



Department of Social Welfare

At a Glance

Functions

The Department of Social Welfare is responsible for the welfare of citizens in need and distress, aged, destitute, handicapped people and neglected children. The Department also provides self-employment opportunities to women, children and the handicapped.

Findings

- ☞ The schemes for socio-economic development which were earlier available to the SC category only, have been extended to ST/OBC and minorities as well.
- ☞ A study conducted by CARE-PLUS in about 4,500 households of slum communities on the awareness of the Department's schemes found that awareness is as low as 23.5% for the Women Development schemes and 17.5% for the Integrated Child Development scheme.
- ☞ The study also cited favouritism on the part of the local elected member (councillor and MLA) in distributing the forms for the various schemes.
- ☞ Over Rs 4 crore of taxpayers' money had been wasted in the Old Age Pension scheme as 37.5% of the beneficiaries were ineligible. In 168 cases, the beneficiaries had died but the Department continued to send them the pension despite being informed about their death by the local post offices.
- ☞ To reduce leakage of funds and improve transparency, the Department is providing scholarships to the SC/ST students through bearer cheques.
- ☞ The Transparency International India team on their visit to the Social Welfare Department found the staff unaware of the Citizen's Charter of their Department.
- ☞ Old Age Pension has been raised from Rs 200 to Rs 300.

Reforms

- ☞ Along with other departments and schemes the Department of Social Welfare will be merged with the proposed Individual and Family Welfare Services to create a 'one window access.'
- ☞ *Aao BPL, Jao APL*: Aggregate the different welfare/financial grant schemes across Delhi, and provide them through a 'single window access' with bearer cheques thus rendering easier access, focused awareness and greater per capita provision due to elimination of middle layers of bureaucracy.
- ☞ Financial transparency is needed. This would imply visible tracking of the funds since the transfer of grants is provided to the Department till the payment is made to the beneficiary.
- ☞ Entrust monitoring and evaluation of the schemes to independent agencies/NGOs and let the results be put up in public.