

# Jal Jeevan Samvad

April | Volume 6 | Issue 04 | Year 2025



Har Ghar Jal  
Jal Jeevan Mission

Building Partnership  
Changing Lives

JJM-Promoting  
Local Governance



Cover Page Image Courtesy

Name: **Sanchari Biswas** | Class:- IX | Sec: C | Roll: 03  
Dhubulia Subhaschandra Balika Vidyalaya, Village: Dhubulia,  
Block: Krishnagar-II, Nadia District, West Bengal.

**Detail:** Nadia District, West Bengal conducted drawing competition to observe #PoshanPakhwada in several schools focusing on importance of safe drinking water.

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# Prime Minister on Jal Jeevan Mission

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**Narendra Modi**  
Prime Minister

*True progress doesn't mean minor changes—it means full-scale impact. Clean water in every home, quality education for every child, financial access for every entrepreneur, and digital economy benefits reaching every village—this is what holistic development truly means.*

*In 5–6 years, we have connected over 12 crore rural homes with tap water. Now, we must connect every rural home as soon as possible. In 10 years, we constructed more than 11 crore toilets for the poor. Now, we must achieve new goals related to waste management.*

- PM's address at the National Panchayati Raj Day program and launch of development works in Madhubani, Bihar on 24<sup>th</sup> April, 2025

”

# Minister of Jal Shakti on Jal Jeevan Mission



**Shri C R Patil**

Minister of Jal Shakti

पृथ्वी का संरक्षण, हमारी पीढ़ियों के भविष्य की सुरक्षा है। माननीय प्रधानमंत्री श्री नरेंद्र मोदी सर के नेतृत्व में भारत सरकार ने जल संरक्षण को केवल एक पर्यावरणीय मुद्दा नहीं, बल्कि राष्ट्रीय प्राथमिकता का विषय बनाया है। हर घर जल योजना से लेकर नमामि गंगे, भूजल पुनर्भरण, और वर्षा जल संचयन जैसे अभियानों के माध्यम से, देश एक जल सुरक्षित भारत की दिशा में दृढ़ता से आगे बढ़ रहा है।

मैं सभी से अपील करता हूँ कि हर घर, हर गांव, हर शहर में जल का संचय करें।  
जल को केवल संसाधन नहीं, संस्कार बनाएं।

जल-सुरक्षा ही जीवन-सुरक्षा है।  
जल बचाएं, पृथ्वी बचाएं।

विश्व पृथ्वी दिवस पर माननीय जल शक्ति मंत्री जी का सोशल मीडिया सन्देश



## Foreword



Strengthening rural water governance is a long-term investment. The progress made so far through Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM) offers strong evidence that the model is working, and that the foundation is getting stronger. When a glass of clean drinking water reaches a rural household, it carries trust – in governance, in systems, and in people's ability to take charge of their futures.

At the core of JJM's approach is a simple principle: governance must be as close to the community as possible. That's why Village Water & Sanitation Committees (VWSCs)/ Pani Samitis, envisaged as sub-committees of Gram Panchayats, are responsible for planning, implementing, and overseeing in-village water supply infrastructure. This structure aims to ensure that schemes are not just implemented for the community, but by the community – promoting a deep sense of ownership, accountability, and long-term commitment, ensuring that the process is community-led at every step.

The results are visible and inspiring. More than 15.59 crore rural households are receiving regular, safe drinking water. Women and frontline workers are playing a greater role in decision-making. More than 24.80 lakh women are now trained for testing water samples using Field Testing Kit.

Stories from villages across the country show how this transformation is taking shape. In Maanpur Lala in Uttar Pradesh, the Gram Panchayat and Village Water & Sanitation Committee revived a stalled scheme through collective action and tariff collection; Chikarada in Odisha, where the community formalized its operational model and fully took charge of piped water supply; and Shikuto in Nagaland, where local leadership and customary laws converged to protect water sources, are all demonstrating the power of governance at the grassroots. The pages inside will give you more such insights into how local governance is changing the rural landscape.

Panchayats are looking forward to new models of convergence, tapping MGNREGS for recharge structures, reviving traditional water bodies, and integrating water governance into the broader development agenda.

This edition of *Jal Jeevan Samvad* highlights the momentum on the ground. It brings together examples of how local institutions are leading rural water management, with innovation, ownership, and agility.

Challenges remain. Capacity building must continue to scale. Long-term operation and maintenance frameworks will be critical for sustainability. Still, the overall direction is clear. Decentralization is enabling faster problem-solving, better alignment with local needs, and stronger resilience against emerging risks, including climate variability.

Looking ahead, the focus will remain on deepening capacities, accelerating convergence with other programmes, and embedding a culture of accountability at every level.

**Shri Ashok K. K. Meena**  
Secretary,

Department of Drinking Water & Sanitation





Note from the desk of

Additional Secretary & Mission Director...



The month of April brings with it the first touch of summer – a reminder of our age-old wisdom to conserve water and prepare for the days ahead. Across rural India, this season has always been a time to store, save, and share water, and this is more than resource management; it is about resilience.

There is a reason water is called the elixir of life. It sustains not only our bodies but the health of our people, the learning of our children, and the prosperity of our households. Today, with over 80% rural households having tap water connections, we are inching closer to a future where every home in every village has the assurance of safe drinking water. Jal Jeevan Mission was never just about infrastructure, it was always about transformation.

But the pipes and taps are just one part of the story. The real engine of change lies in the hearts and hands of the people – *Jan Bhagidari*. This Mission has always believed in the strength of community ownership, and nowhere is this more visible than in our villages. The role of *Gram Panchayats*, our oldest institutions of local democracy, has become more significant than ever.

As we observed National Panchayati Raj Diwas this month, we are reminded of the critical link between local governance and sustainable service delivery. Jal Jeevan Mission's current phase calls for robust operation, regular maintenance, timely repair, and most importantly – community vigilance. Panchayats and Village Water & Sanitation Committees (VWSCs) are not just facilitators, rather they are custodians of their village water systems. From collecting user charges to monitoring supply and addressing grievances, their role cannot be overstated. Local governance also extends to nurturing a culture of accountability and ownership. The Mission's progress depends on how strongly we embed this spirit in every village. Our experience shows that when people take charge, when they understand the value of their resources, they protect them.

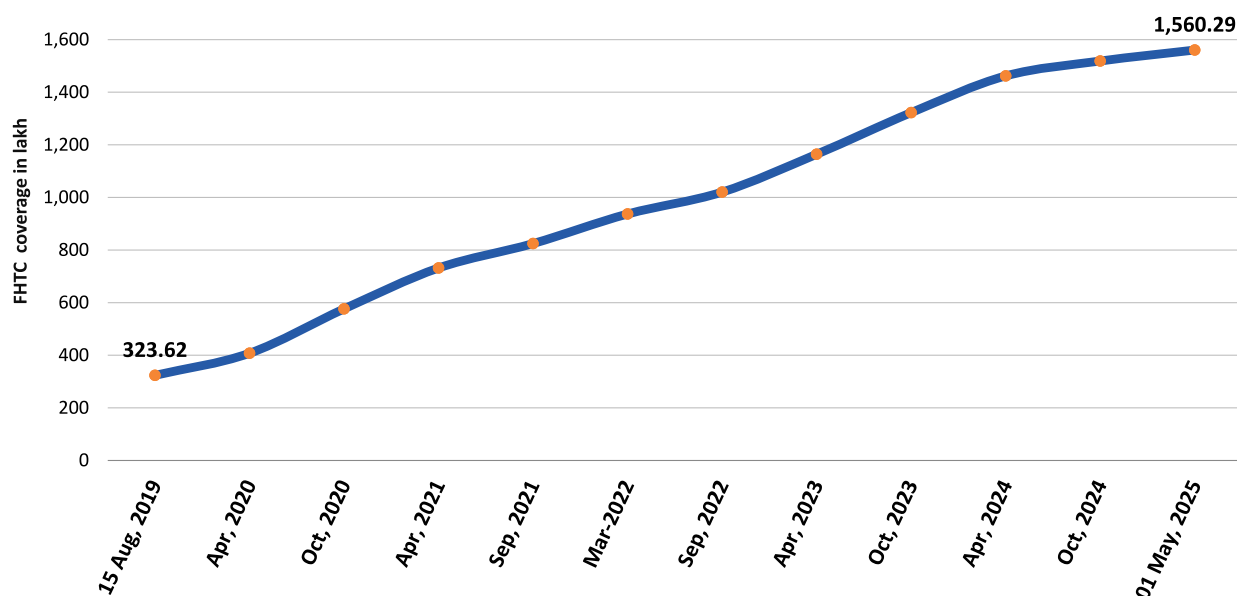
This month also saw our active participation in *Poshan Pakhwada*, an inter-ministerial convergence led by the Ministry of Women and Child Development. It was yet another reminder of how closely water, nutrition, and health are interlinked. Our IEC campaigns are continuously working to build awareness, drive behaviour change, and promote lifelong habits of water conservation and hygiene.

This edition of Jal Jeevan Samvad celebrates Local Governance. Through stories from across India, we highlight how panchayats and local communities are stepping up, resolving challenges, ensuring water supply continuity, managing greywater reuse, and even reviving traditional sources.

