



Suggestions: Winter Plan for Persons Living in Homelessness in Delhi

November 2023 to March 2024

Introduction

Persons living in homelessness face severe challenges resulting from the absence of a safe and secure home and from living in precarious conditions. These include violence, poor health, malnutrition, and extreme deprivation and destitution. Delhi's harsh climatic conditions further exacerbate their vulnerabilities. In particular, the winter months from November to March present unique challenges on account of the biting cold in the city, which is insufferable for those living on the streets and presents severe risks to their lives. While Delhi has over 190 shelters for people living in homelessness, it does not sufficiently accommodate the large homeless population, leaving many people to live on the streets.

Every year during winter, the Delhi Urban Improvement Board (DUSIB) carries out a 'Special Drive' and sets up additional tents for homeless persons. However, it does not sufficiently address or cater to the needs and challenges of the large homeless population in Delhi.

Without adequate housing, warm clothes, food, healthcare facilities, and other amenities, people are unable to protect themselves from the bitter cold. Children, older persons, pregnant women, persons living with disabilities, those living with chronic illnesses, including long-Covid, and other vulnerable groups are disproportionately affected by low temperatures. **Between November 2022 to March 2023, at least 1,007 homeless persons in Delhi died due to/ in the absence of adequate shelter.**¹

Based on our work with the homeless community in Delhi, Housing and Land Rights Network (HLRN) has been highlighting the need for season-specific plans for the protection of homeless persons during adverse weather events. To that effect, HLRN conducted several Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) between September and October 2023, with people living in shelters and on streets in multiple locations, including Paper Market (Ghazipur), Sant Nagar, Nehru Place, Sarai Kale Khan, Nizamuddin, and Bangla Sahib among other locations to understand their immediate demands and needs during the winter. The need to provide access to livelihood, social security benefits, and access to permanent, safe, and dignified housing emerged very prominently during the discussions.

¹ Independent experts estimate that at least 65 per cent of Unidentified Dead Bodies are of homeless persons. Zonal Integrated Police Network (ZIPNET) is an online portal containing data and information on crime from seven states, including Delhi, Haryana, Punjab, Rajasthan, Chandigarh, Uttar Pradesh, and, Uttarakhand 'in real-time.' Available at: <https://zipnet.delhipolice.gov.in/index.php?page=about>
Last Accessed on 25 October 2023

We commend the Delhi government for preparing a [Graded Response Action Plan \(GRAP\) for NCR](#) to tackle concerns related to severe air pollution that worsens during the winter months. The plan, however, does not address the disproportionate and severe impact of air pollution on persons living in homelessness. We also commend Delhi Urban Shelter Improvement Board for its continuing intervention to provide free food to the residents of shelters across the city, as it has helped alleviate concerns and challenges related to food security to an extent. However, as recommended previously, homeless persons living on the streets need to be included within the ambit of this provision immediately.

This Winter Plan, which has been prepared in consultation with Delhi’s homeless community presents important recommendations to address their specific challenges. Specific suggestions from homeless women, older persons, persons with disabilities, single men, and families have also been included in this Winter Plan.

A. Need for Additional Shelters before the Onset of Winter

- Carry out a survey/assessment of people living on the streets who need and want to move to temporary shelters for the winter months.
- Based on the needs assessment and mapping, vacant government buildings, including community halls and other vacant spaces, near areas of concentration of homeless persons, should be converted into shelters with adequate facilities.
- In case vacant permanent buildings/rooms/halls are not available close to areas with large concentrations of homeless persons, portable (porta) cabins could be set up on vacant public land, including in parks.
- Consultations with land-owning agencies should be held to ascertain the availability of vacant land and buildings/spaces/structures for establishing homeless shelters. Short-term lease arrangements could be considered with land-owning agencies prior to the onset of winter.
- Tents, such as the fire-resistant tents used in Delhi every winter, should be set up in the vicinity of existing DUSIB shelters, in order to accommodate all persons who need and want to move to temporary shelters for the winter months.
- Where possible, set up clean and usable tents – one per family – in homeless clusters and areas where homeless people live on the streets.

