

संघराज्यप्रशासन, लद्दाख



ग्रामीणविकासएवंपंचायतीराजविभाग

THE ADMINISTRATION OF
UNION TERRITORY OF LADAKH

RURAL DEVELOPMENT & PR DEPARTMENT

File No. A/1696/2025-RD&PR SECTION/39-40

ई-मेल/email:admsecyutl@gmail.com/secyrddutl@ladakh.gov.in
Tele/Fax: 01982-255567, 255568

यूटीसचिवालय, लेह /UT Secretariat, Leh.
Dated: -21.04.2026

State Informatics Officer (SIO)
UT of Ladakh.

Subject: Seeking Comments and Observation on Operation & Maintenance (O&M) Policy Swachh Bharat Mission (Gramin), UT Ladakh from the General Public and Stakeholders.

Sir,

Kindly find enclosed the captioned subject draft "**Operation & Maintenance (O&M) Policy Swachh Bharat Mission (Gramin), UT Ladakh**" to be notified in the Union Territory of Ladakh for uploading of the same on the district LAHDC Leh and Kargil as well as on the UT of Ladakh website seeking comments and observation on the same within Fifteen Days (15) for favour of further necessary action at your end please.

Enclosure: As above

Yours faithfully,

Sanjay Bhardwaj
Dr. Sanjay Bhardwaj (JKAS)
Under Secretary
21/04/26

Copy for similar necessary action:

1. District Informatics Officer, (DIO) NIC Leh and Kargil.

Operation & Maintenance (O&M) Policy Swachh Bharat Mission (Gramin), UT Ladakh

1. Introduction

The Swachh Bharat Mission (Gramin) has created critical sanitation and solid-liquid waste management infrastructure across rural areas of UT Ladakh, including toilets, community sanitary complexes, segregation sheds, collection vehicles, composting units and greywater systems. To ensure sustainability and functionality, these assets require proper Operation & Maintenance (O&M). Since Ladakh presents unique challenges due to high-altitude terrain, short working season, extreme winters, scattered habitations, and high logistics costs — a dedicated O&M Policy is essential. This policy therefore establishes Gram Panchayats (GPs) as the custodians of sanitation assets, supported by Block, District, and UT-level institutions. It also provides a clear framework for financing, enforcement, and community participation, with bridging support for the initial years and gradual transition to financial sustainability.

2. Objectives

1. To Ensure year-round functionality of all SBM-G assets in Ladakh.
2. To Establish a sustainable financial model through user charges, penalties, Reserve Funds, CSR support, and bridging assistance.
3. To Strengthen Gram Panchayat ownership of sanitation services.
4. To Institutionalize Annual O&M Plans by every GP.
5. To Ensure community participation, transparency, and accountability in sanitation governance.
6. To Guarantee compliance with minimum wages and fair treatment of sanitation workers.

3. Guiding Principles

- **Local ownership:** Gram Panchayats are the primary custodians of sanitation assets.
- **Financial sustainability:** User contributions supported by bridging funds in the initial 2–3 years.
- **Equity:** Households pay affordable fees, while larger commercial and institutional users contribute higher charges.
- **Transparency:** Fee collection, penalties, and expenditures are recorded and publicly disclosed.
- **Community involvement:** Self-help groups (SHGs), schools, and youth groups play active roles in sanitation awareness and monitoring.
- **Legal enforceability:** User fees and penalties are enforced through Jammu and Kashmir Panchayat Raj Act 1989 and Jammu and Kashmir Panchayati Raj Rules, 1996.

4. Assets Covered

The policy applies to maintenance of the following sanitation infrastructure:-

- Household toilets (IHHLs)

- Community Sanitary Complexes (CSCs) & public toilets
- Segregation sheds / resource recovery centres
- Collection vehicles (mini-tippers, tractors, pickups)
- Bailing / shredding equipment
- Greywater soak pits
- Mobile toilets and desludgers

5. Institutional Roles Gram Panchayat (GP):

- Act as custodian of all sanitation assets within its jurisdiction.
- Collect user fees, impose penalties, and maintain accounts.
- Prepare and submit Annual O&M Plan.
- Maintain the Sanitation Reserve Fund at District levels.
- Ensure daily O&M of CSCs, sheds, vehicles, and drains.

