

A Study of **SHELTERS FOR THE
URBAN HOMELESS (SUH)** in
VARANASI

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SAATH

Creating Inclusive Societies

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1. Survey Methodology

A Primary survey has been conducted in all the night shelters based on the list of the night shelters collected from the Varanasi Municipal Corporation. It was a questionnaire which aims to collect comprehensive details of the night shelter facilities based on the condition and supply of basic infrastructure required in them referring to standards provided under the “Scheme of Shelters for Urban Homeless, Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana - (Revised Operational Guidelines)”.

The questionnaire has been filled based on the answers received from the night shelter managers and visual observations of the surveyors.

2. Number of Night Shelters

As per the collected list from Varanasi municipal corporation there are total 12 night shelters in the city. The report analyses the current condition of these shelters and give detailed information about them. The list of these night shelters is given below:

Table 1: General Details of the Night Shelters.

Sr. No.	Name	Location	Type
1	Night Shelter City Station	Usmanpura	Ordinary
2	Night Shelter Nehru Market	Nehru Market	Ordinary
3	Night Shelter Cant Purana Maal Godam	Varanasi Cantt	Ordinary
4	Night Shelter Lahartara Gate no.4	Gate no 4 Lahartara	Ordinary
5	Night Shelter Shivdaspur	Maduwadih	Special
6	Night Shelter Ghasiyaritola Durgakund	Ghasiyaritola Durgakund	Ordinary
7	Night Shelter Chowk Ward Chowki	Beniya Park	Ordinary
8	Night Shelter Town Hall	Town hall Maidagin	Ordinary
9	Night Shelter Alaipur Golgadda	Alaipura Golgadda	Ordinary
10	Night Shelter Kotwali Ward Chowki	Town hall Maidagin	Ordinary
11	Night Shelter Shivpur Chungi	Shivpur Chungi	Ordinary
12	Shelter Home Adampur Safai Chowki	Alaipura Golgadda	Unavailable

On site it was noted that only 11 night shelters are operational, Night Shelter Adampur safai Chowki is not present. There is only one special night shelter which provides accommodation facilities to children from 1 to 10 years while night shelter Town hall remains closed in summer season. This raises the concern regarding the supply of night shelters demand and ignorance of homeless women which constitute a huge number to the homeless population.

On the other hand, Shivpur Chungi shelter has been demolished to pool land for road widening. In this way, only 10 are working throughout the year.

During the primary survey, it was found that there is no Adampur Safai chowk shelter at present in Alaipur Golgadda while Kotwali ward chowki is the night shelter Town Hall. Also, night shelter Shivpur Chungi has been demolished under road widening.

3. Accommodation Facility

It was observed during the survey that the shelters are offering a mattress with an approximate area of 18 square feet per person and during the winter season, even this is reduced as mattress are shared among the people. This shows the lack of accommodation in the facilities and neglecting the desired standard of 50 feet square per person (Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs, 2018).

Only four (City station, Nehru market, Purana maal godam and Shivdaspur) out of ten shelters have full or occupancy rate which can be a result of their location, infrastructure condition and awareness of their existence to the local citizens. These four shelters are located in prominent public spaces like railway station or market which draw huge crowd.

All the shelter provides the accommodation facility free of cost but the visitor must have a Government Identity Proof (like Adhar card, PAN card and Driving License, etc.) to stay there.

Table 2: Accommodation Details of the Night Shelters.

Sr. No.	Name	No. of Beds	Occupancy Rate
1	Night Shelter City Station	14	14
2	Night Shelter Nehru Market	12	12
3	Night Shelter Cant Purana Maal Godam	15	15
4	Night Shelter Lahartara Gate no.4	6	2
5	Night Shelter Shivdaspur	20	25
6	Night Shelter Ghasiyaritola Durgakund	15	5
7	Night Shelter Chowk Ward Chowki	8	2
8	Night Shelter Town Hall	8	0
9	Night Shelter Alaipur Golgadda	10	7
10	Night Shelter Kotwali Ward Chowki	Unavailable	Unavailable
11	Night Shelter Shivpur Chungi	Unavailable	Unavailable
12	Shelter Home Adampur Safai Chowki	Unavailable	Unavailable

4. Visitors Profile

Table 3: Visitors Details of the Night Shelters.