The table below provides an estimate, derived by HLRN, of homeless persons in areas where shelters are required urgently and before the onset of winter.

| | Name of the area | Approximate number of people | Characteristics of the constituency |
|---------------------------|-----------------------------------|------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| I. Southwest Delhi | | | |
| 1. | Mayapuri | 25–30 | Single men |
| 2. | Beri Wala Bagh Market | 100–110 | Single men |
| 3. | Near Deen Dayal Upadhyay Hospital | 60–65 | Single men |
| 4. | Khajan Basti | 70–80 | Single men |
| 5. | Hari Nagar, Ghanta Ghar | 30–35 | Single men |
| 6. | Jail Road | 115–120 | Single men |
| 7. | Lajwanti Garden | 23 | Families |
| 8. | Pankha Road, Kali Madir | 105–110 | Families |

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|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|---------|-------------------------|
| 9. | Dabri Mor | 30–35 | Single men |
| 10. | Uttam Nagar | 60–65 | Single men |
| 11. | Dhauri Pyau | 70–80 | Single men |
| 12. | District Centre | 40–45 | Single men |
| 13. | Tilak Nagar | 60–70 | Single men |
| 14. | Subhash Nagar Mor | 17 | families |
| 15. | Raghubir Nagar | 130 | Families |
| 16. | Raja Garden | 13 | Families |
| 17. | Ramesh Nagar | 16–20 | Single men |
| 18. | Moti Nagar | 20–25 | Single men |
| 19. | Loha Mandi | 30–35 | Single men |
| 20. | Kirti Nagar | 60–70 | Single men |
| 21. | Naraina Vihar | 40–45 | Single men |
| 22. | Inder Puri | 25–30 | Single men |
| 23. | Todapur – Near ITO | 100–110 | Single men |
| II. Central Delhi | | | |
| 24. | Pusa Golchakkar (Roundabout) | 20–30 | Single men |
| 25. | New Rajendra Nagar | 60–70 | Families and Single men |
| 26. | Rajendra Place | 60–70 | Single men |
| 27. | Near Sir Ganga Ram Hospital | 50–55 | Single men |
| 28. | Pusa Road | 30–40 | Single men |
| 29. | Padam Singh Golchakkar (Roundabout) | 53 | Families |
| 30. | Karol Bagh, Hanuman Mandir | 30–40 | Single men |
| 31. | Gaffar Market | 60–70 | Single men |
| 32. | Nai Walan | 30–35 | Single men |
| 33. | Regar Pura | 60–70 | Single men |
| 34. | Tank Road Market | 40–45 | Single men |
| 35. | Liberty Cinema | 100 | Families |
| 36. | Near Ajmal Khan Park and Road | 30–35 | Single men |
| 37. | Gaushala Road | 30–35 | Single men |
| 38. | Karol Bagh Terminal | 15 | Families |
| 39. | Mukherjee Market | 60–70 | Single men |
| 40. | Near Telephone Exchange | 40–45 | Single men |
| 41. | Jhandewalan Metro | 30–35 | Single men |
| 42. | Panchkuian Road | 60–70 | Single men |
| 43. | Paharganj 6 Tooti Chowk | 30–35 | Single men |
| 44. | Aaram Bagh | 20–25 | Single men |
| 45. | Kamla Market | 200–205 | Single men |
| 46. | Ajmeri Gate | 60–70 | Single men |
| 47. | G.B. Road | 100–110 | Single men |
| 48. | Sharadhanand Market | 60–64 | Single men |
| 49. | Khari Baoli | 100–110 | Single men |
| 50. | Naya Bazar | 60–70 | Single men |
| 51. | Bagh Deewar | 30–35 | Single men |
| 52. | Kacha Bagh | 100–120 | Single men |
| 53. | Vankhandi Mandir | 60–70 | Single men |
| 54. | Fawara Chowk | 100–105 | Single men |
| 55. | Bhagirath Palace | 200–210 | Single men |