Village Sanitation Committee (VSC) (sub-committee of GP):

- Assist the GP in waste collection, segregation monitoring, and community awareness.
- Conduct inspections and report offences.

Block and District Authorities:

- Approve Annual O&M Plans submitted by GPs.
- Provide technical guidance and capacity building.
- Monitor GP performance and arrange audits.

UT Administration (Rural Development Department):

- Provide policy oversight and bridging support (SDP/SBM) for initial years.
- Notify fee and penalty frameworks for adoption by GPs.
- Propose 1% sanitary Cess in UT Ladakh on all developmental works.
- Review and update the policy periodically.

CSR / NGOs / Private Entities:

- Support GPs through MoUs for adoption of villages or clusters.
- Provide financial, manpower, IEC, or technical support.

6. Adoption of Innovative and Community-Based Sanitation Practices for SSG 2025

6.1 Eco-Points (Swachhata Bank Model)

Eco-Points shall be established in tourist zones, marketplaces, and other high-footfall areas to promote systematic waste and plastic collection. Participation will be encouraged through small incentives such as digital coupons, reward points, and shop-based discounts. These Eco-Points will be integrated with village-level Material Recovery Facilities (MRFs) to strengthen circular economy mechanisms and ensure efficient processing of collected materials.

6.2 SBM–Grameen Information Capsules

Weekly SBM–G Information Capsules shall be disseminated in Ladakhi, Balti, Urdu, and Hindi through radio broadcasts, digital platforms, and Gram Panchayat notice boards. These capsules will highlight key sanitation messages, showcase local sanitation champions, and promote community-led best practices to enhance awareness and behavioral change.

6.3 Legacy Waste Reclamation

All identified legacy waste dumpsites shall undergo scientific reclamation, including geotextile layering, slope stabilization, soil cover application, and landscape development using native plant species. These sites will be converted into green community spaces and maintained through stewardship by Self-Help Groups (SHGs), youth clubs, and local community institutions to ensure long-term sustainability.

6.4 Swachh Snow Festival

Cleanliness and zero-waste protocols shall be integrated into major winter tourism and sports events such as ice hockey tournaments, snow marathons and winter carnivals. The Swachh Snow Festival will include volunteer-led clean-up teams, dedicated awareness booths, interactive IEC activities and tourist engagement initiatives to promote responsible tourism and reinforce the principles of Swachh Bharat and SSG 2025.

7. Financial Framework

7.1 Revenue and Expenditure (2024–25)

Head	Kargil (₹lakh)	Leh (₹lakh)	Total
Revenue (2024-25)	34.34	35.26	69.6
Wages	155	209	364
Fuel	50	35	85
Repair & maintenance	11	10	21
Insurance	9	10	19
Safety Gear & Hygiene	4	5	9
Electricity	3	5	8
Water	2	2	4
Total Expenditure	234	276	510
Gap (Revenue Expenditure)	>200	>241	>441

(Details of the revenue and expenditure of 2024-25 for both the district is annexed as Annexure I, II)

This comparison shows that both Kargil and Leh face substantial annual funding gaps. Bridging support will be essential in the short term, with gradual transition to sustainability

through enhanced user charges (revised every 2 years), stricter enforcement of penalties, CSR partnerships, and operationalization of the Sanitation Reserve Fund.

Gram Panchayats are positioned at the centre of this framework. Their role as custodians of sanitation assets, coupled with financial transparency and enforcement powers, will be key to achieving long-term sustainability in sanitation service delivery across Ladakh.

7.2 Bridging of Gap and Transition to Sustainability:

- For the first 2–3 years, the gap will be bridged through SDP/SBM funds.
- During this period, GPs will stabilize systems of fee collection, penalties, and reserve Fund management.
- By Year 3 onward, reliance on external funds will reduce through revised user charges, penalties, compost sales, CSR/NGO partnerships, and efficiency improvements.

7.3 User Fee Structure (Phased every 2 years):

(Monthly Basis)

S.No	Category	Current	Year 2-3	Year 3-4
1	Household	50	50	100
2	Small Shops	100	100	200
3	Medium Shops	100	150	350
4	Large Shop	100	200	400
5	Restaurant	100	200	400
6	HomeStays	-	350	500
7	Schools/PHCs	-	200	500
8	Hospitals	-	500	750
9	Office/Companies	-	300	500

(Note: NOC from GP required for renewal of licenses of commercial/institutional Establishments.)

