

Social Welfare

Welfare of the Physically/Mentally Challenged

10.83 The Persons with Disability (Equal Opportunities, Protection of Rights and Full Participation) Act 1995 empowers persons with disabilities with the right to demand an enabling environment wherein they can enjoy the protection of rights, equal opportunities and full participation in various developmental activities of the country so as to be self-reliant and productive members of the society.

10.84 A National Programme for Rehabilitation of Persons with Disabilities (NPRPD) is a State Sector Programme to provide rehabilitation services for persons with disabilities, starting from district level to the village level, in a structured manner. Under this scheme, support is extended to the State Governments for setting up of State and District level rehabilitation services. During 2001-02 an amount of Rs.43 crore has been transferred to the States. Five Composite Regional Centres (CRCs) and four Regional Rehabilitation Centres (RRCs) for the persons with spinal injuries have been set up through assistance from the Ministry.

10.85 A National Trust for the Welfare of Persons with Autism, Cerebral Palsy, Mental Retardation and Multiple Disabilities has been set up under the National Trust Act. The Trust seeks to uphold the rights, promote development and safeguard the interests of these groups. A one time contribution of Rs.100 crore from the Central Government towards the Corpus Fund is envisaged out of which Rs.90 crore have already been provided till December, 2001. To facilitate better planning and formulation of holistic and comprehensive welfare schemes for persons with disabilities, disability data has been included as a separate category in Census 2001. Uniform guidelines for issue of Identity Cards to Persons with Disabilities have been circulated to all State/UT Governments.

10.86 A scheme of Assistance to Disabled for Purchase/Fitting of Aids and Appliances (ADIP) is in operation. The implementing agencies are

provided grant-in-aid for purchase, fabrication and distribution of the aids and appliances to persons identified through assessment Camps. An Umbrella Scheme to promote Voluntary Action for Persons with Disabilities is underway and aims at providing education, training and rehabilitation services through the medium of Non-Governmental Organisations. During 2001-02 a Plan allocation of Rs.259 crore has been made available under various schemes for the Welfare of Persons with Disabilities.

Caring for the Other Disadvantaged

10.87 To cater to the well being of older persons, an Integrated Programme for Older Persons has been formulated by reviving the earlier scheme of Assistance to Voluntary Organisations. Financial assistance has been provided by the Ministry to 527 voluntary agencies to set up 331 Old Age Homes, 436 Day Care Centres, 74 Mobile Medicare Units and 2 Non-Institutional Service Centres. The National Policy on Older Persons was adopted in 1999 for the welfare and care of the elderly. To implement this Policy, a National Council for Older Persons (NCOP) has been set up for receiving complaints, grievances and suggestions for older persons. An Action Plan for 2000-05 for implementation of the provisions of the Policy has been finalised and circulated to all States/UTs. A telephone helpline for Older Persons has also been started in Delhi, Ahmedabad and Bhuj.

10.88 To address the problems of street children, an Integrated Programme for Street Children has been formulated under which assistance is provided to voluntary organizations and other agencies to provide a wide range of services such as shelter, nutrition, health, education etc. The Scheme is being implemented in 22 States/UTs through 190 Voluntary Organisations. CHILDLINE, a 24 hours free phone emergency service for children in distress has become operational in 34 cities and is to be extended to 16 cities. So far, this service has responded to 15.50 lakh calls (upto December 31, 2001) since 1998. A National Initiative for Child Protection (NICP) has been launched through the National Institute of Social Defence

and Childline India Foundation. The NICP aims at building partnerships with the allied systems for child protection and promotion of rights of the child. The Central Adoption Resource Agency (CARA) became autonomous in March 1999 and has initiated steps to promote in-country adoption.

Reforming Social Deviants

10.89 The Juvenile Justice (JJ) Act 1986 has been replaced by a new Act called the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act 2000. The new Act makes a distinction between

a child in conflict with law and a child in need of care and protection and seeks to extend the requisite services and safeguards for social and emotional rehabilitation. Under the Scheme of Prevention and Control of Juvenile Social Maladjustment, 522 homes/institutions are receiving government support for care of the child in conflict with law.

10.90 For tackling the problems of alcohol and drug abuse, 88 Counselling Centres and 354 Treatment-cum-Rehabilitation Centres are being supported under the Scheme of Prevention of Alcoholism and Substance (Drugs) Abuse.