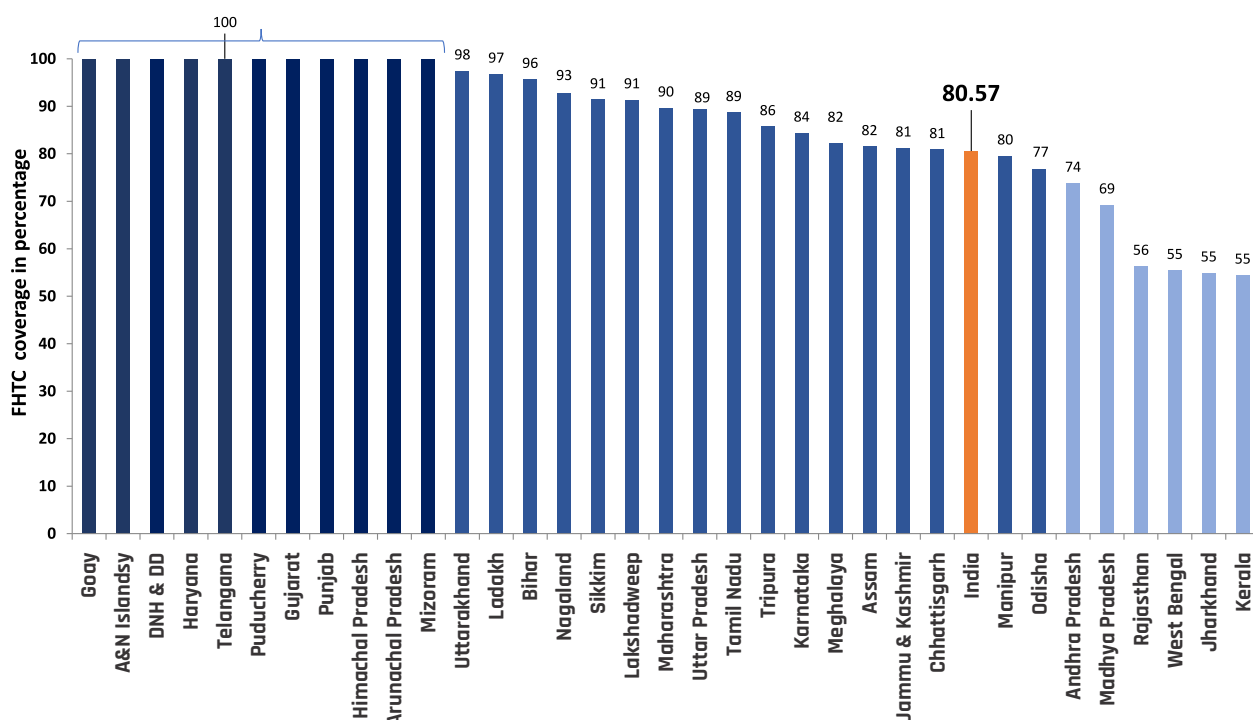
As you turn the pages, you will witness the revolution taking place across the country where ordinary citizens are becoming water champions, where every Panchayat meeting becomes a forum for sustainability, and where every drop saved is a step towards water security. Let us continue to build this people-led movement, where government support and community initiative walk hand in hand. Because the future of water lies not just in pipelines, but in participation!

**Kamal Kishore Soan**  
Additional Secretary & Mission Director (NJJM)  
Department of Drinking Water & Sanitation

## Progressive coverage - Functional Household Tap Connection (FHTC) (as on 30.04.2025)



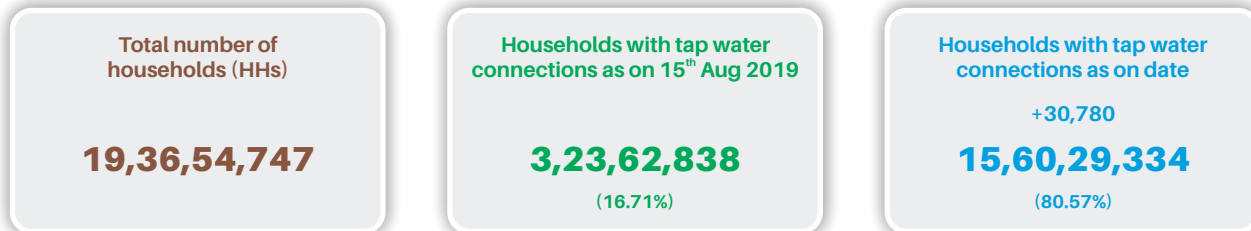
## Comparative FHTC coverage status of States/ UTs (as on 30.04.2025)



As on 30<sup>th</sup> April, 2025

Source: JJM-IMIS

India | Status of tap water supply in rural homes



Households provided with tap water connection since launch of the Mission

**12,36,66,496** (76.67%)

Har Ghar Jal [100% HHs with tap water connections]

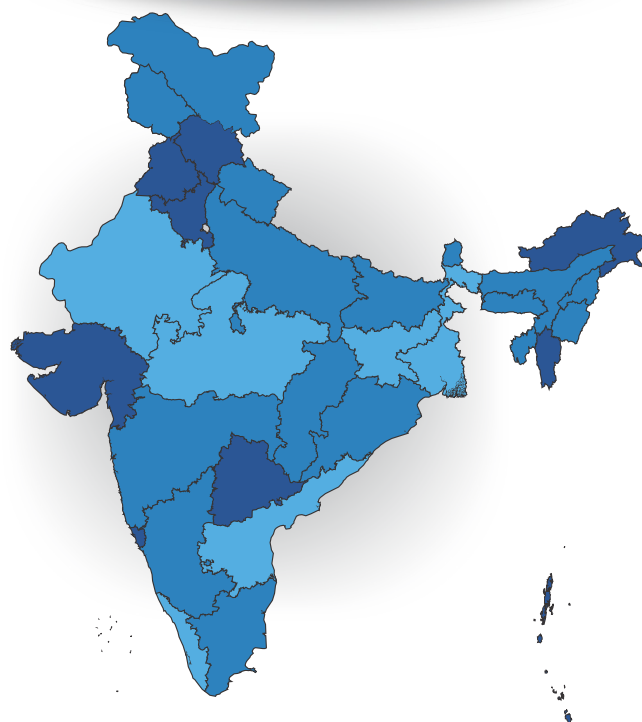
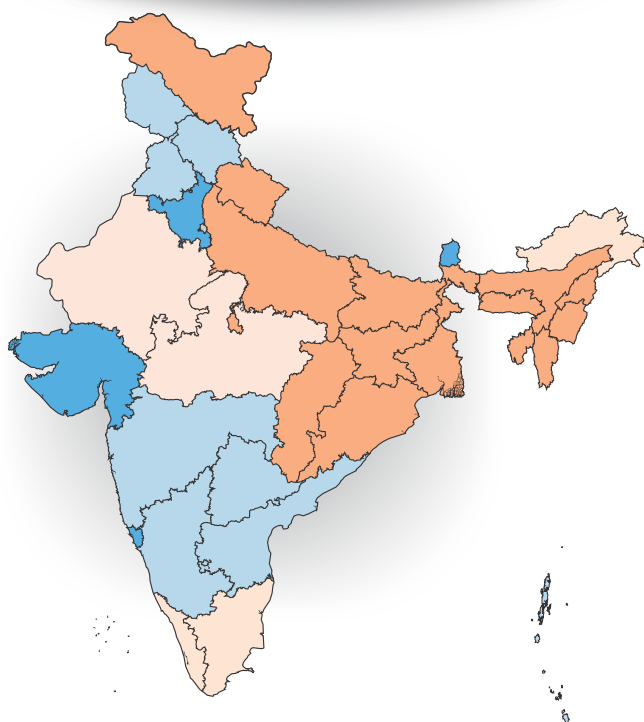
100% FHTC States/ UTs

Goa, A & N Islands, Puducherry, D&NH and D&D, Arunachal Pradesh, Haryana, Punjab, Telangana, Mizoram, Himachal Pradesh, Gujarat



As on 15<sup>th</sup> August, 2019

As on 30<sup>th</sup> April, 2025



0 to <10%

10% to <25%

25% to <50%

50% to <75%

75% to <100%

100%

# Empowering Communities through Local Governance:

## The Journey of Smt. Uma Banerjee

- Dipanwita Bose (Block Project Manager ISA) and Gobinda Das (IEC Specialist DPMU), Birbhum District

In the heart of **Mahammad Bazar, Birbhum District**, a remarkable transformation is taking place—driven by the spirit of local governance and community-led development. **Smt. Uma Banerjee**, Chairperson of the **Village Water and Sanitation Committee (VWSC)** has been at the forefront of a movement to bring clean and safe drinking water to her community. Her dedication to water resource management, sanitation awareness, and participatory governance has made a significant impact on the lives of the villagers.

For years, the residents of Mahammad Bazar struggled with access to clean drinking water. Contaminated sources and poor sanitation infrastructure led to



Figure 1: Gram Panchayat level review meeting | Source: DPMU, Birbhum District

frequent waterborne diseases. Women and children, especially, bore the burden of walking long distances to fetch water from unsafe sources, exposing themselves to both physical strain and health risks.

With the implementation of the Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM), Uma Banerjee, in close coordination with the local panchayat, took the lead in engaging with the community to spread awareness about the importance of safe drinking water and sanitation. Her leadership is a prime example of how JJM is strengthening local governance mechanisms by empowering grassroots leaders to drive change.

Smt. Banerjee took several proactive steps to address the village's water challenges. She led awareness campaigns to educate villagers about water conservation and hygiene, ensuring they understood the importance of clean water and its

sustainable use. She also organized workshops and seminars, where experts and local leaders discussed strategies for effective and sustainable water management.

To foster a sense of ownership and accountability, she encouraged community participation and involved the gram panchayat in decision-making processes related to water governance. Her persistent efforts, supported by the Panchayati Raj Institution (PRI) and other local stakeholders, ensured that every household in the village received a Functional Household Tap Connection (FHTC). This provided direct access to safe drinking water and significantly improved the quality of life for the residents. The inclusive approach helped build trust and cooperation among villagers, setting a model for other rural communities.

By getting tap connections at household level, the villagers of

“

“আমাদের গ্রামে নিরাপদ পানীয় জলের অভাব একটি স্থায়ী সমস্যা ছিল। মহিলাদের প্রতিদিন জল আনতে দীর্ঘ পথ হেঁটে যেতে হত, যার ফলে স্বাস্থ্য সমস্যা হত এবং মূল্যবান সময় নষ্ট হত।”

*("The lack of safe drinking water was a persistent issue in our village. Women had to walk long distances daily to fetch water, leading to health issues and a waste of valuable time.")*

recalls Uma Banerjee

”

Mahammad Bazar experienced a drastic improvement in their daily lives. The availability of clean drinking water directly at their doorsteps brought several benefits, including:

1. **Improved Health & Hygiene** – Waterborne diseases significantly reduced, and the overall health of the community improved.
2. **Reduced Water Fetching Time** – Women and children no longer had to travel long distances to fetch water, giving them more time for education and livelihood activities.
3. **Economic Growth** – With more time available, women in the community were able to take up income-generating activities.
4. **Sustainable Water Use** – Villagers became more conscious about water conservation and sanitation practices.

“

“নলবাহিত নিরাপদ পানীয় জল আমাদের স্বাস্থ্য এবং জীবনযাত্রার মানকে ব্যাপকভাবে উন্নত করেছে। আমাদের আর জল আনতে বাইরে যেতে হয় না, যা আমাদেরকে অন্যান্য কাজে আরও বেশি সময় দিতে পারি।”

*(“Piped safe drinking water has greatly improved our health and quality of life. We no longer have to fetch water, allowing us to dedicate more time to other productive activities.”)*

Ms. Banerjee proudly shares

”



Figure 2: Ms. Banerjee leading a community awareness meeting | Source: DPMU, Birbhum

The impact of JJM in Mahammad Bazar has set an example for other villages facing similar challenges. It illustrates how empowering VWSCs and involving panchayats can lead to decentralized and sustainable development outcomes. With the active involvement of community leaders like Smt. Uma Banerjee and the support of the local self-governance system, the village now enjoys the benefits of a robust and reliable water supply system and improved sanitation facilities.