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| 56. | Cycle Market | 100–105 | Single men |
| 57. | Parade Ground | 60–70 | Single men |
| 58. | Gali Guliyani | 60–70 | Single men |
| 59. | Chawri Bazaar | 100–110 | Single men |
| 60. | Sitaram Bazaar | 30–35 | Single men |
| 61. | Himmatgarh Chowk | 40–45 | Single men |
| 62. | Asaf Ali Road | 150–155 | Single men |
| 63. | Lok Nayak Hospital | 200+ | Single men |
| 64. | Takiya Kale Khan | 100–110 | Single men |
| 65. | Meena Bazaar | 190–200 | Single men |
| 66. | Subhash Park | 35–40 | Single men |
| 67. | Kasturba Hospital | 50–60 | Single men |
| 68. | Pataudi House | 60–70 | Single men |
| 69. | Darya Ganj | 30–35 | Single men |
| 70. | Ansari Road | 60–70 | Single men |
| 71. | Delhi Gate | 40–45 | Single men |
| 72. | Sunheri Masjid | 20–23 | Single men |
| III. North Delhi | | | |
| 73. | Yamuna Bazaar | 200–210 | Single men |
| 74. | Yamuna Pushta | 400–450 | Single men |
| 75. | Qudsia Ghat | 100–110 | Single men |
| 76. | Monastery Market | 140–150 | Single men |
| 77. | Geeta Ghat | 30–35 | Single men |
| 78. | Kashmere Gate | 100–110 | Single men |
| 79. | Chota Bazaar | 60–70 | Single men |
| 80. | Bada Bazaar | 60–65 | Single men |
| 81. | Hamilton Road | 30–35 | Single men |
| 82. | Nicholson road | 40–45 | Single men |
| 83. | Mori Gate Golchakkar (Roundabout) | 60–70 | Single men |
| 84. | Mori Gate Terminal | 60–70 | Single men |
| 85. | Rajendra Market | 80–85 | Single men |
| 86. | Khanna Market | 100–110 | Single men |
| 87. | Pul Mithai | 150–155 | Single men |
| 88. | Sarai Fools, Kali Mandir | 25–30 | Single men |
| 89. | Azad Market | 60–70 | Single men |
| 90. | Barf Khana | 30–35 | Single men |
| 91. | Roshanara Road | 60–65 | Single men |
| 92. | Sabzi Mandi Ghanta Ghar | 40–45 | Single men |
| 93. | Kamla Nagar | 30–35 | Single men |
| 94. | Nagia Park | 35–40 | Single men |
| 95. | Pratap Bagh Gur Mandi | 30–35 | Single men |
| 96. | Sawan Park | 20–25 | Single men |
| 97. | Azadpur | 80–85 | Single men |
| 98. | Azadpur Mandi | Over 800 | Single men |
| 99. | Model Town | 60–65 | Families |
| 100. | Camp | 30–35 | Single men |
| 101. | Khyber Pass | 30–35 | Single men |
| 102. | Majnu Ka Tila | 40–45 | Single men |
| 103. | Timarpur | 25–30 | Single men |

