

## Policy Level Recommendations

### *Based on learnings from Alag Karo project*

**Alag Karo** is a program aimed at promoting waste segregation at source as a way of life and is being implemented in selected residential, commercial and educational institutions in Gurugram. Drawing from the learnings of this program specifically from residential apartment complexes, the team would like to propose a few policy recommendations for implementing and sustaining Source Segregation in cities and towns.

These recommendations are specifically for **Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC)** and **Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA) - Swachh Bharat Mission (SBM) cell**. The four policy recommendations are:

1. Phased Implementation
2. Assigning Responsibility and Strict Monitoring
3. Driving Visible Impact
4. Separate Collection Channel for Segregated Waste

In the following sections, the learnings have been summarized. We have suggested the operationalization of the recommendation by getting them included in the relevant policy documents.

### Policy recommendation 1: Phased implementation

**Learning from the Alag Karo program:** Most apartments especially the large societies adopted a phased approach for implementing Source Segregation i.e. instead of starting the program in the entire society, it was implemented one or few towers at a time. Phased implementation resulted in:

- **Starting small and then scaling up:** Breaking down a large project in small parts makes it more manageable.
- **Adopting the less disruptive approach:** Often people don't like changes, by keeping the project low profile in the beginning, helped reduce resistance. The societies often selectively started the program with more amenable groups of residents. Later, with 70-80% of the residents segregating, even the most difficult residents could be on-boarded easily.
- **Building capacity of the housekeeping staff:** This was necessary as it was a new activity that none of them had performed earlier.
- **Building confidence with successes:** The successes in each tower helped build the confidence of the team: the association, house-keeping team, volunteers etc. and got them motivated to face bigger challenges. Success stories also helped bring more support for the program. Often the pace of implementation picked up in later stages as the team was well prepared and confident.
- **Addressing teething issues:** It was easier to address the challenges at small scale. In each tower, often there were some unique issues, these could be addressed in a focussed manner.
- **Optimising meagre resources:** Dedicated volunteers were few but were critical for the success, they could work tower by tower without getting over stretched

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## Recommendation

**“Phased Implementation of Source Segregation”:** It is critical that the implementation is done in a phased manner instead of launching the program across the city in one go. Implementation phases can be decided based on certain kind of waste generators such as apartments, schools, offices etc. or by locality

## Operationalising the Recommendation:

### MoEFCC

- Include phased implementation plan for Municipal corporations in the *Toolkit for Implementation of Solid Waste Management Rules, 2016* developed jointly by MoEFCC, MoHUA, CPCB and NPC. (Alag Karo team can provide a sample plan for a typical mid-size city).

### MoHUA:

- Detail out phase wise implementation plan for Source Segregation in Component 4 of Swachh Bharat Mission (Urban) Guidelines. (Alag Karo team can provide a sample plan for a typical mid-size city).

## Policy recommendation 2: Assigning responsibility & close monitoring

**Learning from the Alag Karo program:** Defining clear responsibility and monitoring of the program at different levels was the biggest differentiator for the residential communities that quickly achieved high levels of segregation. This was achieved by:

- **Standardising format for data collection and training on monitoring:** The door to door collection staff was well trained and was given a form to track household level segregation. Data entry was simplified so that even the un-educated could tick boxes. Residents became very cautious on seeing the staff enter this data regularly.
- **Analysing the data to identify non-compliance:** The data sheets from the staff were reviewed daily by supervisors who identified non-complying flats.
- **Approaching non-complying flats for compliance:** Using the above data, Volunteers and RWA members who had the specific responsibility of each tower reached out to each of these non-complying households to address their concerns and seek support.
- **Weekly review:** On weekly basis, the program implementation was reviewed by the RWA member who was leading the initiative along with volunteers and housekeeping staff.
- **Encouraging and rewarding high performers:** Supervisors and door to door collection staff who were performing well were encouraged and, in some cases, rewarded while others were motivated to follow their example.