Ms. Banerjee's leadership and commitment have played a pivotal role in transforming the lives of Mahammad Bazar's residents.

Through Jal Jeevan Mission and strong local governance, the community has gained access to a fundamental necessity-clean water-improving their overall well-being and empowering them towards a healthier and more sustainable future.

This success story of Mahammad Bazar stands as a testament to the power of community participation, Panchayati Raj Institutions, and grassroots leadership. It reinforces the core principle of JJM-that real change happens when local communities take charge of their development journey.

Copy edit by Lopamudra Panda, NPMU-NJJM

“

“নিরাপদ নলবাহিত পানীয় জল দীর্ঘমেয়াদী জল সরবরাহ নিশ্চিত করেছে এবং দূষিত উৎসের উপর নির্ভরতা হ্রাস করেছে। VWSC সদস্য হিসেবে, আমরা এই উদ্যোগকে সমর্থন করতে এবং একটি স্বাস্থ্যকর সম্প্রদায় গড়ে তুলতে আগ্রহী।”

*(“Safe, piped drinking water has ensured a long-term water supply and reduced reliance on contaminated sources. As VWSC members, we are eager to support this initiative and build a healthier community.”)*

Ms. Banerjee expresses with gratitude

”

# प्यास से अमृत तक!

- Lopamudra Panda, NPMU-NJJM, inputs courtesy PHED, Madhya Pradesh

“

“पहले जहां पानी के लिए संघर्ष करना पड़ता था, आज वहां घर-घर नलों से पानी की धारा बह रही है। उन्हें ऐसा लगता है, जैसे यह पानी नहीं, बल्कि अमृत की धारा हो! जहां प्रधानमंत्री जनमन और जल जीवन मिशन योजना के तहत जल संकट को दूर किया गया है। यह ‘हर घर जल, हर घर खुशहाली’ की दिशा में बढ़ता भारत का एक मजबूत कदम है।”

- गांव के बुजुर्गों का कहना है

”

## एक प्यासा गांव!

मध्य प्रदेश के डिंडोरी जिले का एक छोटा सा गांव उफरी, जो करंजिया विकासखंड से लगभग 23 किलोमीटर दूर स्थित है, एक समय था जब यहां पानी एक सपना था। मात्र 13 परिवार और 530 की आबादी वाला यह गांव मुख्य रूप से बैगा जनजाति का बसेरा है, जो टोलों में बंटा हुआ है। सालों से यह गांव पेयजल संकट का सामना करता आ रहा था।

गर्मी के दिनों में हालात इतने गंभीर हो जाते थे कि महिलाएं और बच्चे भोर से लेकर दोपहर तक झिरियों और कुओं पर कतार में लगे रहते। कई बार तो गंदे और दूषित जल से ही प्यास बुझानी पड़ती थी।

## वो दर्द!

ग्रामवासियों के अनुसार, गर्मियों में पानी लाने के लिए दिनभर इंतजार करना पड़ता था, और कई बार दूर स्थित झिरियों से गंदा पानी पीने की नौबत आ जाती थी। बैगा जनजाति के लोग विशेष रूप से इस समस्या से प्रभावित थे, क्योंकि उनके पास अन्य कोई विकल्प नहीं था। साफ पानी की अनुपलब्धता से बीमारियां हो रही थी, जिससे गांव की स्थिति और भी दयनीय हो गई थी।



Figure 3: बैगा जनजाति की एक बुजुर्ग महिला नल से पानी भरते हुए | स्रोत: डिंडोरी जिला, पीएचडी, मध्य प्रदेश

“

“पानी था ... मगर दूर!

हमने तो कभी नहीं सोचा था कि हमारे घर में भी नल से पानी आएगा। हमें हर दिन यह डर रहता था कि पानी कैसे मिलेगा। अब नल खोलते ही साफ पानी आता है, जैसे कोई सपना सच हो गया हो। जल जीवन मिशन ने तो जैसे हम प्यासोंको जल दान दीए हैं।”

कहती हैं गांव की एक महिला

”

## फिर जागी उम्मीद की एक नयी किरण!

प्रधानमंत्री जनमन योजना अभियान एक प्रयास है जिसका उद्देश्य इन जनजातीय समुदायों को उनके अधिकारों के बारे में जागरूक करके PVTG परिवारों को व्यक्तिगत अधिकारों और बस्तियों को बुनियादी सुविधाओं से संतुष्ट करना है। जिसमें प्रमुख रूप से आदिवासी परिवारों की शुद्ध पेयजल पहुंचाना है, ताकि आदिवासी परिवारों को पानी के लिए दर-दर न भटकना पड़े। **लोक स्वास्थ्य यांत्रिकी विभाग द्वारा जल जीवन मिशन** के तहत उफरी गांव में भी मुख्य जल स्रोत से पाइपलाइन बिछाई गई और हर घर तक नल कनेक्शन जोड़ा गया। इस योजना के अंतर्गत, गांव में एक बड़ी पेयजल टंकी का निर्माण किया गया, जिससे पूरे गांव में पाइपलाइन के माध्यम से पानी की आपूर्ति सुनिश्चित की गई है।

## अब नल से बहती है खुशी की लहर!

आज जब गांव में खासकर 13 बैगा आदिवासी परिवारों को नल खोलते ही पानी उपलब्ध होता है, तो आदिवासी ग्रामीणों की खुशी देखते ही



Figure 4: नल से पानी लेती बैगा जनजाति की महिलाएं | स्रोत: डिंडोरी जिला, पीएचडी, मध्य प्रदेश

बनती है। वर्षों की परेशानी से मुक्त होकर गांववालों ने इसे किसी चमत्कार से कम नहीं माना। नल से जल मिलने से सबसे अधिक लाभ हुआ। गंदे झिरिया का पानी पीने की मजबूरी खत्म हो गई, जिससे गांव में बीमारियों का खतरा भी कम हो गया।

ग्रामवासी प्रधानमंत्री जनमन योजना और जल जीवन मिशन के इस कार्य से इतने प्रसन्न हैं कि उन्होंने प्रधानमंत्री जी को धन्यवाद और आभार प्रकट किया। यह सिर्फ एक पेयजल योजना नहीं, बल्कि गांव के लोगों के जीवन स्तर में एक क्रांतिकारी बदलाव लेकर आई है।

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# Shikuto Village:

## A Journey from Water Scarcity to Sustainable Success under Jal Jeevan Mission

- Ellies Yanthan, WSSO, PHED, Nagaland

In the lush hills of Nagaland, where bamboo forests sway and rain clouds linger, water is both a gift and a challenge. Despite abundant rainfall, many villages face water scarcity during dry months, often walking miles for safe drinking water.

Shikuto Village, tucked away in the rolling hills of Dhansiripar Block in Chumoukedima District, Nagaland, is a shining example of how community participation and government initiatives can together transform lives. Established in 1996 and home to 301 residents across 42 households, Shikuto's story is one of resilience, collective spirit, and change flowing directly from the heart of the Jal Jeevan Mission. where the community, under the leadership of its village council and VWSC, actively participated in planning water supply schemes. Villagers collectively mapped their natural springs, decided on distribution networks, and even set up local guidelines for the protection of water sources ensuring that the systems are not only functional but sustainable. For years, the people of Shikuto faced a difficult reality: severe water scarcity. Despite the beauty of their surroundings, daily life revolved around the struggle to access clean water. The nearest water sources rivers and traditional wells were located 3 to 5 kilometres downhill, forcing villagers, especially women and children, to endure long and tiring walks carrying heavy bamboo baskets filled with water.



Figure 5: Beneficiaries with water tank constructed by PHED | Source: WSSO, PHED, Nagaland

The successful implementation of JJM in Shikuto was possible because of strong community leadership and collaboration. The village's WATSAN Committee, chaired by Village Chief Shri. Shikuto Zalipu, worked in close coordination with the Village Council and Nagaland's Public Health Engineering Department (PHED) to plan and oversee the scheme. Collective labour, community participation towards construction of the infrastructures provided by the government and the essence of community ownership paved the success.

In many cases, customary laws reinforce water conservation, and forest protection is directly linked to water source preservation. The Village Development Boards (VDBs), working alongside Panchayats, have been instrumental in maintaining both the pipelines and the springs that feed them.

Beyond water access, JJM's influence extends to sustainable practices within the community. Capacity-building initiatives led by the Implementation Support Agency and the Water and Sanitation Support Organization (WSSO) have trained





Figure 6: Main reservoir tank | Source: WSSD, PHED, Nagaland

From reviving old rainwater harvesting pits to safeguarding forest catchments, Nagaland's example proves that the real strength of Jal Jeevan Mission lies not just in engineering solutions but in empowering communities to revive and sustain their water heritage.

Shikuto Village's journey reminds us that the most powerful change often begins with the simplest human need: access to clean water and the will to work together to secure it.

Copy edited by Amit Ranjan, NPMU-NJIM

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*In the age of satellites and smartphones, India's villages remind us that sometimes the most effective solutions are still rooted in community, collaboration, and care.”*

”

villagers in essential areas such as waste management, water conservation, sanitation, and personal hygiene. These programs have empowered the community to adopt sustainable practices that ensure the responsible use and management of their water resources.

Today, Shikuto stands not only as a water-secure village but as a symbol of how rural communities can lead their own transformation when empowered with the right tools and opportunities. The success of Jal Jeevan Mission in Shikuto illustrates the potential of people-driven development where government support meets local leadership and collective ownership to create lasting impact.



Figure 7: Community participation during laying of pipelines from the main source | Source: WSSD, PHED, Nagaland

# Chikarada Village Leads by Example: Community Takes Ownership of Piped Water Supply to Every Home

- Chandrika Patnaik, Saroj Poriccha, Gram Vikas, Odisha

In the quiet village of Chikarada in Odisha, communities are driving change—the way rural communities perceive and manage their water resources. What began as a simple awareness initiative has evolved into a powerful example of community-led water governance.

The spark was ignited by '*Basudha Rath*', a digital outreach initiative that uses mobile screens to showcase educational content in local languages like *Odia*, *Saura*, and *Kui*. These screenings are designed to engage and inform rural audiences through songs, plays, and videos on critical topics such as hygiene, sanitation, solid and liquid waste management, and the significance of clean and safe drinking water.

