



S-11011/3/2015-SBM
Government of India
Ministry of Drinking Water & Sanitation
Swachh Bharat Mission (G)

4th Floor, Paryavaran Bhavan
CGO Complex, Lodhi Road
New Delhi- 110 003
Date: 9th June, 2015

To,

**The Principal Secretary / Secretary in charge Rural Sanitation
All States/UTs**

Subject: Definition of Open Defecation Free

Sir / Madam,

You are aware that the most important objective of Swachh Bharat Mission (Gramin) is achievement and sustainability of Open Defecation Free (ODF) status. Para 4.1 of the SBM-G guidelines states that, "Implementation of SBM(G) is proposed . . .with the goal of creating Open Defecation Free (ODF) Gram Panchayats (GPs)". The focus is on creation of complete ODF villages, rather than only on construction of individual toilets. This entails triggering the entire village into changing their behavior rather than dealing individually with beneficiaries. It has also been brought out that "collective action" by the village in making itself ODF yields faster results than an attempt to target individual households. But more importantly, there is scientific data to show that reduction in diarrhoea and improved health parameters result only when the village (entire community) becomes completely ODF i.e. 100% of villagers use toilet 100% of the times.

2. It has however, been observed that there is no uniform definition of ODF across the country. ODF that is the main outcome of the Mission, must be defined uniformly and precisely, so that there is a clear focused effort in achieving the same. Lack of a uniform definition may lead to each State (and even sub-State levels) having their own understanding of ODF, thereby leading to differential focus in reaching the common goal of ODF for country as a whole. Lack of a uniform definition also leads to lack of monitoring. There is a consequential lack of clarity on how many villages/GPs have become ODF; out of them how many have slipped back and how many are still sustained.

3. After examining the matter in detail and after holding detailed discussions with various stakeholders, it has now been decided to define ODF as follows:

"ODF is the termination of faecal-oral transmission, defined by

a) no visible faeces found in the environment/village; and

b) every household as well as public/community institutions using safe technology option for disposal of faeces.

(Tip: Safe technology option means no contamination of surface soil, ground water or surface water; excreta inaccessible to flies or animals; no handling of fresh excreta; and freedom from odour and unsightly condition)"

4. It is requested that the above definition may be brought to the notice of all concerned. The ODF status will be decided, henceforth, on the basis of above definition.

Yours faithfully,



(Saraswati Prasad)
Joint Secretary (SBM-G)

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1. State Coordinator, SBM (G) all States/UTs
2. Technical Director (NIC) for uploading on website
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