



# “ADDRESSING HOMELESSNESS”



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# We Don't Need Coins, We Need Change!

According to an article published by the *Guardian Australia* in 2019, the low rate of Newstart is making the situation worse in the country. The majority of people experiencing homelessness are adults under the age of 25 and women aged 55 and above. In 2018, there was a significant increase in people who presented themselves at a homelessness agency. But the recent COVID-19 pandemic has proved to be an “*Out of the pan, into the fire*” situation for this issue. The looming rent bomb because of the protections against evictions in the past few months is a big problem that needs to be addressed that safeguards renters as well as landlords. This problem is not only concerned with people who are currently living without shelter but it has expanded its wings to those who are on the verge of experiencing homelessness. It needs more effort than just improving the housing system. People experiencing these serious community issues of sleeping rough and homelessness do not need coins from us, they need a change within our system, they need change within working principles of local bodies who holds the responsibilities to eradicate this problem from its root because leaves of a tree are green only when we take care of the roots, not just the branches.

# They Can't But We Can!

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Complex problems like this need greater force to be wiped off. Greater force comes with collaboration. Government across South Australia and Australia are working towards these goals and thanks to other bodies that are taking voluntary actions to address the issue. But a pitfall in our system is that we are not working together simultaneously with a greater force to make an impact visible to the community. For this, it is recommended that all independent bodies including NGOs, Real Estate Agencies, Healthcare Organizations, and Governments come together with a highly advanced and approved "Great Impact" action plan that will enable us to eliminate homelessness. Following points highlight the work required from each of these organizations to function collectively:

- ◆ *NGOs*: Running awareness campaigns and collecting donations
- ◆ *Real Estate Agencies*: Provide data of impacted tenants
- ◆ *Healthcare Organisations*: Providing healthcare to the people who cannot afford these services
- ◆ *Government*: Working in collaboration with all of them to implement real strategies and providing ground support to each person without shelter.

# Within the Problem, Lies the Solution

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Poverty is the ground that augments several problems including homelessness. But this disadvantage can be turned into an opportunity. As per the report published in *The Guardian* by *Helen Davidson* in 2017 pointed out that 1 out of 3 young people is unemployed or underemployed. If we use the unemployed youth who are currently facing homelessness to work for the government's housing schemes to build those affordable houses which will be their place of shelter shortly. This is a two-way advantage for the government as well as the unemployed youth. Application of this strategy will harness the youth's ability to carry out daily tasks of building the houses and get paid so that they do not sleep empty stomach and this way government will be able to decrease the unemployment rate plus easy and cheap labor will be available as compared to high-cost construction agencies that charge more for the same amount of labor work.

## The Final Note

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The recommendations made above are not definitely easy to implement. But a sense-making attribute would suffice. The Adelaide Zero Project is a great initiative to get rid of this issue and by the implementation of the above-mentioned strategies, it can gain much power to stabilize the current number of people sleeping rough and without shelter. In these unprecedented times of crisis, we should be ready to embrace alternative approaches to serve the needs of these people. With wide support from various organizations, Adelaide Zero Project can bring down the number of homeless people in the city and South Australia by collaborating and working simultaneously with all active bodies and governments across Australia. Looking at the proactive functioning of the Adelaide Zero Project, we will be able to address this issue very soon and there will be no person sleeping on the streets of Adelaide without shelter by 2020. The aim is to change the perception of people from a traditional to a broader view of being homeless - ***"We do not need coins, we need change"***.