The highlight of '*Basudha Rath*' screenings in 2023 included an entertaining play and songs that emphasise the importance of maintaining a clean environment, community-owned household piped water supply, toilets, sanitation and hygiene practices, wastewater management and solid waste management.

In 2023, a highlight of the '*Basudha Rath*' tour was a captivating play and a series of songs in regional languages, that stressed the need for community-owned piped water supply, proper sanitation, and a clean environment. After '*Basudha Rath*' visited Chikarada, the message hit every home.



Figure 8: A beneficiary with her household tap connection | Source: Gram Vikas, Odisha

Motivated by the awareness drive, the Village Water and Sanitation Committee (VWSC) sprang into action. In a landmark village meeting, the committee proposed taking full charge of the piped water system—right from infrastructure management to fee collection and regular maintenance. The proposal included collecting a modest monthly maintenance fee from each household, reducing dependence on the Panchayat and ensuring an uninterrupted water supply.

To formalize the initiative, the VWSC first sought consent from the villagers

and then approached the Sarpanch, requesting the official transfer of operational responsibilities to the committee. They also held discussions with officials from the Rural Water Supply and Sanitation (RWSS) department. The immediate goal was to repair the damaged main pipeline, install new pipelines to cover households that had been left out, and encourage households to fix leaks in their individual connections.

A significant step forward was appointing a local resident to monitor water quality regularly, ensuring that every family received clean and safe

water. With support from the RWSS and community involvement, the vision soon turned into reality.

“

***"The RWSS repaired the old pipelines and extended new ones to households that previously did not have tap connections. As a result, every home in Chikarada now has access to piped water, including in their bathrooms and toilets. Our VWSC members are proactively managing the PWS scheme."***

Sarpanch G. Asantul Reddy shared proudly

”

Today, Chikarada stands as a model of sustainability and community-led development. The VWSC, with an equal number of men and women members, manages the system's day-to-day operations—from repairs to finances.

“

***"Earlier, the Panchayat maintained the infrastructure and paid electricity bills for the motor used in pumping water. Now, with the village in charge, all 700 households contribute a monthly fee of ₹40. A pump operator receives ₹5,000 per month, ensuring regular supply and upkeep. A youth from the village handles monthly fee collection, bookkeeping, and minor repairs. The committee monitors all records and expenses."***

Sasmita Mohanty, President of the VWSC, explained the operational model

”

This shared responsibility regulated by VWSC has instilled a deep sense of ownership and pride among residents.

“

Badrinath Behera, another VWSC member, echoed the sentiment:

***"The entire village is united in maintaining the system. It may be a basic facility, but it is our most valuable one. Every three months, we hold meetings to gather feedback from residents and discuss water-related issues. In one such meeting last year, we decided to disconnect the water supply to households that continued open defecation despite having tap water. It is upsetting to see someone from our village making public spaces dirty; it goes against the dignity that piped water brings us. Tap water supply also helped our villager maintain safe sanitation practices"***

”

As the village continues to grow, so does its water demand. In November 2024, the residents approached the

Sarpanch again, this time requesting a larger overhead tank. The existing 7,500-litre tank, supplying water twice daily, had become inadequate for the daily water needs of villagers.

*"A mega project is underway to build a new overhead tank with increased capacity to be completed by the end of 2025. It will ensure sufficient water for all residents,"* said the Sarpanch.

Beyond water supply, the village is exploring sustainable ways to fund development. Four ponds have been leased from the Panchayat for pisciculture, with the revenue generated feeding into the village development fund. *"With the population in our village increasing every year and more houses coming up, the water demand is rising,"* said Badrinath. *"To avoid future shortages, we must recharge groundwater. We are taking steps to de-silt and maintain the four ponds so they continue to thrive."*

Chikarada's journey from a Panchayat-dependent village to a self-sufficient, water-secure community is both inspiring and instructive. It demonstrates the power of community mobilisation, local leadership, and the critical role of awareness initiatives like 'Basudha Rath' in driving grassroots change.

*Copy edited by Lopamudra Panda, NPMU-NJIM*



Figure 9: Village mapping | Source: PHED, UP

# ग्राम-पटारिया नजदीक: पेयजल समिति की सक्रियता से नल-जल योजना बनी ग्रामीण आत्मनिर्भरता की मिसाल

- Himanshu Dubey, Madhya Pradesh, PHED

**दे**वास जिले के सोनकच्छ विकासखंड के ग्राम पटारिया नजदीक में 400 परिवारों को नल से जल उपलब्ध कराने में नल-जल योजना के सफल संचालन की प्रेरणादायक है। इस सफलता का श्रेय गांव की सक्रिय **पेयजल समिति** को जाता है, जिसने न सिर्फ योजना को सुचारू रूप से चलाया, बल्कि पूरे समुदाय को स्वच्छ जल और सहभागिता की दिशा में एक नई राह दिखाई।

## प्रशिक्षण और सहभागिता से शुरूआत

लोक स्वास्थ्य यांत्रिकी विभाग, देवास द्वारा केआरसी-3 के स्तर अंतर्गत आयोजित प्रशिक्षणों में जल जीवन मिशन की नल जल योजना के बेहतर संचालन के उद्देश्य से ग्राम स्तर पर समिति के सदस्यों एवं पंचायत प्रतिनिधियों ने योजना से संचालन विषय पर प्रशिक्षण प्राप्त कर प्रक्रिया को बेहतर तरीके से जाना एवं प्रशिक्षण उपरांत अपने ग्राम की नल जल योजना से संचालन में समिति की भूमिका, दायित्व और अधिकारों पर बैठक कर विस्तार से चर्चा की गई। विशेष ध्यान महिलाओं की भागीदारी पर दिया गया, जिससे समिति में महिलाओं को भी सम्मिलित किया गया।

## समझदारी से लिए गए निर्णय, मजबूत हुए परिणाम

बैठकों के दौरान ग्रामीणों, पंचायत प्रतिनिधियों एवं समिति के सुझावों से समिति का पुनर्गठन किया गया, जिसमें नई ऊर्जा और सक्रिय सदस्यों को जोड़ा गया। इसके बाद, समिति ने नियमित जल आपूर्ति, पाइपलाइन और टंकियों की



Figure 10: नल जल योजना से संचालन में समिति की भूमिका, दायित्व और अधिकारों पर बैठक | स्रोत: पीएचईडी एनपी

सफाई, समय पर रिपेयरिंग, दस्तावेजीकरण और जल कर संग्रहण जैसे महत्वपूर्ण कार्यों को जिम्मेदारी से निभाना शुरू किया।

**समर्थन और मार्गदर्शन बना प्रेरणा का स्रोत-** परियोजना टीम एवं विभागीय अधिकारियों - जैसे कार्यपालन यंत्री, सहायक यंत्री - के मार्गदर्शन से समिति को समय-समय पर प्रेरणा मिलती रही। इससे समिति की कार्यक्षमता और समर्पण में लगातार सुधार हुआ।

**आज की स्थिति: गांव की योजना, गांव के हाथों में -** आज पटारिया नजदीक में नल-जल योजना केवल एक सरकारी योजना नहीं रही, बल्कि यह ग्रामीणों की साझी जिम्मेदारी और सफलता की कहानी बन चुकी है। समिति नियमित बैठकें कर निर्णय लेती है, जल आपूर्ति

का निरीक्षण करती है, पानी की बर्बादी रोकने के प्रयास करती है और समुदाय को जागरूक करती है।

ग्राम पटारिया नजदीक की यह कहानी दर्शाती है कि जब गांव की जनता स्वयं अपनी योजनाओं की जिम्मेदारी लेती है, तो कोई भी पहल सिर्फ कागजी नहीं रहती, बल्कि ज़मीनी सफलता में बदल जाती है। पेयजल समिति की यह भागीदारी नल-जल योजना को टिकाऊ, प्रभावी और जनोन्मुखी बनाती है - यह संपूर्ण प्रदेश के लिए एक प्रेरणास्पद उदाहरण है।

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# Strengthening Rural Water Quality through Community Engagement and Local Governance

– Tula Bardhan (State Manager, Andhra Pradesh) and Anupriya Shukla (Senior State Manager, Madhya Pradesh), India Safe Water Program, Evidence Action

As the government's flagship programme Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM) continues to provide leadership to ensure every rural household in India has access to safe and adequate drinking water through household tap connections, community engagement and sensitization is emerging as a pivotal part of water quality interventions. As a technical partner, Evidence Action has been supporting NJJM interventions to provide hundreds of communities in Madhya Pradesh and Andhra Pradesh with access to quality drinking water. The intervention uses an in-line chlorination (ILC) device installed in the village water pipeline. Once the device has been installed in a village, the community starts getting safe drinking water through the JJM household taps which is free from odor and taste of chlorine.

However, the installation of the device is only one step in the process. Consistent involvement of Gram Panchayats and successful community engagement has to precede and follow the device installation in order to ensure acceptance and adoption of chlorinated water, community ownership, and long-term sustainability of such an intervention. Two stories from the States Evidence Actions currently works in, illustrates this fact.

## Agraharam, Andhra Pradesh: Panchayat Leadership in Action

Agraharam is a small village of 385 households in the Palanadu district of

Andhra Pradesh. With the guidance of the Rural Water Supply and Sanitation (RWSS) Department, Government of Andhra Pradesh Evidence Action installed a tablet-based doser (TBD) for in-line chlorination in the village.

At first, the villagers hesitated to adopt chlorinated water for drinking due to unfamiliarity with the technology. At this time, Shri Rambabu, the village Sarpanch, led community engagement by organizing community meetings at the Gram Sabha and Panchayat levels. In these meetings, he explained the purpose and benefits of the ILC device to the community members.

He built awareness and trust within the community for the device through his strong leadership, and

the active support of the Rural Water and Sanitation Department, Jal Samiti, and SHG members in the GP. Here are the steps Shri Rambabu and his team followed for this purpose:

- 💧 **Active Monitoring of Water Supply:** Every morning, Shri Rambabu personally supervised the water supply to ensure chlorinated water was reaching households across the village.
- 💧 **Recruitment and Fair Wages:** A dedicated pump operator was appointed to manage the ILC device with fair wages.
- 💧 **Infrastructure Improvement:** He proactively supported the laying down of new pipelines to ensure uniform water access. Contamination-prone points in the supply



Figure 11: Community engagement meeting with local leaders and other panchayat members | Source: Evidence Action

*"Initially people were reluctant to consume tap water. As they were thinking the water coming from taps which has been treated from the installed chlorination device will have the same bitter odor and taste of chlorine. It took repeated meetings and communication with community to convince them that consuming chlorinated water will improve the health of their children. With consistent chlorination and regular maintenance, water-borne illnesses have significantly declined in the village, showcasing the direct health benefits of the intervention. Anything that is for the betterment of my people, I will always stand for that."*

- Shri Rambabu shares with sparkling eyes



**Shri Rambabu**  
Sarpanch

line were identified and replaced, while unhygienic side drains were removed and rearranged for better sanitation.