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| 104. | Lucknow Road | 15–29 | Single men |
| IV. East Delhi | | | |
| 105. | Khajuri | 40–45 | Single men |
| 106. | Bhajanpura | 30–35 | Single men |
| 107. | Gokalpuri | 40–50 | Single men |
| 108. | Loni | 30–35 | Single men |
| 109. | Durgapuri Chowk | 40–45 | Single men |
| 110. | Seelampuri | 30–40 | Single men |
| 111. | Maujpur Jaffrabad | 20–25 | Single men |
| 112. | Welcome | 15–20 | Single men |
| 113. | Shyam Lal College | 30–35 | Single men |
| 114. | Shahdara | 60–65 | Single men |
| 115. | Shastri Park | 70–80 | Single men |
| 116. | Usmanpur | 60–65 | Single men |
| 117. | Gandhi Nagar | 70–80 | Single men |
| 118. | Geeta Colony Near Shamshan Ghat | 30–35 | Single men |
| 119. | Jheel | 40–45 | Single men |
| 120. | Geeta Colony | 60–70 | Single men |
| 121. | Khureji | Over 30 | Single men |
| 122. | Nirman Vihar | 20–25 | Single men |
| 123. | Near S.D.M. Office | 60–65 | Single men |
| 124. | Laxmi Nagar | 30–35 | Single men |
| 125. | Akshardham | 70–80 | Single men |
| 126. | Mayur Vihar Phase 1 | 35–40 | Single men |
| 127. | Trikolpuri | 40–45 | Single men |
| 128. | Khichdipur | 35–40 | Single men |
| 129. | Kalyan Puri | 30–35 | Single men |
| 130. | Ghazipur Paper Market | 130 | Families |
| 131. | Anand Vihar | Over 500 | Single men |
| 132. | Apsara Border | Over 500 | Single men |
| 133. | Jhilmil | 60–65 | Single men |
| 134. | Karkardooma | 20–21 | Families |
| 135. | Jagatpuri | 70–75 | Families |
| 136. | Soran Cinema | 60–65 | Single men |
| 137. | Ganesh Nagar | 15–20 | Single men |
| 138. | Mayur Vihar Extension | 35–40 | Single men |
| 139. | Gagan Cinema | 60–65 | Single men |
| 140. | Near GTB Hospital | 100+ | Single men |
| 141. | Seema Puri | 50–55 | Single men |
| 142. | New Seema Puri | 30–35 | Single men |
| V. South Delhi | | | |
| 143. | Jamia Nagar Metro | 15–16 | Families |
| 144. | Taimur Nagar | 5–6 | Families |
| 145. | Maharani Bagh | 30–35 | Single men |
| 146. | Lajpat Nagar | 40–45 | Single men |
| 147. | Garhi | 20–25 | Single men |
| 148. | Okhla Mandi | 60–70 | Single men |
| 149. | Sarita Vihar | 40–45 | Families |
| 150. | Badarpur | 60–70 | Families |

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| 151. | Modi Mill | 20–25 | Families |
| 152. | Nehru Place | 40–45 | Families |
| 153. | Kalkaji | 60–65 | Single men |
| 154. | Chirag Delhi | 5–6 | Families |
| 155. | Near Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Gate | 7–8 | Families |
| 156. | Ber Sarai | 6–7 | Families |
| 157. | Katwaria Sarai | 7–8 | Families |
| 158. | Malviya Nagar | 30–35 | Single men |
| 159. | Saket | 60–65 | Single men |
| 160. | Munirka | 40–45 | Single men |
| 161. | R.K.Puram | 30–35 | Single men |
| 162. | Moti Bagh | 7–8 | Families |
| 163. | Sarojini Nagar | 30–35 | Single men |
| 164. | Safdarjung | 20–25 | Single men |
| 165. | I.N.A. | 60–65 | Single men |
| 166. | Near All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) | Over 500 | Single men |
| 167. | Moolchand | 40–45 | Single men |
| 168. | Nizamuddin | 110-120 30 | Single men Families |
| 169. | Barahpullah | 65–70 | Single men |
| 170. | Bhogal | 30–35 | Single men |
| 171. | Kilokri | 20–25 | Single men |
| 172. | Sarai Kale Khan | 33 | Families |
| 173. | Sai Mandir, Lodhi Road | 16 | Single men |
| VI. Northwest Delhi | | | |
| 174. | Nangloi | 30–35 | Single men |
| 175. | Peeragarhi | 35–40 | Single men |
| 176. | Mangolpuri | 30–40 | Single men |
| 177. | Sultanpuri | 35–40 | Single men |
| 178. | Patthar Market | 60–65 | Single men |
| 179. | Avantika Chowk | 70–80 | Single men |
| 180. | Kali Mandir | 50–60 | Single men |
| 181. | Madhuban Chowk | 30–35 | Single men |
| 182. | Rohini East Metro | 30–35 | Single men |
| 183. | Rohini West Metro | 40–45 | Single men |
| 184. | Rithala | 60–65 | Single men |
| 185. | Rohini Sector 18 | 40–45 | Single men |
| 186. | Haiderpur | 35–40 | Single men |
| 187. | Kela Godam | 60–70 | Single men |
| 188. | Wazirpur | 35–40 | Single men |
| 189. | T.V. Tower | 80–85 | Single men |
| 190. | Rani Bagh | 35–40 | Single men |
| 191. | Britannia Chowk | 19 | Families |
| 192. | Punjabi Bagh | 20–25 | Single men |
| 193. | Madipur | 60–65 | Single men |
| 194. | Madipur Sajjan Lal Park | 60–65 | Single men |
| 195. | Karampura | 35–40 | Single men |