Sr. No.	Name	No. of Female per day	No. of Male per day	No. of Children per day
1	Night Shelter City Station	5	5	2
2	Night Shelter Nehru Market	3	9	1
3	Night Shelter Cant Purana Maal Godam	0	10	0
4	Night Shelter Lahartara Gate no.4	0	2	0
5	Night Shelter Shivdaspur	10	15	25
6	Night Shelter Ghasiyaritola Durgakund	0	5	0
7	Night Shelter Chowk Ward Chowki	0	2	0
8	Night Shelter Town Hall	0	0	0
9	Night Shelter Alaipur Golgadda	0	7	0
10	Night Shelter Kotwali Ward Chowki	Unavailable	Unavailable	Unavailable
11	Night Shelter Shivpur Chungi	Unavailable	Unavailable	Unavailable
12	Shelter Home Adampur Safai Chowki	Unavailable	Unavailable	Unavailable

This also shows that there are more male single migrants rather than families or females who come to the Varanasi for job opportunities and develop a source of income. The night shelter Shivdaspur also provides education to the children coming from the nearby slum area but no one stays in the shelter at night.

5. Infrastructure Assessment

5.1. Water Supply

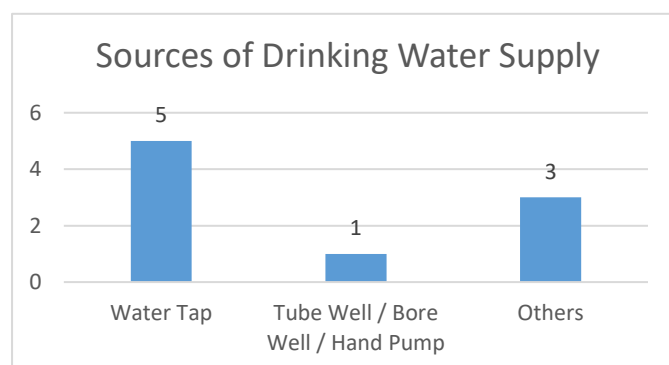


Figure 1: Sources of Drinking Water in the Night Shelters

5 out of 9 shelters have drinking water facility within the premises as water taps from treated source supplied by Varanasi municipal corporation with 4 to 6 hours' duration of water supply. On the other hand, 3 night shelters rely on water cans supply and 1 uses nearby handpump with medium occupancy. This shows the inadequate supply of drinking water at the shelters.

Table 4: Sources of Drinking Water in the Night Shelters.

Sr. No.	Name	Source of Water Supply	Number of Water Taps or Handpumps	Duration of Water Supply (If Piped)
1	Night Shelter City Station	Water Tap	1	4 - 6 Hrs
2	Night Shelter Nehru Market	Others	0	
3	Night Shelter Cant Purana Maal Godam	Water Tap	1	4 - 6 Hrs
4	Night Shelter Lahartara Gate no.4	Others	0	
5	Night Shelter Shivdaspur	Water Tap	1	4 - 6 Hrs
6	Night Shelter Ghasiyaritola Durgakund	Tube Well / Bore Well / Hand Pump	1	
7	Night Shelter Chowk Ward Chowki	Water Tap	1	4 - 6 Hrs
8	Night Shelter Town Hall	Water Tap	1	4 - 6 Hrs
9	Night Shelter Alaipur Golgadda	Others	0	
10	Night Shelter Kotwali Ward Chowki	Unavailable	Unavailable	Unavailable
11	Night Shelter Shivpur Chungi	Unavailable	Unavailable	Unavailable
12	Shelter Home Adampur Safai Chowki	Unavailable	Unavailable	Unavailable

5.2. Sanitation

In Varanasi, every night shelter has its own toilet with in the premises but 5 of them are only in fine condition in aspects of cleanliness and maintenance while 3 are in bad condition because of scarcity of water and uncleanliness while the Ghasiyaritola Durgakund shelter's toilet is in very bad condition as it depends on nearby hand pump for water. Assuming them to be a community toilet, there is an

adequate supply of them based on the occupancy rate in the shelters, i.e. (1 seat for 35 men and 1 seat for 25 women) but there is a complete ignorance of gender based demand (MoUD, 2014). There are no separate toilets for men and women even after the availability of two toilets. There are no sign boards distinguishing the toilets for different sex. This raises the concern of security of women staying in the shelters.

