

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2714
TO BE ANSWERED ON 18.12.2024

WELFARE OF WOMEN WASTE PICKERS IN THE COUNTRY

2714. SHRI MOHAMMED NADIMUL HAQUE:

Will the Minister of Women and Child Development be pleased to state:

- (a) the data regarding women waste pickers working in the informal sector in the country;
- (b) whether measures are being taken to address the economic, social and gender inequalities faced by women waste pickers, including limited access to fair wages, health safety and recognition within the waste management system;
- (c) if so, the details thereof, and if not, the reasons therefor; and
- (d) the policy measures undertaken to ensure the inclusion of women in leadership and managerial roles in waste management systems to enhance economic and social empowerment?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT
(SHRIMATI SAVITRI THAKUR)

(a): Data of women waste pickers working in the informal sector in the country is not maintained centrally.

(b) to (d): The National Action for Mechanized Sanitation Ecosystem (NAMASTE) scheme is implemented by central government for waste pickers across the country in urban and rural areas to provide the following key benefits:

- (i) Occupational Safety Training on occupational hazards, safe handling & legal rights along with provision of PPE kits to protect against health hazards and improve working conditions.

- (ii) Integration of Waste Pickers in the Solid Waste Management through long term allotment of Dry Waste Collection Centres (DWCCs) and MRFs to Waste Pickers collectives by Urban local Bodies and Gram Panchayats. DWCCs are managed by the Waste Pickers collection.
- (iii) Capital Subsidy of upto Rs. 5.00 Lakhs for procurement of Waste Collection Vehicles by the DWCCs.
- (iv) Establish Linkage with Social Security Benefits including coverage under Ayushman Bharat PM-JAY, Pre-Matric Scholarship to their children and Registration under e-Shram portal.
- (v) Information, Education, and Communication (IEC) Campaign for Waste pickers' safety, dignity, and benefits under the scheme and encouraging citizens to segregate waste at the source.

Further, “Swachh Bharat Mission- Urban” (SBM-U) encourages entrepreneurship in the sanitation and waste management space and empowering women led Self-Help Groups (SHGs) in convergence with other government programmes such as National Urban Livelihood Mission (NULM). The high level of involvement of SHGs has resulted in sustainable source of income specifically the SHGs, informal sector waste pickers and sanitation workers have a scope for new engagement prospects through their association with the programme, becoming waste managers and waste entrepreneurs. In 2023, the Mission released the first edition of “SHG directory” with details of 4000 Women SHGs (WSHG). This has later been updated with nearly 11,000 WSHGs in the sector across various States. Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA) rolled out the “Swachhata Yatra”, first ever women-focussed peer learning tour across the country for more than 300 WSHG members to attend workshop to facilitate cross learning, as well as facilitating interactions with local political representatives to increase awareness regarding the mandate of the Mission and integrate the SHG members with the same.