💧 **Maintenance and Hygiene Measures:** The village water tank is now cleaned twice a month, and platforms have been constructed for 56 public taps to maintain hygiene. Additionally, clean water connections were extended to the local school and Anganwadi center, improving water access for children.

💧 **Consistent Device Monitoring:** He ensures that the device is regularly reviewed from an operations and maintenance perspective.

### Mugaliya Hat, Madhya Pradesh: Local Governance Driving Grassroots Change

Shri Uday Singh Thakur is the Secretary of Mugaliya Hat Gram Panchayat in

Bhopal district of Madhya Pradesh. Shri Thakur exemplifies how local governance and Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) can transform public health outcomes through community-driven initiatives.

With the guidance of the Public Health Engineering Department (PHED), Government of Madhya Pradesh, Evidence Action installed an ILC device in the village to provide safe drinking water. Gram Panchayat took immediate administrative action to support the provision of chlorinated water to all 177 households in the village.

Recognizing the importance of safe water and the threat of waterborne diseases, Shri Thakur led door-to-door awareness campaigns, organized Gram Sabha meetings, and addressed community skepticism. He provided necessary administrative assistance and approvals on time. He also ensured the successful installation and maintenance of the chlorination system. By involving local village leaders, he fostered community engagement and built collective ownership of the initiative.

Mugaliya Hat today stands as a beacon of how empowered PRIs and local leadership can drive sustainable change from the grassroots, ensuring safe water, healthier lives, and a stronger future.



Figure 12: Shri Uday Singh Thakur doing Community engagement meeting with villagers | Source: Evidence Action



*"Chlorinated water is safe to consume. Our village was transformed with the access we got to clean, purified water by tap in every household. If we ensure every community in India gets access to chlorinated water, we can build a healthier, brighter future for all."*

Says Shri Thakur while speaking about the intervention



**Shri Uday Singh Thakur**  
Secretary

## Local Bodies Leading the Way in Water Source Sustainability

The success of Agraharam and Mugaliya Hat highlights the critical role of Gram Panchayats and local governance in achieving water security through community engagement. When the GP leaders and members get actively involved in water quality interventions, they can foster capacity building, infrastructure development, institutional support, and true long-term ownership of the ILC device by the community. This active involvement of PRIs makes all the difference between a one-time intervention and a lifelong sustainable system of drinking water.

## Recommendations on capacity building of Gram Panchayats

The stories of Agraharam and Mugaliya Hat show how Gram Panchayats can drive meaningful change—by preserving traditions, ensuring continuous availability of safe and clean water, and building a healthier future for rural India. These villages stand as examples of what's

possible when local leadership is empowered and communities are actively engaged. Their success highlights the transformative potential of grassroots governance under Jal Jeevan Mission. To replicate such success across the country, the following measures will be crucial:

1. **Capacity Building:** It is crucial to strengthen the capacities of Gram Panchayats (GPs), especially the valve operators who operate and maintain the water quality technology. With the leadership of PHED/RWSS departments and knowledge of relevant subject matter experts, PRI members and valve operators need to be equipped with practical knowledge and skills in:
  - Water disinfection / chlorination basics
  - Operation and maintenance of chlorination devices
  - Water quality testing
  - Monitoring and maintaining safe free chlorine residual levels
  - Community engagement - specifically managing community concerns and adverse reactions,

promoting awareness, and sustained acceptance of chlorinated water by the community

To ensure the sustainability of capacity-building efforts, dedicated district-level resource centres can be established. These hubs would provide GPs with ongoing access to tools, training, and technical assistance for effective water system management. Such training can be conducted in collaboration with the State Institute of Rural Development.

2. **Inclusivity:** Since women are the ultimate Water Managers of most rural households, it is crucial that these training initiatives are gender-inclusive. It can be achieved by ensuring the training programs actively involve women, focusing on decision-making roles in water governance and system operations and management. Empowering women in these roles will not only enhance the effectiveness of service delivery but also reinforce community ownership and long-term sustainability. The successful involvement of village level groups such as- Women Self-Help Groups (SHGs), Agricultural committees, Village Water and Sanitation Committee (VWSC) and Village Health, Sanitation, and Nutrition Committee (VHSNC) in activities such as Field Test Kit (FTK) water quality testing in JJM serves as a strong model for inclusive participation and can be scaled as part of future training and implementation efforts.
3. **Structured feedback and monitoring mechanisms:** These can be instituted at the GP level to track device performance, and



Figure 13: A mother and child enjoying safe water

Source: Evidence Action

enable timely troubleshooting. Incorporating community feedback into ongoing operations will further foster local ownership and accountability in safe water service delivery and help make JJM water quality interventions a true *jan andolan* through *Jan Bhagidari*. At GP level JJM dashboards can work as a platform to gather community feedback.

#### 4. Use of behavioral sciences in community engagement:

Behaviours are not changed by facts, information, or diktats. Behavioral science and concepts of nudge theory outline the ways in which we can initiate sustained behaviour change in communities from within. This can be done through participatory rural activities like village water quality mapping, water timeline creation, and behaviour

change triggering exercises. These principles have previously been used in successful large-scale behavioural change campaigns like the Swachh Bharat Mission (Grameen), and can now be adopted to create the same kind of sustained changes in water quality management and consumption behaviours as well.

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# Community at the Core: Sustaining Water Supply through Local Governance

- Ritika Rai, Executive Engineer, SWSM-Uttar Pradesh

**M**aanpur Lala, a small village located just 28 kilometres from Lucknow in the Bakshi Ka Talab block of Uttar Pradesh, presents an inspiring example of how Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM) is strengthening local governance and enabling long-term sustainability of rural water supply systems. Once plagued with acute water scarcity and contaminated sources, Maanpur Lala has today emerged as a model for community-led water management through active Panchayat involvement and community ownership.

Despite its proximity to the state capital, the community of Maanpur Lala faced persistent challenges in accessing safe drinking water. The village was primarily dependent on India Mark II handpumps, which were not only difficult to access, especially for women and the elderly, but also often drank impure water. This led to repetitive waterborne diseases and considerable hardship for the villagers.

The launch of the Jal Jeevan Mission brought a significant shift in the village's water situation. A piped water supply scheme was initiated, ensuring household-level tap connections. For the first time, clean water became easily accessible, greatly improving the quality of life and health in the community.

However, the real test came after the initial implementation. While the water supply functioned smoothly



Figure 14: Solar based OHT in Maanpur Lala | Source: SWSM-UP



Figure 15: The happiness of a young girl having tap connection | Source: SWSM-UP

for almost a year, small issues began to come up—pipeline leakages, faulty fittings, and minor mechanical problems started affecting the regularity of supply. Initially, the Pradhan personally managed small repairs, but the situation took a

critical turn when the solar switch broke down, halting the water supply for almost a month. Without a dedicated fund or a formal maintenance mechanism, the problem remained unresolved, and community frustration began to scale.

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*“Initially, we were struggling with the operation and maintenance of the scheme. No one took care of it, and the functionality was interrupted many times due to leakage, breakage and other technical issues. Paying the Pump Operator was a challenge. But after the VWSC was reformed, the committee collectively took care of the functionality and the sustainability of the scheme. Now, our village water scheme is not dependent upon anyone—we have built the capacity to independently manage and ensure good functionality of the system.”*

Says Gram Pradhan Sri. Mahendra Yadav, Maanpur Lala

”

To address the crisis, Gram Pradhan facilitated an open community dialogue involving the community, Village Water and Sanitation Committee (VWSC), and residents. This collective discussion led to the decision to restructure and strengthen the VWSC and assign it the responsibility for the operation and maintenance (O&M) of the village water scheme. The newly reformed VWSC, under the leadership of the Pradhan, held its first meeting to devise a concrete action plan.

It was decided that a resident, Prakash ji, would be appointed as the pump operator, and a water tariff would be introduced to fund maintenance and operational costs. Initially, the idea of contributing monthly payments met with some resistance. However, as the VWSC members and the Pradhan engaged with villagers and explained the importance of shared responsibility, the initiative gradually gained community support. The collected funds were promptly used to repair the faulty solar switch, and the water supply resumed.

Since then, the VWSC has maintained a consistent system of monthly tariff collection. Over the past two years, water tariffs have been collected and fairly used to pay the pump operator's salary and conduct periodic maintenance work. The committee meets regularly to review operations, resolve issues, and maintain financial transparency. The sense of ownership and accountability fostered through this community-led model has resulted in uninterrupted water supply, minimal service disruptions, and a heightened awareness of water conservation.

Maanpur Lala's transformation showcases how Jal Jeevan Mission is not merely a scheme for infrastructure development, but a catalyst for empowering local governance. By





Figure 16: Smile speaks the inner happiness more than words | Source: SWSM-UP

“

*“When the water supply scheme is situated in our village and if we want to get free flowing water from taps, then it is our responsibility to take care of it. With this thought, we began the journey of forming our village committee. Today, we are running our water scheme smoothly and even inspiring other villages to do the same.”*

VWSC member Pinki Ji says with confidence

”

building the capacity of Gram Panchayats and enabling them to manage their own water supply systems, JJM is ensuring long-term sustainability and resilience. This case illustrates how even small contributions and collective decision-making at the village level can lead to sustainable and efficient public service delivery.

The processes of change have been supported by Aga Khan Foundation as a sector partner. The success of Maanpur Lala reinforces the importance of Panchayat-led efforts and community participation in achieving water security. It also underlines the value of building strong institutional mechanisms like VWSCs, which are essential for the continued functionality and sustainability of rural water supply schemes under Jal Jeevan Mission.

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# Bundelkhand's Beacon, Sendhkhuri Became a Model Village

- Shivani Singh, Senior Programme Manager, Parmarth Samaj Sevi Sansthan

**W**ater is a basic human need and vital for survival. However, in many rural areas, access to a reliable and safe water supply remains a significant challenge. A sustainable and effective approach to address this issue lies in collective community action. When communities come together, they can play a powerful role in strengthening water supply systems and ensuring effective tariff collection.