Table 5: Sanitation Facility in the Night Shelters.

Sr. No.	Name	Number of Water Closets	Condition of Water Closet
1	Night Shelter City Station	2	Fine
2	Night Shelter Nehru Market	2	Fine
3	Night Shelter Cant Purana Maal Godam	2	Bad
4	Night Shelter Lahartara Gate no.4	2	Bad
5	Night Shelter Shivdaspur	3	Fine
6	Night Shelter Ghasiyaritola Durgakund	1	Very bad
7	Night Shelter Chowk Ward Chowki	1	Fine
8	Night Shelter Town Hall	2	Fine
9	Night Shelter Alaipur Golgadda	2	Bad
10	Night Shelter Kotwali Ward Chowki	Unavailable	Unavailable
11	Night Shelter Shivpur Chungi	Unavailable	Unavailable
12	Shelter Home Adampur Safai Chowki	Unavailable	Unavailable

5.3. Bathroom Facility

In Varanasi, every night shelter has its own toilet with in the premises but 5 of them are only in fine condition in aspects of cleanliness and maintenance while 3 are in bad condition because of scarcity of water and uncleanliness while the Ghasiyaritola Durgakund shelter's toilet is in very bad condition as it depends on nearby hand pump for water. Although, there are sign boards or separation for males and females which affects the security of the female visitors.

Table 6: Bathroom Facility Details in the Night Shelters.

Sr. No.	Name	Number of Water Closets	Condition of Water Closet
1	Night Shelter City Station	1	Fine
2	Night Shelter Nehru Market	2	Fine
3	Night Shelter Cant Purana Maal Godam	2	Bad
4	Night Shelter Lahartara Gate no.4	2	Bad
5	Night Shelter Shivdaspur	2	Fine
6	Night Shelter Ghasiyaritola Durgakund	1	Very bad
7	Night Shelter Chowk Ward Chowki	1	Fine
8	Night Shelter Town Hall	2	Fine
9	Night Shelter Alaipur Golgadda	2	Bad
10	Night Shelter Kotwali Ward Chowki	Unavailable	Unavailable
11	Night Shelter Shivpur Chungi	Unavailable	Unavailable
12	Shelter Home Adampur Safai Chowki	Unavailable	Unavailable

5.4. Other Facilities

Lighting condition of every night shelter is in fine condition but there is unavailability of other essential facilities in most of the shelters. Only, Shivdaspur night shelter is well equipped with adequate fire protection measures while only two of them have first aid kit facility.

Five out nine operational shelters are still lagging behind to provide pest and vector (mosquito) control. Still six shelters still fail to provide locker facilities, even those which are in most prominent public spaces like railway station or market which draw huge crowd. Even the Shivdaspur night shelter has no common recreational spaces for children who study there.

The overall picture of the condition of night shelter clearly reveals that other Shivdaspur night shelter, most of the shelter still need to improve their condition and provide basis facilities.

Table 7: Other Facilities Details in the Night Shelters.

Sr. No.	Name	Lighting Condition	Fire protection measures	First Aid Kit	Pest and vector control.	Common Kitchen	Personal Locker	Common Recreational Space
1	Night Shelter City Station	Fine	No	No	Yes	No	No	No
2	Night Shelter Nehru Market	Good	No	No	No	Yes	No	No
3	Night Shelter Cant Purana Maal Godam	Fine	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	No
4	Night Shelter Lahartara Gate no.4	Fine	No	No	No	No	Yes	No
5	Night Shelter Shivdaspur	Fine	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
6	Night Shelter Ghasiyaritola Durgakund	Fine	No	No	No	No	Yes	No
7	Night Shelter Chowk Ward Chowki	Fine	No	No	No	No	No	No
8	Night Shelter Town Hall	Good	No	No	No	No	Yes	No
9	Night Shelter Alaipur Golgadda	Fine	No	No	Yes	No	No	No
10	Night Shelter Kotwali Ward Chowki	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
11	Night Shelter Shivpur Chungi	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
12	Shelter Home Adampur Safai Chowki	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA

6. Operation and Maintenance

Night Shelters Shivdasपुर and Cantt Purana Maal Godam are two shelters which are managed and operated NGOs Shramik Seva Samiti and Krishak Mahila Griha respectively and have one full time manager while other shelters which are maintained by Varanasi Municipal Corporation have no one on this position.

