

Friends, all of us in this village will act like a family to promote healthy living and a clean environment. Today, as a major step in this direction, let us resolve to achieve Swachh Gram status which will be a service to community as well as the nation. Hence, let us all take an oath as follows:

**“I will follow the resolve that I have made. I shall contribute 100 hours in a year i.e. 2 hours per week of my voluntary labour for ensuring sanitation of my village. I will also motivate others to do so.”**

### About the Reader

Under its “Active Gram Sabha” series, the Ministry of Panchayati Raj is bringing out short booklets to be read out in Gram Sabhas. States may adapt these booklets in their own context and translate them into local language.

This is an illustrative model reader prepared with the general situation in mind. However, based on local situation, it can be modified and adapted.



## GRAM SABHA READER SANITATION





Greetings to all fellow members of Gram Sabha!

The Swachh Bharat Mission has been launched on 2nd October 2014, on Gandhi Jayanti. This day was selected to launch the Mission because of the high importance given to cleanliness by Gandhiji. Let us now realize his dream to make Indian villages clean.

Let us first understand, what is sanitation?

Sanitation means creating and maintaining hygienic conditions including personal, household and community level hygiene. It includes hand washing, keeping the house and surroundings clean, collecting and disposing garbage, waste water and excreta safely.



5. After the household, the school is the place where children spend most of their time. It is also a learning ground for them, where they learn habits and behaviours that affect their lives. Similarly, Anganwadis provide the first contact point where positive and preventive health practices and behaviour are learnt. Lack of healthy environment and sanitation facilities in these places affect school attendance, children's education performance and their health, especially girls.

So let us all resolve that:

- ✓ We, as parents, will provide hygiene and sanitation education to our children.
- ✓ Our village schools will have separate toilets for boys and girls.
- ✓ The toilets in the schools will be well maintained and used by students.
- ✓ We will ensure the availability of proper toilets and drinking water in all the Anganwadis of our village.



At the community level a common dumping yard/ manure processing unit needs to be identified.

So let us all resolve that:

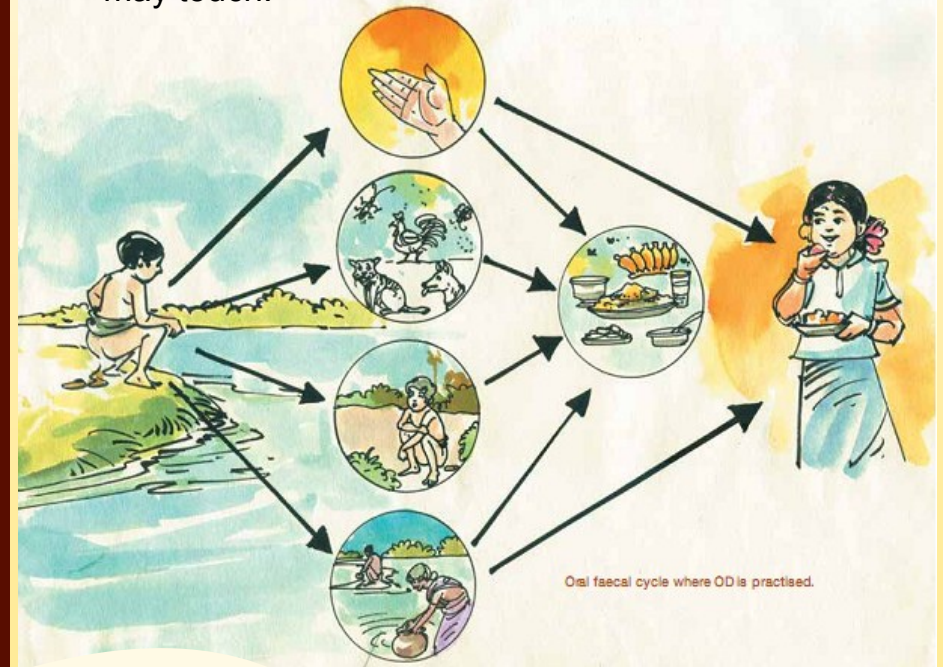
- ✓ We will maintain community hygiene by avoiding littering, spitting, open urination and open defecation at public places like bus stops, offices, schools, community halls, etc.
- ✓ We will maintain cleanliness of the platforms of public taps / hand pumps and bore wells.
- ✓ We will never throw children's excreta into drains.
- ✓ We will use soak / leach pits for waste water and not let it flow on the roads.
- ✓ We will not dump any type of solid waste such as plastics, metals, tyres etc. into the drains.
- ✓ We will not throw used sanitary pads, cloths and other such items into the toilet or drain.
- ✓ We will dispose dead animals and birds safely and away from water bodies

You may well ask, why should we practice sanitation?