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**“Assigning Responsibility and Close Monitoring”:** Assigning clear roles and responsibility at each level of the Municipality with respect to implementation of Source Segregation and regular review at all levels is essential for a successful roll out of the program.

## Operationalising the recommendation:

### MoEFCC:

- A section for ward/RWAs/Zone wise achievement of 100% source segregation should be included in Form IV (annual report) of Municipal Solid Waste Management Rules, 2016. This section should also ask for details of IEC activities conducted by Municipal Corporation during the year in accordance with section (15), subsection (zg) of the rules.
- Municipal corporations should be notified to monitor source segregation levels in their cities and compile the progress every week in a dashboard. This should be reviewed by the Zonal Commissioners. (Alag Karo team can provide a sample monitoring plan for a typical mid-size city).

### MoHUA:

- Swachh Survekshan ranking should increase the points weightage for source segregation and monitor the segregation levels through form IV (as per MSW 2016 rules) submitted by Municipal Corporations.
- It can be notified by the MoHUA that All Detailed Project Reports (DPRs) for waste processing must be approved based on a plan for monitoring Source Segregation.

## Policy recommendation 3: Driving visible impact

**Learning from the Alag Karo program:** Of the 32 societies where the program is being implemented, 14 societies have implemented on-site composting. In these societies, the segregation levels have remained high even after the ALAG KARO team moved out. This was because the society could visibly see the impact of their effort in high quality compost being produced. They could see that most of the waste was not going to landfill which was a big incentive to continue segregating. While in other societies, where residents knew that even after source segregation most of the waste was still going to the landfill required continuous effort from the volunteers and the RWA to continue segregation. Visible impact can be shown through multiple ways:

- On-site composting for bulk generators,
- Community composting sites, managed by the Municipality
- Dry waste collection centres at ward level where people can see their Dry waste being sorted and sent for recycling.

## Recommendation

**“Driving Visible Impact”** Ward level decentralised waste management of segregated waste acts as a big motivation for residents to start and to continue segregating their waste.

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## Operationalising the recommendation:

### MoEFCC :

- A prescribed format for Action plan as mentioned in section 9 of form IV of SWM 2016 rules should be developed. The action plan can emphasise on planning done by the municipal corporation for decentralised processing of waste. (Alag Karo Team can develop the format for action plan for all municipal corporations)
- ‘Visible Impact’ concept to be included and emphasised upon in the rules under section (15), subsection(zg) of the rules.

### MoHUA:

- Concept of ‘Visible Impact’ gets included as a guideline in the *SBM SWM Guidelines*, with ideas on showing visible impact of decentralised processing of waste.
- All DPRs on waste processing must mandatorily provide a ward wise plan on how ‘Visible Impact’ would be operationalised.

## Policy recommendation 4: Separate collection channel

**Learning from the Alag Karo program:** A big deterrent for implementation and sustenance of Source Segregation is collection of segregated waste and mixed waste in the same vehicle. People are discouraged when their segregated waste gets mixed. In apartments as the program was implemented in phased manner, the blocks where waste was getting segregated was handled separately from the blocks where waste was still mixed. It was critical for residents who started segregation early, to see that their waste was not mixed. While this added to the logistic costs it showed the strong commitment of the RWA. Societies where this practice was not followed, the segregation levels remained poor.

## Recommendation

**“Separate Collection Channel”:** The municipality can set up a separate collection channel for segregated waste as a premier service for localities/ segments that start segregating.

## Operationalising the recommendation:

### MoEFCC:

- In section 15 it should be included that municipal corporation should incentivise societies/wards that have shown visible progress of source segregation through a premier collection service.

### MoHUA:

- Separate Collection Channel model should be included as a component in the *SBM SWM(Urban) Guidelines*, with pros and cons so that Municipalities can evaluate this option.

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- A state level policy on this concept and how this would be beneficial in the long run needs to be developed. (Alag Karo team can provide a costing template and a cost-benefit analysis for this approach).

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