through the coordinated efforts of Central and State Governments, Urban Local Bodies, Civil Society Organizations, and various implementation agencies. With over 22,410 individuals identified and 3,400 rehabilitated till date, the SMILE Scheme is poised to scale up its impact in Phase 3, covering 100 cities across 34 States/UTs.

This National Implementation Workshop and National level consultation brought together State nodal officers, District nodal officers, NGOs/Implementation agencies, from more than 23 States/UTs and 67 Districts across the country, State Govt. of MP, NISD, Govt. of India senior officers and underscores the government's commitment to dignity, inclusion, and sustainable livelihoods for the most marginalized sections of society. During the workshop, Secretary Shri Amit Yadav also reviewed the merchandise produced by rehabilitated beggars.



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