

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE & EMPOWERMENT
RAJYA SABHA
STARRED QUESTION NO -183
ANSWERED ON – 06/08/2025**

IMPLEMENTATION OF SMILE SCHEME

183. SHRI A. A. RAHIM

Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:-

- (a) the total budget allocation and actual expenditure for the Support for Marginalized Individuals for Livelihood and Enterprise (SMILE) scheme during last three year, year-wise, along with reasons for underutilization of funds;
- (b) the number of transgender individuals and persons engaged in begging who have received direct benefits, including rehabilitation, skill development and employment opportunities under the scheme, State-wise;
- (c) whether it is a fact that many beneficiaries still lack access to healthcare, education and social security, and if so, the reasons therefor; and
- (d) whether Government has conducted an impact assessment of the scheme, if so, the findings regarding its effectiveness in reducing begging and improving socio-economic conditions?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT

(DR.VIRENDRA KUMAR)

(a) to (d) A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) TO (d) IN RESPECT OF RAJYA SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. 183 FOR REPLY ON 06.08.2025 REGARDING IMPLEMENTATION OF SMILE SCHEME ASKED BY Shri A. A. Rahim.

(a) Support for Marginalized Individuals for Livelihood and Enterprise (SMILE) scheme comprises two sub-schemes namely 'Central sector scheme for Comprehensive Rehabilitation for Welfare of Transgender Persons' and 'Comprehensive Rehabilitation of persons engaged in the act of Begging'. The Scheme was launched on 12.02.2022.

The total revised budget allocation and actual expenditure for the SMILE scheme during last three year, year-wise, is at Annexure-I.

Reasons for underutilization of funds are as under:

A. Central sector scheme for Comprehensive Rehabilitation for welfare of Transgender Persons

- i. Reluctance by Community Based Organisations to formally partner with government programs.
- ii. Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs)/Community Based Organisations (CBOs) who have submitted proposals for setting up Garima Grehs were forwarded to 14 States/UTs, from where no recommendation for setting up Garima Grehs have been received. Further, no proposals for setting up Garima Grehs have been received from 08 States/UTs.
- iii. Reluctance to self-identity due to social stigma and non-acceptance by the society and/or lack of support system from family.
- iv. Application for identity certificates often faces hurdles due to fear of outing, or past experiences of discrimination of Transgender Persons which prevents them from enrolling in welfare programs.

B. Comprehensive Rehabilitation of persons engaged in the act of Begging

- i. During 2022-23, implementation of the Scheme was put on hold to revise the guidelines following consultations aimed at aligning it with existing welfare schemes for sustainable rehabilitation.
- ii. After approval of guidelines, the actual implementation of the Scheme *i.e.* conducting survey/ identification and mobilization commenced from January 2024.
- iii. Due to the phased onboarding of cities.
- iv. The onboarding process depends on the consent of local/city administrations, which takes time.
- v. Fund release is contingent upon the completion of sequential stages—from survey to rehabilitation—which progresses at different pace in each city.

(b) The state-wise number of transgender individuals and persons engaged in act of begging who have received direct benefits, including rehabilitation, skill development, and employment opportunities under the scheme is at Annexure-II.

(c) While continuous efforts are done for welfare and protection of Transgender Persons some of the challenges faced by them for accessing to healthcare, education and social security are:

- i. Transgender individuals face rejection from families, primarily due to societal pressure, ignorance and fear.
- ii. High dropout rates among transgender students, especially in rural and semi-urban districts.
- iii. Challenges in college admissions, including denial of hostel access and inadequate infrastructure facilities in public places.
- iv. Lack of adequate transgender-friendly healthcare personnel and clinics.