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| 196. | Paschim Vihar | 20–25 | Single men |
| 197. | Keshavpur | 60–70 | Single men |
| 198. | Vikaspuri Macchi Market | 50–60 | Single men |
| 199. | Rampura | 35–40 | Single men |
| 200. | Inderlok Cooler Market | 60–70 | Single men |
| 201. | Shastri Nagar | 30–35 | Single men |
| 202. | Pratap Nagar | 20–25 | Single men |
| 203. | Inderlok | 20–25 | Single men |
| 204. | Jakhira | 40–50 | Single men |
| VII. New Delhi | | | |
| 205. | Press Club | 15–20 | Single men |
| 206. | Janpath Road | 30–40 | Single men |
| 207. | Janpath Road Mandir | 30–35 | Single men |
| 208. | Cannought Place Hanuman Mandir | 40–50 | Single men |
| 209. | Near Bangla Sahib Gurudwara | 30–35 | Single men |
| 210. | Near Rakab Ganj Gurudwara | 30–35 | Single men |
| 211. | Near Ram Manohar Lohia Hospital | 70–80 | Single men |
| 212. | Gol Dak Khana | 30–35 | Single men |
| 213. | Kali Mandir | 12–130 | Families |
| 214. | Gole Market | 80–90 | Single men |
| 215. | Kali Bari | 35–40 | Single men |
| 216. | Basant Lane | 100–110 | Single men |

Source of data: Rapid assessment by Housing and Land Rights Network (September and October 2023)

B. Need for Improved Facilities and Services in Existing and New Shelters and for Persons Living on the Streets

Adequate Space, Hygiene, and Services in Shelters

- Take steps to ensure and maintain high standards of hygiene and cleanliness of additional tents being set up as a part of the special drive conducted by DUSIB. Undertake timely and regular inspections of all tent shelters and ensure that mattresses, bed sheets, quilts, and pillows being distributed are sanitized and disinfected at multiple intervals.
- Provide sufficient and clean blankets, mattresses, bed sheets, quilts, and pillows in all permanent and temporary shelters. Currently, blankets are not reserved for users but are shared by different people. This promotes the spread of infection and disease. In order to reserve the use of sheets and blankets for one user, one way could be to provide beds in shelters and allocate a specific bed/mattress per person – that will be used regularly by that person.
- Ensure regular disinfection and cleaning of all shelters (temporary and permanent), toilets, bathrooms, bedding, common areas, and utilities.
- Ensure adequate water supply for drinking, bathing, and washing clothes and other personal items. During the winter months, provide facilities for warm water in each shelter.
- Provide adequate heating facilities through electric and gas heaters in each shelter.
- Ensure adequate ventilation in all shelters.

- Establish sufficient and functional toilets with adequate water and sanitation facilities with regular and sufficient cleaning. In case sanitation facilities cannot be set up near temporary tents, facilitate access of homeless persons to public toilets and sanitation facilities in other shelters.
- In family shelters, provide privacy and safety by creating partitions for each family and improving the design of such shelters. Existing shelters can be redesigned similar to the family shelter in Dwarka, Sector –3, Phase III (Code Number 195) with individual cabins and partitions. A large number of families in Delhi do not move into shelters because of the lack of privacy and safety and the absence of storage facilities.
- To address the specific concerns of homeless persons with disabilities, ensure that there is adequate space in the tent shelters for wheelchairs, cycles, and other related equipment.
- Take steps to ensure the safety and security of all persons and their belongings in all temporary and permanent shelters.
- Provide information on shelters, including the location and capacity, to the homeless community through advertisements, oral announcements, and other modes, in local languages.