Sanitation is necessary for good health. Poor sanitation is a major cause of diseases such as diarrhoea, dysentery, jaundice, typhoid, worm infection etc.

Now, let us discuss what are the causes of poor sanitation and what we can do to address them.

1. Open defecation is very harmful for our health. Faecal matter contains disease causing microbes. When the faecal matter is left in the open, these microbes get into air, water and food, which we may touch.



Therefore, we must stop open defecation in our village. We must also prevent all direct handling of faecal matter, including that of children. We must ensure use of sanitary latrines and hand wash with soap after defecation.

You would be happy to know that as per Swachh Bharat Mission guidelines, the incentive amount provided to Below Poverty Line/ identified Above Poverty Line families for construction of one Individual House Hold Latrine (IHHL) unit including for water storage, hand washing, and toilet cleaning is up to Rs.12000/. All eligible beneficiaries are to be included by the Gram Panchayat in the proposal sent.



4. Finally, sanitation is important not only at the individual and household level, but also at the community level. Community sanitation means, a clean and healthy environment. This helps community members to lead a disease free and healthy life. Community sanitation includes safe and proper disposal of waste and waste water, provision of safe drinking water and provision of institutional and public sanitary measures.

Waste can be segregated into solid and liquid waste. Solid waste is categorised into bio-degradable and non-biodegradable waste. Bio-degradable waste such as kitchen waste, food left over etc. can be recycled and can even be used for preparing organic manure. But non bio degradable solid waste such as plastic bags, tyres etc. creates harm to the environment and life. For example, polythene material and carry bags do not get dissolved in the soil and this affects the soil quality. Hot food preserved in polythene material is harmful for health and even cattle eat carry bags along with stray food, which becomes fatal for them. Liquid waste needs to be managed at the source of generation itself, otherwise it leads to health problems.



Another important place in the household is the animal shed and places where animals and poultry are kept. Animal waste and droppings may cause diseases not only in the animals but also in humans.

So let us resolve that:

- ✓ We will maintain cleanliness in and around our house.
- ✓ We will ensure safe storage and handling of drinking water and food.
- ✓ We will manage waste water at the household level by maintaining kitchen garden/soak pits.
- ✓ We will clean animal sheds regularly.
- ✓ We will ensure the safe disposal and management of animal excreta.
- ✓ We will ensure proper disposal of coconut shells, broken pots, used tyres, glass and plastic bottles, etc.
- ✓ We will ensure that solid waste or waste water does not accumulate in vacant plots or unused houses.



As we know, illness leads to expenditure, loss of earnings and children miss school. Poor sanitation also harms pregnant women and infants. Poor sanitation can especially harm children by retarding their growth and even causing death. If we want to be free of diseases, we have to practice sanitation.

So, let us all resolve that:

- ✓ We will not defecate in the open.
- ✓ All our households will have sanitary latrines.
- ✓ Everybody including children will use the sanitary latrines and keep them clean.
- ✓ We will dispose faeces of infants and young children in the sanitary latrines.
- ✓ Households for which construction of IHHL under any government scheme has already been approved, will start construction of sanitary latrines at the earliest.
- ✓ Households which are not eligible for any government incentives will take up toilet construction at the earliest on their own.
- ✓ Households without sanitary latrines at present will arrange temporary pit latrines with lids till they construct sanitary latrines.
- ✓ In temporary latrines used by women and girls, extra care will be taken to provide privacy.
- ✓ We will tell our children to use the toilets at school and in the Anganwadi.

2. Another hazard to our health is dirty hands. We should ensure that we wash our hands with soap and water essentially before and after eating, before feeding children, before handling food, after defecating and after cleaning babies, as dirty hands spread infection.

Regular bathing, cutting of nails, clean clothes and adequate menstrual hygiene are important hygiene practices that should be followed. If nails are not cut regularly, there can be worm infestation which leads to malnutrition and anaemia. If we do not use footwear, we can get worm infestation from the soil.

So let us resolve that:

- ✓ We will wash hands with soap and water regularly, especially after eating and after using toilets and also ensure that our children wash their hands.
- ✓ We will maintain personal hygiene, like cutting nails, bathing every day, brushing our teeth, wearing clean clothes and using footwear.



3. Cleanliness in and around our house affects our health and also that of the community. Garbage and waste water generated from our house and deposited around it may attract flies, mosquitos, rodents and animals. Open drains, waste water deposited in ditches, garbage dumped in the open and uncovered drinking water leads to diseases like malaria, dengue, diarrhoea etc. Moreover, rain water gets collected in broken pots, coconut shells, tyres etc. which becomes a breeding ground for mosquitos, leading to malaria, dengue and chikun gunya etc.

Therefore, every household needs to decide how it will deal with waste water. For example, the waste water may be channeled to the kitchen garden or soak pit/drains.