Under the SMILE-Beggary scheme,

- i. All identified individuals are mobilized to shelter homes based on their willingness. Thereafter, primary rehabilitation services, including health check-ups, basic medical care, nutritious meals, clean clothing, and psychological counselling, de-addiction support are provided to all such individuals.
- ii. Subsequently, comprehensive rehabilitation is undertaken based on the socio-economic needs of the individuals, particularly in the case of senior citizens, children, and persons with disabilities, who are often reunited with their families, or shifted to old age homes or appropriate care facilities.
- iii. Based on their physical condition, livelihood interventions such as skill development and employment-oriented training are provided to enable them to lead a life of dignity.

The Scheme has proven to be a significant intervention in ensuring dignity, sustainable livelihoods and social reintegration for individuals who were previously dependent on begging for survival.

(d) Evaluation of the Scheme is part of the Scheme guidelines.

ANNEXURE-I

ANNEXURE REFERRED TO PART (a) IN REPLY OF RAJYA SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. 183 TO BE ANSWERED ON 06.08.2025 REGARDING IMPLEMENTATION OF SMILE SCHEME BY SHRI A. A. RAHIM.

- i. The budget allocation and expenditure for the SMILE scheme during last three year, year-wise, under the sub-Scheme 'Central Sector scheme for Comprehensive Rehabilitation for Welfare of Transgender Persons', is as under:

(Rs. in crore)

Year	Funds allocated	Funds Released
2022-23	30.00	-
2023-24	22.82	3.40
2024-25	45.00	5.02

- ii. The budget allocation and expenditure for the SMILE scheme since its launch, year-wise, under the sub-Scheme 'Comprehensive Rehabilitation of persons engaged in the act of Begging', is as under:

(Rs. in crore)

Year	Funds allocated	Funds Released
2022-23	15.00	0.12
2023-24	10.00	6.50
2024-25	15.00	9.65

ANNEXURE REFERRED TO PART (b) IN REPLY OF RAJYA SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. 183 TO BE ANSWERED ON 06.08.2025 REGARDING IMPLEMENTATION OF SMILE SCHEME BY SHRI A. A. RAHIM.

A. Sub-scheme namely 'Central sector scheme for Comprehensive Rehabilitation for Welfare of Transgender Persons'

i. State-wise number of transgender individuals who have been rehabilitated through Garima Grehs supported by Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment is as under:

Sl. No.	State/ (No. of Garima Grehs)	Numbers of transgender persons rehabilitated
1	Andhra Pradesh (1)	25
2	Assam (1)	25
3	Bihar (1)	84
4	Chhattisgarh (1)	154
5	Delhi (1)	153
6	Gujarat (1)	107
7	Karnataka (1)	26
8	Madhya Pradesh (1)	08
9	Maharashtra (3)	326
10	Odisha (1)	99
11	Punjab (1)	25
12	Rajasthan (1)	81
13	Tamil Nadu (1)	96
14	Uttar Pradesh (1)	25
15	West Bengal (2)	135
	Total	1369

Garima Grehs in Jharkhand, Manipur and Madhya Pradesh have been sanctioned during current financial year 2025-26.

ii. Skill development training to 1,631 transgender persons has been provided through various Sectoral Skill Councils etc.

B. Sub-scheme namely 'Comprehensive Rehabilitation of persons engaged in the act of Begging'

Under the Scheme, as of July 2025, 22,410 individuals have been identified as engaged in begging and 3,493 individuals have been rehabilitated. The state-wise number of persons engaged in begging who have received direct benefits, including rehabilitation, skill development, and employment opportunities under the scheme is as under:

S. No.	States/UTs	No. of persons Rehabilitated
1	Andhra Pradesh	250
2	Arunachal Pradesh	62
3	Assam	230
4	Gujarat	138
5	Himachal Pradesh	1
6	J&K	374
7	Karnataka	53
8	Kerala	162
9	Madhya Pradesh	339
10	Maharashtra	86
11	Odisha	100
12	Pudhucherry	30
13	Punjab	7
14	Tamil Nadu	681
15	Telangana	20
16	Uttar Pradesh	960
Total		3,493