Healthcare and Medical Services for Residents of Shelters and those Living on the Streets

- Ensure that Mobile Medical Health vans visit all shelters (permanent and temporary), and homeless clusters on a bi-weekly basis, at least.
- Ensure comprehensive First-Aid kits in every shelter.
- Provide adequate vector control devices/facilities in each shelter.
- Ensure adequate and sufficient supply of soaps, sanitizers, and disinfectants.
- Prioritize medical treatment of older persons, children, pregnant/lactating women, infants and persons with chronic illnesses.
- Provide mental-health services and psycho-social counselling to all homeless persons, including those living in shelters.

Provision of Food and Measures to Uphold the Human Right to Food

- Continue the provision of free food for homeless persons living in shelters.
- Expand the ambit of the provision of free food to homeless persons living on the streets. This could be done in collaboration with Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) by setting up community kitchens in areas of high concentration of homeless persons. This would ensure the distribution of free or subsidized nutritious food to homeless persons who do not live in shelters and help build their immunity, prevent them from falling ill and losing their lives.
- Provide free milk to homeless children and pregnant women to ensure their adequate nutrition.
- Ensure the provision of ration cards to homeless persons, including those living on the streets, to enable them to access subsidized essential food grains and supplies.

Protecting the Rights of Shelter Caretakers

- Uphold the right to work of shelter caretakers, including fixing work hours, paying adequate wages, and providing them with a weekly day off. Ensure that ‘relievers’ are appointed so that regular caretakers can take a break.

Social Protection Measures

- Undertake measures to provide social security and pension to homeless persons. Special care must be taken of older persons living on their own.
- Provide all residents of DUSIB shelters with ‘Shelter User Identity Cards.’ These should be recognized as a valid form of official identification. Any directives given to create and maintain databases of homeless persons, including those in shelters and temporary buildings, should not result in the violation of the right to privacy.
- Conduct skill–training workshops for homeless persons in shelters and take measures to link them with job portals and other livelihood opportunities.
- As recommended earlier by HLRN, the Delhi government could consider initiating a pilot project to provide a Universal Basic Income to all homeless persons. This would greatly help in preventing hunger, ill health, and destitution. It would also set a positive precedent for the rest of the country.

Monitoring and Information

- Ensure comprehensive protocols to deal with emergencies, including health emergencies, are prepared in each shelter, in consultation with caretakers and Shelter Management Agencies (SMAs). Organize a training workshop in consultation with all SMAs for shelter caretakers on the protocols.
- Ensure that all ‘rescue’ efforts undertaken by DUISB are carried out with the consent and participation of all persons.
- Create a Monitoring Committee to supervise the functioning of shelters and the quality of services provided. As stated previously by DUSIB, this Committee could include the DUSIB Chief Executive Officer, Executive Members, representatives from Shelter Management Agencies, non–government organizations, officials from the Delhi Jal Board, Health Department, Municipal Corporations, and the Delhi Police. The Committee should undertake frequent inspections of shelters and meet regularly to discuss issues of concern and publish recommendations made to the Delhi government on the DUSIB website.

Conclusion

Housing and Land Rights Network presents this plan for the upcoming winter with specific suggestions to address concerns related to housing, livelihoods, food, safety, and security of the homeless community in Delhi. We would also like to take this opportunity to urge the Delhi government to develop a long–term plan to address and end homelessness in the city. This can be done only through adequate investment in housing for homeless persons using the ‘Housing First’ approach that has been adopted in many countries. This is the only solution to ensure the dignity of Delhi’s working poor and to enable people to live in safety and security while protecting their fundamental right to life. As a step towards providing adequate housing across a ‘continuum of housing options’, rental vouchers could be provided to those who cannot be accommodated in existing shelters.

Housing and Land Rights Network is committed to working for the human rights of all those living in homelessness and also to working with the Delhi government in this endeavour. We thank the Delhi government for its consideration, efforts, and support.²

² For more information, please contact us at: contact@hlrn.org.in