This is the inspiring story of Sendhkhuri, a small village under Peera Gram Panchayat in Bada Malhera block of Chhatarpur district, Madhya Pradesh. With a population of just 238, the village is located about 50 km from the block headquarters. Like many villages in the Bundelkhand region, Sendhkhuri faced an acute water crisis, which made life difficult for its residents.

Development on the WASH (Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene) front was negligible, and the village's remote location made regular administrative visits difficult.

The launch of Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM) offered a ray of hope. Under the programme, pipelines were laid, and an overhead tank was constructed. However, the water supply did not commence regularly due to the absence of a pump operator. Adding to the problem, the gates of an existing check dam on a nearby river had been stolen, rendering it ineffective. With minimal awareness about hygiene and cleanliness, even agriculture was suffering due to a lack of water.

As an Implementation Support Agency (ISA), the Parmarth team penetrated Sendhkhuri as an intervention village and began engaging

the community. They organized multiple community meetings focused on WASH and water issues. These discussions especially resonated with the young girls and women of the village, who came forward with a desire to bring change.

They conducted PRA in the village, prepared social and resource maps and mobilized the community on cleanliness and WASH issues. They learnt how to prepare the water budget and prepared their village's water budget. Through Jal Chaupals awareness on water issues and Jal Jeevan Mission-Har Ghar Jal ethos were created among the community.

Sendhkhuri comes under the single village scheme and the scheme was handed over to the active VWSC by the officials. The PHED officials helped them with adequate training and from time to time they provided the required support so that the VWSC can effectively work. They regularized VWSC meetings and emphasized proper record keeping. Parmarth conducted VWSC trainings so that they can understand their roles and responsibilities that made the VWSC a proactive one.

The VWSC played a crucial role in ensuring a regular and reliable water supply for the community. By taking ownership of the local water management system, the committee implemented scheduled water distribution and monitored usage, in addition to managing the supply, the



Figure 17: Community repairing the stolen gate of check dam | Source: Parmarth Samaj Sevi Sansthan





Figure 18: Community meeting | Source: Parmarth Samaj Sevi Sansthan

VWSC also streamlined the process of tariff collection, encouraging households to contribute regularly. This not only helped cover operational and maintenance costs but also fostered a sense of community responsibility and ownership. Today all households are providing monthly water tariff. The accounts are maintained and during the meetings the community is informed about the collected tax. Transparent communication about how tariffs are calculated and used can build trust. When villagers see visible improvements in their water services, they are more likely to pay their dues.

Meetings with the PHED department led to the completion of laying of pipelines and connections. A pump operator was also appointed. The VWSC members are keeping records of meetings also.

Under the project awareness was created on grey water management through establishment of kitchen garden so that grey water can be used. The **Jal Sahelis** and other women enthusiastically took initiative for establishing kitchen gardens. Now each household has a kitchen garden near his/her home that has not only manage grey water but also has provided vegetables for enhancing nutritional status. Earlier

vegetables were hardly a part of their daily diet, but since they have home grown vegetables, daily consumption of vegetables has become a normal routine.

Besides, VWSC also emphasizes water conservation issues. When they learnt about the missing gates of the check dam, a deep search was initiated by VWSC members for their reclamation. Finally, the gates were reclaimed and were put to their proper place.

Now during the monsoon, the river was full of water. The irrigation area is increased by 100 hectares. The

community started establishing kitchen gardens to recycle wastewater and to grow vegetables and now they could get vegetable in the village itself. It saved the women a long trek to the market which is about 4 km away. The households are getting regular supply of drinking water. They are paying water tariff. Nutrition garden is established in the primary school to provide fresh vegetables to kids. When people have a stake in their water systems, they are more likely to take responsibility and participate actively in its upkeep. The village is a model village today as the young leaders showed the way.

When communities take charge of their water supply systems, several positive outcomes follow. Water becomes more reliable and accessible. Infrastructure is better maintained. Revenue collection improves, leading to more funds for future upgrades. Moreover, such collaboration fosters a sense of ownership and pride among residents, which contributes to the sustainability of the system. VWSC of Sendkhuri showed the way for collective responsibility sharing and making a sustainable water supply system.

*Copy Edited by Lopamudra Panda, NPMU-NJIM*



Figure 19: Young VWSC members of Sendkhuri showing village map | Source: Parmarth Samaj Sevi Sansthan

# Lanshonbi's Leap from Water Scarcity to Water Security

- Dr R Ramesh, Associate Professor, CRI, NIRDPR-Hyderabad

**N**estled in the Patsoi subdivision of Imphal West district, Manipur, Lanshonbi village under Yurembam Gram Panchayat is home to around 570 households and a population of approximately 3,000 people. Until recently, the villagers faced a persistent and costly challenge in accessing safe drinking water. The only reliable source was water tankers, which visited once a week. Families had to spend between ₹300 and ₹600 weekly, depending on household size and water needs—an expense that imposed a significant financial burden and a constant sense of uncertainty.

This changed dramatically with the implementation of national flagship programme, Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM) to provide rural India access to

drinking water through household tap connections. Under this initiative, the Public Health Engineering Department (PHED), Imphal West, undertook the augmentation of the **Yarou Bambir Water Supply Scheme**. With a reservoir capacity of 0.39 million litres per day (MLD), the project became fully operational in December 2020.

Lanshonbi emerged as one of the major beneficiaries. The arrival of piped water at every doorstep ushered in what the villagers now call “real freedom”—freedom from long waits for tanker operators, recurring expenses i.e freedom from spending a large share of their income on water, and unpredictability. The success of the scheme echoed in every household, families express

deep relief and gratitude for this transformation.

At the heart of this success lies the committed leadership of the Village Water and Sanitation Committee (VWSC). **Shri L. Tomba Singh, President** of the VWSC, is widely appreciated for his unwavering dedication to ensuring that every household receives an adequate and safe water supply. Under his leadership, the committee remains active and responsive to the needs of the community.

A strong pillar of this community-led approach is **Smt. Asharani Devi**, a member of a local **Self-Help Group (SHG)**, who has been trained in water quality testing. She regularly conducts tests for 13 parameters,



Figure 20: Water purification plant Yarou Bambir | Source: PHED, Manipur



with a special focus on 5 critical ones – using the Field Test Kit. Her meticulous record-keeping and diligence ensure that the water supplied is not just sufficient but also safe. Her efforts add a layer of trust and confidence in the system. The active VWSC has created a community-based system for sustainable operation and maintenance (O&M) of the facilities created.

Adding a unique motivational boost to this success story was a moment that the village will never forget. During a “Mann Ki Baat” broadcast, the Hon’ble Prime Minister of India interacted virtually with the villagers of Lanshonbi. The community gathered around a large screen to witness the event, and for many, it felt like a personal visit from the Prime Minister himself. This interaction deeply inspired the villagers, leaving them with a sense of pride, recognition, and belonging to a larger national mission.

Today, Lanshonbi village stands as a shining example of how community participation, visionary leadership, and timely government intervention can bring about a tangible change in people’s lives. The Jal Jeevan Mission has not only delivered safe water to their homes—it has restored dignity, reduced financial stress, and brought the community together with a shared sense of purpose.

Copy edited by Lopamudra Panda, NPMU-NJJM




Figure 21: The happiness brought by FHTC | Source: NIRDPR



Ministry of Jal Shakti




Ministry of Jal Shakti






Ministry of Jal Shakti

## Shuddh Jal aur Swachhta Se Swasth Bachpan

Purn Poshan Ki Shuruwaat, Shuddh Jal aur Swachhta ke Saath



-  Ensure Shuddh Jal and Swachhta Drive
-  Smart Poshan Anganwadi' Certification
-  Session for AWC Workers
-  Swachh Jal, Sundar Aangan



# Hand Hygiene: The Missing Piece of the WASH Jigsaw Puzzle

- Aditi Tewari, NPMU, Swachh Bharat Mission -Grameen



**W**hen we talk about WASH- Water, Sanitation and Hygiene, our attention typically gravitates toward infrastructure that include piped water, toilets, waste treatment systems etc. Even though these are critical pieces, there's one element that's often treated as an afterthought and is one that underpins the effectiveness of all these pieces, hand hygiene.

This simple, low-cost, high-impact behavior often gets sidelined, and it took a global pandemic to bring handwashing to the forefront of the public discourse, where handwashing was everywhere - billboards, WhatsApp messages, even in memes. It was a crisis-induced behavior, a reactive response rather than a systemic one. However, since then, the focus has faded as the headlines have shifted. Yet it is imperative that we don't fall back into old patterns, underestimating the power of this act.

## Why It Still Matters

As per available research, the simple act of handwashing with soap can reduce diarrhoeal disease by up to 30% and respiratory infections by around 20%. For children under five, especially in rural areas, this difference is lifesaving. These are not just statistics, they do translate into fewer hospital visits, reduced out-of-pocket expenses, and lives saved, especially among young children and vulnerable populations. In schools, hand hygiene supports attendance and learning outcomes. In health care settings, it protects both patients and providers. For communities, it is the difference between falling into a cycle of disease and moving towards a healthier, more resilient future.

Hand hygiene is the first line of defense against countless infections and as per the WHO/ UNICEF 2023 update estimated that in 2022, 27% of the global population (2.2 billion people) lacked "safely managed

drinking water"— meaning water at home, available, and safe. The JMP 2023 update estimated that in 2022, 25% of the global population (2.0 billion people) lacked basic hygiene services – access to a handwashing facility with soap and water at home. 1.3 billion people had handwashing facilities that lacked soap and/or water, while 653 million people had no handwashing facility at home. In India, as per JMP 2022, 60% of rural and 82% of urban populations in India had access to basic hygiene services, while 29% had access to handwashing facility but lacked either soap or water and 3% had neither soap nor water. As per national survey conducted in 2018, only 35.8% population regularly washed hands before meals, and 74.1% did so after defecation. In schools, 93.6% had handwashing facilities, but only 39.8% had both soap and water; in anganwadis, just 42.1% had access to soap and water, and in healthcare settings, hand hygiene compliance was 67.88%.



These highlight the progress and throw light on the ongoing challenges about hand hygiene, which is arguably the most powerful preventive habit in the WASH framework.

There has been remarkable work that has been done to ensure India's progress on WASH and wash infrastructure. However, hand hygiene is often not prioritized in programmatic planning and is viewed not as an infrastructure need like toilets or taps. It is recommended as a practice to States/UTs but if we truly want to build sustainable WASH systems, hand hygiene needs to be treated as a foundation. Promoting hand hygiene is not only about putting up handwashing stations. It's about enabling behavior by making hand hygiene easy, accessible, fashionable and aspirational.