Five shelters still have less than 3 caregivers (less than the standard as per Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs, 2018) but their shift timings are 10 hours or more. They maintain and clean mattresses and sheets mostly 1 to 2 times in a week.

Table 8: Operation and Maintenance Details in the Night Shelters.

Sr. No.	Name	Maintained by	Fulltime Manager	No. of Caregivers	Time of the Shift	Cleaning of Mattresses and Sheets
1	Night Shelter City Station	Varanasi Municipal Corporation	No	5	More than 10 hours	1 - 2 times in a month
2	Night Shelter Nehru Market	Varanasi Municipal Corporation	No	2	More than 10 hours	1 - 2 times in a month
3	Night Shelter Cant Purana Maal Godam	Shramik Seva Samiti (NGO)	Yes	3	8 - 10 hours	1 - 2 times in a month
4	Night Shelter Lahartara Gate no.4	Varanasi Municipal Corporation	No	2	More than 10 hours	1 - 2 times in a month
5	Night Shelter Shivdasपुर	Krishak Mahila Griha (NGO)	Yes	8	6 - 8 hours	1 - 2 times in a week
6	Night Shelter Ghasiyaritola Durgakund	Varanasi Municipal Corporation	No	3	More than 10 hours	1 - 2 times in a week
7	Night Shelter Chowk Ward Chowki	Varanasi Municipal Corporation	No	2	8 - 10 hours	1 - 2 times in a month
8	Night Shelter Town Hall	Varanasi Municipal Corporation	No	2	8 - 10 hours	1 - 2 times in a year
9	Night Shelter Alaipur Golgadda	Varanasi Municipal Corporation	No	2	More than 10 hours	3 - 4 times in a week
10	Night Shelter Kotwali Ward Chowki	Varanasi Municipal Corporation	NA	NA	NA	NA
11	Night Shelter Shivpur Chungi	Varanasi Municipal Corporation	NA	NA	NA	NA
12	Shelter Home Adampur Safai Chowki	Varanasi Municipal Corporation	NA	NA	NA	NA

6.1. Collection of Records

6.1.1. Attendance Register

Every night shelter has attendance records of their staff member. Although, in absence of a full time manager in many shelter its veracity is still ambiguous.

6.1.2. Maintenance Register

Only Shivdaspur and Purana Maal Godam night shelter are maintaining their maintenance register while shelters have kept no such records.

6.1.3. Suggestion and Complaint Register

Only Shivdaspur and Purana Maal Godam night shelter are maintaining their maintenance register while shelters have kept no such records.

Table 9: Record Collection Details in the Night Shelters.

Sr. No.	Name	Attendance Register	Maintenance Register	Suggestion and Complaint Register
1	Night Shelter City Station	Yes	No	No
2	Night Shelter Nehru Market	Yes	No	No
3	Night Shelter Cant Purana Maal Godam	Yes	Yes	Yes
4	Night Shelter Lahartara Gate no.4	Yes	No	No
5	Night Shelter Shivdaspur	Yes	Yes	Yes
6	Night Shelter Ghasiyaritola Durgakund	Yes	No	No
7	Night Shelter Chowk Ward Chowki	Yes	No	Yes
8	Night Shelter Town Hall	Yes	No	Yes
9	Night Shelter Alaipur Golgadda	Yes	No	No
10	Night Shelter Kotwali Ward Chowki	NA	NA	NA
11	Night Shelter Shivpur Chungi	NA	NA	NA
12	Shelter Home Adampur Safai Chowki	NA	NA	NA

7. Conclusion

Comparing the number of shelters and homeless citizens, there is still need to construct more night shelters with essential facilities. Existing shelters which are operated and maintained by the Varanasi municipal corporation are mostly in unsatisfactory and miserable condition which require special attention to improve the living condition of the homeless people in terms of housing.

Many shelters are failing to fulfil basic infrastructure need like drinking water within the premises or sanitation. There is a huge need to appoint full time manager to enhance the current situation.