In Lakhimpur Kheri the implementation of Faecal Sludge Management (FSM) under SBM(G) Phase II represents a shift from simple toilet construction to a "managed service" approach. As a district with diverse geography—ranging from the Sharda river plains to forest-fringe villages—Lakhimpur Kheri has tailored its sanitation strategy to address both urban-rural integration and local topographical challenges.

---

1. Progress of FSM in Lakhimpur Kheri (2020–2026)

Lakhimpur Kheri has shown significant commitment to the ODF Plus framework. As of the current 2025–26 cycle:

- ODF Plus Saturation: Out of approximately 1,686 villages in the district, over 1,685 have been declared ODF Plus.
- Asset Creation: Focus has been on retrofitting. Thousands of single-pit toilets have been converted to Twin-Pit systems, which allow for in-situ stabilization of sludge, effectively making the household a self-contained FSM unit.
- Urban-Rural Convergence: The district has leveraged its 10+ Urban Local Bodies (ULBs). Villages within a 15–20 km radius of towns like Lakhimpur, Palia, and Gola are being linked to urban Faecal Sludge Treatment Plants (FSTPs) for co-treatment.
- Deep Row Entrenchment (DRE): For remote forest-area villages where tanker access is difficult, the district has implemented DRE sites—scientific burial of sludge that eventually turns into nutrient-rich soil.

---

2. Challenges Faced in the District

- High Water Table: Much of Lakhimpur Kheri is in the Terai belt. High groundwater levels in several blocks make traditional pits prone to leaching and contamination of drinking water sources.
- Logistical Barriers: The district is geographically large. Transporting sludge from the northern border villages to centrally located treatment plants is often not cost-effective for private operators.
- Flooding: Frequent monsoon flooding in the Sharda and Ghaghra basins often damages sanitation infrastructure and complicates the emptying cycle.
- Behavioral Lag: While toilets are used, "scheduled desludging" (emptying every 3 years) is still not a common practice; most households wait for a total blockage before seeking help.

---

3. O&M (Operation & Maintenance) Arrangements

Sustainability in Lakhimpur Kheri is built on a "Tied Fund" and "Community Ownership" model.

Component	Responsibility	Financial Source
Mechanized Emptying	Private Vacuum Tankers / ULB Tankers	User fee paid by the household (~₹1500–₹2500).

Component	Responsibility	Financial Source
Primary Maintenance	Gram Panchayat (GP)	15th Finance Commission (Tied Grants) earmarked for sanitation.
Treatment Plant Ops	Urban Local Body / Private Contractor	Revenue from tipping fees and sale of "Son-Khad" (treated organic manure).
Community Monitoring	Village Health, Sanitation & Nutrition Committee	Volunteer-led oversight of local assets like soak pits.

---

4. Way Forward for Residual Villages

To ensure 100% of the district's residual villages become fully FSM compliant and transition to "Model Village" status, the following roadmap is in place:

1. Cluster-Based Treatment: Developing 2–3 new Standalone Rural FSTPs in blocks that are too far from existing urban centers (e.g., Nighasan or Palia interiors).
2. Mandatory Retrofitting: A final "mop-up" campaign to ensure no single-pit toilets remain in high-water-table zones; replacing them with eco-san or elevated toilets.
3. Digital Tracking: Implementation of a GPS-based tracking system for vacuum tankers to prevent illegal dumping in local canals or fields.
4. SHG Empowerment: Handing over the management of village-level liquid waste assets to Women’s Self-Help Groups (SHGs) to create a local "Sanitation Economy."