One can consider how "walking 10,000 steps a day" became a global health mantra. Originating as a Japanese marketing slogan in the 1960s ("manpo-kei" or "10,000-step meter"), it gained popularity not because it was the only way to stay fit, but because it was simple, measurable, and widely promoted. Over time, this number has almost become a health standard. **Hand hygiene needs its "10,000 steps moment."** This entails, simplifying the message, anchor it in habit, and make it aspirational. It could be as basic as:

- Wash hands five times a day: - **Haath Dhona Paanch Baar, Bimariyon Se Rahe Hum Paar**
- One minute. Two hands. Big impact"- **Saaf Haath, Acchi Baat!**
- Swachh Haath, Swasth Zindagi.

The point being, we need a hook. Something that makes handwashing part of daily identity, not just a disease response. We need a shift in how we perceive return on invest-



ment. Every rupee spent on hand hygiene promotion saves multiple rupees in healthcare costs. It boosts productivity and enhances dignity.

We need to also continue focusing on ensuring water availability, promoting the use of soap, and continue **creating nudges in public spaces** which include *visual cues and reminders* through footsteps, posters featuring local role models washing hands, mirrors with messages, and signages; *strategic placement of handwashing stations* at entrances/exits of meal areas, and outside toilets; *behavioural prompts* through motion triggered audio messages or jingles that can be played in local languages as reminders and tactile prompts such as textured soap that engage curiosity and embedding the hand washing habit in schools and anganwadi routines.

The content and the communication must **engage communities with relatable messaging and sustained campaigns, not just during disease outbreaks**, but as a permanent feature of WASH communication. To

make this a reality, **we need leadership and support of all panchayats, health workers, teachers, sanitation workers, Nal Jal Mitra and even self-help groups** who will have a significant role to play in making hand hygiene a norm.

The integration of hand hygiene into the ongoing DDWS Poshan Pakhwada campaign (8-23 April) is not just timely but it underlines that good nutrition and good hygiene go hand in hand. Clean hands are a critical ingredient for a healthy life. The intention is that if the people in the community see others consistently practicing it especially role models and local leaders, there will be higher uptake and higher recall.

In the end, if 10,000 steps became a lifestyle through design, repetition, and visibility so can handwashing. But it requires a collective mindset shift, where we stop viewing hygiene as an extra and start treating it as a foundational public health behavior, since in the WASH jigsaw puzzle, hand hygiene is not a side piece. It's the center that holds it all together.

# Empowerment of Community through Knowledge

- Er. Rajib Majumder, Chief Engineer, PWD(DWS), Tripura

**G**ram Panchayats (GPs) have a constitutional mandate to supply & manage drinking water to the rural households in India. They do so mostly by sinking Tube Well (TW). The Ministry of Jal Shakti, Govt. of India has come out to ensure providing FHTC (Functional Household Tap Connection) to every rural family by 2028. Not only that, but it also includes providing functional tap connection to schools, Anganwadi centers, GP building, health centers, SHG buildings and other institutions in rural areas. The task of GP related to water supply will change substantially with implementation of JJM. There will be need for daily operation & timely maintenance involving more cost, advance technology, monitoring and maintaining service quality including water quality, grievance redressal and management of fund for financial sustainability. The focus will

change from just installing & maintaining TW to providing daily service – which will be easily monitored by the people. The same is to be done as a service to enhance the wellbeing of the people and improving public health. That will require change in mindset from infrastructure creation to service management with responsiveness. There will be need for developing capacity of the GP/ VWSC on multiple dimensions and putting in place system for engagement with the consumer. Attitude towards the people must change by treating them as consumer of services with mutual accountability.

Keeping in mind the paradigm shifts of the role and responsibilities of the grass root level administration and to address the need of the hour Public Works Department (Drinking Water & Sanitation) of the Government of Tripura in collaboration with the

block level administration organised an orientation programme for the Panchayat personnel of Satchand Block within the Sabroom Subdivision on April 8, 2025, at the conference hall of Satchand RD Block.

The program was headed by Anupam Das, the Block Development Officer (BDO) of Satchand, and included participation from key officials of the Public Works Department (Drinking Water & Sanitation) of the Government of Tripura. Public representatives present included the Block Panchayat Samiti Chairperson, the Block Advisory Committee Chairperson, and various dignitaries. Additionally, representatives from all 24 villages within the block, including heads of 39 Gram Panchayats and Village Councils, took part in the event, marking it as one of the most inclusive and community-oriented initiatives in recent history. Central to



Figure 22: Delegates from different GPs & Village Councils | Source: DWS Tripura





Figure 23: Dignitaries of different departments | Source: DWS Tripura

the discussions was the government's flagship initiative, the 'Jal Jeevan Mission,' which aims to provide safe and sufficient drinking water to every rural household through individual tap connections.

Participants examined how this mission could be effectively implemented in the region, identifying infrastructure gaps, outlining future action plans, and emphasizing the necessity of community engagement. A crucial point raised during the meeting was that constructing infrastructure alone would not resolve the issue unless the community is educated on the significance of

water conservation. Speakers highlighted the importance of preventing water wastage, increasing awareness among villagers, and fostering a collective responsibility for the preservation of water sources. The program also focused on the need for localized solutions that cater to the geographical and demographic characteristics of the Satchand block. Discussions included strategies for educating the rural population on responsible water usage, water charges, promoting rainwater harvesting, and implementing cost-effective water recycling techniques at the community level.

It was also mentioned that there is to be clearly laid responsibility among different functionaries of the GP as to their responsibilities for O&M of the IVWSS, accountability, coordination with PHED, coordination with village level skilled persons like plumbers and engagement with the consumers

This initiative has received significant recognition as an essential advancement, as it unites administrative authorities and local community leaders on a shared platform to address grassroots challenges.

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Figure 24: Speaker addressing the audience | Source: DWS Tripura

# Jal Abhinandan: Community Honours Dedicated Water Workers

- Charu Shukla and Ratika Bhargav, State Water & Sanitation Mission, Uttar Pradesh

The true measure of any mission's success lies not merely in its implementation but in the impact it creates on the ground. When beneficiaries begin to identify with the mission, internalize its objectives, and actively spread awareness within their communities, it reflects a deeper level of acceptance and empowerment. This organic participation transforms a top-down initiative into a people-led movement – an indicator that the mission has not only reached its target audience but has inspired them to become ambassadors of change. Such community-driven advocacy marks the essence of a truly successful and sustainable mission.

'Jal Abhinandan' is one such initiative led by Gram Panchayats across Uttar Pradesh, where villagers express heartfelt gratitude towards the officials and teams who have worked tirelessly under the Jal Jeevan Mission. For years, these villages faced severe water scarcity that disrupted daily life and impacted overall well-being. Today, thanks to the Mission's interventions, they enjoy reliable access to potable water, leading to improved living conditions.

This initiative is a public expression of appreciation by the villagers for the dedication of Jal Jeevan Mission teams and implementing agencies. It also exemplifies the spirit of collaboration between the government and the community. The event is not only a platform for celebration but also a space for promoting two-way communication. It encourages dialogue between officials and

villagers, thereby building a strong sense of community ownership and responsibility towards the sustainable management of water schemes.

The 'Jal Abhinandan' activity is held in villages where 100% of the 'Har Ghar Jal' work has been successfully completed. These events bring together community representatives, including village heads, trained women from VWSCs (Village Water & Sanitation Committees), FTK-trained members, and other residents. They collaboratively organize the event and honour the teams responsible for ensuring tap water supply at the doorstep. Through these gestures, the community acknowledges the efforts that have transformed their quality of life and resolved long-standing water issues.

So far, three such events have been organized in Uttar Pradesh, with each witnessing participation from around 4,000 to 5,000 people. In the case of multi-village schemes, representatives

from 3- 4 villages come together for the celebrations. Apart from community members, the events are attended by key administrative officials such as the District Magistrate, Chief Development Officer, and Block Pramukh. Senior technical and field functionaries like the Executive Engineer, Chief Engineer, and implementing agency representatives also take part.

Political leaders and elected representatives, including MLAs, MLCs, and the State Minister of Jal Shakti, participate in these programmes, further amplifying their significance.

The individuals recognized during these events include field workers and staff from agencies who have worked tirelessly to implement the water supply schemes. Moving forward, similar events are planned in all 'Har Ghar Jal' certified villages across the state.

*Copy edited by Shailika Sinha, NJJM*



Figure 25: The Gram Pradhan of Shivhar village of Mahoba district expressing the gratitude to the Jal Nigam engineer for bringing water to the village | Source: State Water and Sanitation Mission, Uttar Pradesh

# Jal Jeevan Mission: Transforming Rural Water Management Through Local Governance

- Mithilesh Krishnatrya and Ankush Bhattacharjee, CML Tata Trust



Figure 26: Mirzakhat WUC member | Source: CML Tata Trust

In the heart of Assam's Kamrup district, a quiet revolution in water governance is unfolding. The Mirzakhat and Mugakhol villages have emerged as beacons of success under Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM), demonstrating how empowered local communities can effectively manage their water resources through participatory governance.

These villages showcase the transformative impact of JJM's focus on decentralized decision-making, where water is not merely provided as a service but entrusted as a resource to be managed by the community itself. Their stories reflect JJM's core philosophy: sustainable water security can only be achieved when communities take ownership of their water systems.

## Mirzakhat: From Contamination to Celebration

In the picturesque village of Mirzakhat, situated in 76 No. Dakhin Pachim Luki of Boko Block, the Public Water Supply Scheme (PWSS) faced a critical challenge—microbial contamination that threatened the health of its residents. Today, under the committed leadership of President Mr. Dulal Boro and Secretary Mr. Dilip Boro, this same scheme stands as a model of **community-managed water governance**.

The installation of an In-Line Chlorinator (ILC) marked a turning point. This technological intervention, accompanied by comprehensive community training, empowered the village to maintain safe drinking

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*“Change didn't happen overnight, when we first took responsibility under JJM's decentralized approach, we knew we needed to address the water quality issues that had plagued our village for years.”*

recalls Shri Dulal Boro,  
President WUC

”

water standards independently. So successful was this intervention that the community sent an appreciation letter to CML (Centre for Microfinance and Livelihood), acknowledging the transformation in their water quality.

What makes Mirzakhat's story remarkable is the systematic approach to water governance they've established:

- 💧 **Regular Operations & Maintenance:** The Water User Committee (WUC) ensures the continued functioning of the system through scheduled maintenance activities
- 💧 **Proactive Monitoring:** Weekly inspection of pipes and taps prevents major breakdowns
- 💧 **Community-Funded Repairs:** Minor repairs are promptly addressed using village resources.