7.4 Penalties & Enforcement:

- Household littering: ₹500
- Burning waste: ₹1000
- Shop violations: ₹500–2000
- Restaurants: ₹1500–3000
- Hospitals: ₹5000
- Large companies: ₹5000–50,000

Process: Detection → Notice → Hearing (if requested) → Levy → Recovery → Deposit in dedicated sanitary account (Fund).

7.5 Sanitation Cess Fund:

- to collect 1% sanitation cess from all developmental work into a dedicated account (Fund) at District level.

-Fund to be used for emergency repairs, consumables, remuneration and asset replacement.

8. Annual O&M Plan

Each GP shall prepare and submit an Annual O&M Plan at the beginning of each financial year. The plan will be discussed in the Gram Sabha for transparency and submitted to Block and District authorities for approval.

The Plan will include:

- I. **Asset Inventory & Status:** record of all SBM assets with functionality rating.
- II. **Staffing & HR:** list of sanitation workers and drivers, wage compliance, training needs.
- III. **Estimated Expenditure:** detailed costs for wages, fuel, repairs, consumables, IEC, electricity, insurance, water.
- IV. **Revenue Projections:** anticipated income from fees, compost sales, recyclables, CSR.
- V. **Gap Analysis:** expenditure vs revenue; bridging request from SDP/SBM if required.
- VI. **Reserve Fund Contributions:** 1% sanitation cess receipts from all developmental work in UT at District Level account.
- VII. **Seasonal Maintenance Schedule:** pre-winter checks, winter- proofing, spring inspections.
- VIII. **Monitoring Indicators:** asset functionality percentage, fee collection ratio, segregation compliance, IEC coverage.
- IX. **Community Engagement:** IEC campaigns in schools, SHGs, eco- clubs, awareness linked to SHS campaigns.
- X. **Approvals:** Gram Sabha discussion → GP resolution → Block approval → District consolidation.

The Annual O&M Plan will serve as the primary governance tool for rural sanitation management. Release of bridging funds will be contingent on submission and approval of these plans.

9. Community Participation & CSR

- GPs to mobilize SHGs, schools, and youth groups for awareness and monitoring.
- CSR adoption model: private firms/NGOs adopt villages or clusters for manpower, consumables, or IEC.
- MoUs to define responsibilities, funding, and monitoring mechanisms.

10. Audit & Review

- Annual financial and functional audits of GP sanitation accounts.
- Social audit in Gram Sabha to ensure transparency.
- UT-level review every 3 years to update fee schedules, penalties, and subsidy norms.

11. Challenges and Solutions:

- Extreme winters, high altitude → Winterized toilets, insulated soak pits
- Scattered villages → Cluster-based O&M models
- Funding gaps → Bridging funds, CSR partnerships
- Weak ownership → Gram Panchayat accountability

12. Way Forward:

- Year 1–2: Bridging funds for gap coverage
- Year 3: Fee revision, penalties, compost sales
- Year 4 onwards: Self-sustaining O&M model

12. Transitional Arrangements – District Leh

The District Panchayat Officer (DPO), Leh, District Leh, has currently executed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Ladakh Renewable Energy Development Agency (LAREDA) for operation and maintenance of sanitation and waste management assets.

The provisions of the said MoU shall remain valid and enforceable until its expiry.

Nothing in this O&M Policy shall be construed to override or conflict with the obligations and arrangements stipulated therein.

This O&M Policy shall come into effect for District Kargil immediately upon its notification.

Upon expiry of the existing MoU executed between the District Panchayat Officer, Leh, and LAREDA, the provisions of this O&M Policy shall thereafter become fully applicable to District Leh, and all Gram Panchayats in District Leh shall implement the policy in accordance with its provisions.

Conclusion

This O&M Policy provides a robust, transparent and enforceable Framework for ensuring resilient, year-round sanitation services across rural Ladakh. By strengthening Gram Panchayat ownership, integrating climate-responsive, community-driven best sanitization practices and ensuring financial sustainability, UT Ladakh is positioned to uphold the objectives of Swachh Bharat Mission (Gramin) and SSG 2025, while fostering cleaner, healthier and environmentally responsible rural communities.