Figure 27: Water Tariff collection | Source: CML Tata Trust

- ◆ **Monthly Governance Meetings:** Regular discussions focus on water quality and conservation.
- ◆ **Women's Participation:** Female community members actively participate in decision-making, bringing diverse perspectives to water management.
- ◆ **Transparent Record-Keeping:** Detailed documentation of meetings and tariff collections builds trust and accountability.

### Mugakhhol: Excellence in Water Governance Recognized

Just a few kilometers away in 69 No. Dakhin Pachim Boko, the village of Mugakhhol has taken community water governance to award-winning levels. Under the leadership of President Mr. Pradip Kumar Boro and Secretary Mr. Hemanta Boro, the village PWSS has become a district-level success story.

In May 2024, Mugakhhol received district-level recognition, winning awards for Best Water User Committee, Jal Mitra, and FTK (Field Testing Kit) usage in Kamrup. These accolades highlight the village's exceptional commitment to water service quality and hygiene monitoring.

“

*"The recognition is gratifying, but what truly matters is that our community has reliable access to safe water, every family now receives clean water through household tap connections, something we once considered a distant dream."*

says Mr. Hemanta Boro

”

Like Mirzakhat, Mugakhhol's success stems from strong community involvement, regular maintenance, and transparent governance practices. What sets them apart is the meticulous attention to capacity building within the community, ensuring that knowledge about water management is widely shared rather than concentrated among a few leaders.

### The Human Impact: An Anganwadi Worker's Testimony

While data and systems tell us one part of the story, the real impact is felt in everyday lives. For Mrs. Runu Rabha, an Anganwadi worker and elder in her village, the difference is clear.

She's been caring for children for years and remembers the struggles families once faced.

For Mrs. Rabha, the biggest change is not just the water, but the confidence



Figure 28: Repair works-Mugakhhol PWSS | Source: CML Tata Trust





Figure 29: Mrs. Runu Rabha,  
Anganwadi worker  
Source: CML Tata Trust

*"The water we had before was dirty and smelly most of the time. Children used to fall sick with stomach problems and rashes. It was upsetting because we were doing everything, we could keep them healthy, but still, the illnesses kept coming."*

*"Now, things are different. After In-line Chlorination, the water is clean, it smells fresh. And most importantly, the children are not getting sick like before. I have seen it myself — fewer complaints, healthier kids, and less worried parents."*

*"People are trusting the tap water. Mothers tell me they cook with it, drink it, and do not think twice. That kind of change matters. It means a lot to all of us."*

says Mrs. Runu Rabha, Anganwadi worker

it has brought back. With safe drinking water children are getting healthy.

## The Foundation of Success: Unity and Ownership

When asked about the secret to their successful water management, leaders from both villages offer the same answer: unity. The collective approach to decision-making, problem-solving, and resource mobilization has created a resilient system that can withstand challenges.

“

*"In our meetings, every voice matters," explains Mr. Pradip Kumar Boro of Mugakhol. "When we decide on tariff amounts or maintenance schedules, we ensure that the entire community, especially women who are primary water managers in households, have their say."*

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This inclusive approach has fostered a strong sense of ownership. Rather than seeing the water supply scheme as a government initiative, villagers view it as a community asset—one they have the right and responsibility to manage.

## Key Elements of Effective Local Water Governance

Drawing from the experiences of Mirzakhat and Mugakhol, several elements emerge as essential to the success of community-led water governance under JJM:

- 💧 **Democratic Leadership Structure:** Elected Water User Committees with clearly defined roles

- ◆ **Regular Participatory Meetings:** Monthly forums for transparent decision-making
- ◆ **Financial Sustainability:** Community-determined and collected water tariffs
- ◆ **Gender Inclusion:** Active participation of women in governance and decision-making
- ◆ **Systematic Monitoring:** Regular water quality testing and infrastructure inspections
- ◆ **Documentation and Accountability:** Maintenance of registers for meetings and financial transactions
- ◆ **Technical Capacity Building:** Training community members in operation and maintenance
- ◆ **Problem-Solving Autonomy:** Ability to address minor repairs without external assistance

## Looking Ahead: The Future of Community Water Governance

As Jal Jeevan Mission progresses toward its goal of providing functional household tap connections to every rural home, the experiences of Mirzakhat and Mugakhol underscore a crucial lesson: sustainable access to safe drinking water depends not just on infrastructure but on empowered local governance.

Through JJM's emphasis on decentralized decision-making, these communities have transformed from passive recipients of government services to active stewards of their water resources. Their success demonstrates that when villages are empowered with the right tools, training, and trust, local governance becomes the strongest foundation for achieving water security for all.

Copy edited by Lopamudra Panda, NPMU-NJJM

“

*“This Inline Chlorination system has not just purified our water but has also renewed our faith in sustainable solutions,” reflects Mrs. Champa Rabha. “I often remind the villagers during our meetings that this effort under JJM, by PHED and in, collaboration with CML, Tata Trusts is a blessing we should protect. It gives me hope for a healthier future for the children of our village.”*

”



Figure 30: District-level recognition Mugakhol PWSS | Source: CML Tata Trust



# श्रम से मुक्ति और समय बचत ने दिया सपने गढ़ने का मौका

- अमित रंजन, राष्ट्रीय जल जीवन मिशन एवं दंतेवाड़ा जिला मुख्यालय, जल जीवन मिशन की तकनीकी सहायता से

“

“पहले मुझे पीने का पानी लेने के लिए अपने घर से दूर मेन रोड पार करने के बाद कुछ दूरी तय कर हैंडपम्प से लाना पड़ता था। जहां अन्य महिलाएं भी पानी लेने, कपड़े धोने या नहाती भी थी, जिसके कारण एक लंबे इंतजार के बाद मुझे पानी मिलता था। नहाने और कपड़े धोने के लिए मैं बच्चों को लेकर नदी जाती थी। दिनभर में कुल 5 से 7 गुण्डी पानी लाने के कारण मेरा पूरा दिन केवल पानी भरने और घर के दैनिक कामों में ही गुजर जाता था”

यह कहना है ब्लॉक दंतेवाड़ा के ग्राम पंचायत बालपेट के आश्रित ग्राम भैरमबंद निवासी श्रीमती सुमित्रा भास्कर का।

”

क मोबेश यही व्यथा यहां के हर ग्रामीण महिलाओं की रही है। जो अपने परिवारजनों के लिए दैनिक कार्यों और पेयजल के लिए नदियों कुओं और हैंड पंप में ही अपने दिनचर्या का अधिकतर समय व्यतीत करने में विवश थी। परन्तु अब स्थितियां बदली है और वे अब जल जीवन मिशन योजना के लाभ से स्वच्छ पेयजल के साथ-साथ अपना और अपने बच्चों के भविष्य को आधुनिक स्वरूप दे रही है।

ग्राम भैरमबंद जिला दंतेवाड़ा के मुख्यालय से लगभग 07 किमी दूर स्थित है। ग्राम भैरमबंद में कुल घरों की संख्या 60 और कुल जनसंख्या 323 है, ग्राम में कुल 03 बसाहट पटेलपारा, राउतपारा, स्कूलपारा है। ग्राम में 01 प्राथमिक शाला और 01 आंगनवाड़ी है यहां जल जीवन मिशन योजना के क्रियान्वयन के तहत कुल 11.5 लाख लागत की योजना बनाकर, पहले से कुल 03 जीआई स्ट्रक्चर एवं 1400 मीटर पाईप लाईन का विस्तार कर ग्राम के कुल 06 पारा के घरों में जल जीवन मिशन योजना को पहुंचाया गया है। इससे ग्रामीणों को न केवल घरों में नल के माध्यम से पेयजल प्राप्त हो रहा है साथ ही साथ यहां के स्कूलों और आंगनवाड़ी में अध्ययनरत बच्चों को पेयजल एवं मध्याह्न भोजन हेतु शुद्ध पेयजल प्राप्त हो रहा है।



Figure 31: खुशियों की मुस्कान : समय की बचत ने श्रीमती सुमित्रा भास्कर को फैशन डिज़ाइन का कोर्स करने हेतु अवसर प्रदान किया | श्रोत: दंतेवाड़ा, पीएचआईडी

घरों में नल सुविधा होने से प्रसन्न सुमित्रा भास्कर आगे बताती है कि पहले तो जिंदगी की सबसे बड़ी समस्या पानी भरना ही था जिसके कारण कभी कुछ करने का सोच भी नहीं सकती थी। मैं सरस्वती स्व-सहायता समूह में सदस्य हूँ लेकिन उसमें भी कभी ठीक से समय नहीं दे पाती थी।

शासन की जल जीवन मिशन योजना की प्रशंसा करते हुए वे यह भी कहती है, जल जीवन मिशन

योजना ने तो जैसे मुझे साफ पानी देने के साथ नयी जिंदगी ही दे दी। पहले हैंडपंप का पानी पीने और नदी में नहाने के कारण मेरे जैसी कई महिलाओं के स्वास्थ्य पर भी बुरा असर पड़ता था। तबीयत खराब होने से दवाई का खर्चा और घर परिवार में परेशानी अलग होती थी। पर अब तो नल के स्वच्छ पानी से पूरा परिवार स्वस्थ है। जल जीवन मिशन योजना लाने के लिए हम महिलाएं शासन का आभार व्यक्त करती हैं।

वास्तव में पूर्व में ग्राम भैरमबंद में ग्रामीण एवं मवेशी पीने के पानी, दैनिक कार्यों और पेयजल हेतु नदी, चुंआ और हैंडपंप पर आश्रित थे। ग्रीष्मकाल के दौरान नदी सूखने व जल स्तर कम होने पर लंबी दूरी तय कर पेयजल लेना होता था और कुल 60 घरों के संख्या वाला यह ग्राम पेयजल संकट से जूझ रहा था। लेकिन आज इस ग्राम की सुमित्रा सहित अन्य महिलाओं के लिए जल जीवन मिशन आर्थिक व सामाजिक विकास का एक बड़ा कारक बना है। और इस तथ्य से सभी सहमत होंगे कि गांव के घरों में नलों से पीने का पानी मिल जाने से गांव और समाज में सुखद परिवर्तन आ रहा है।

“

लेकिन अब मेरे घर में जल जीवन मिशन योजना का नल लग गया है। सुबह 7 बजे से ही घर में पानी मिल जाता है। इसके अलावा मेरी सिलाई में बहुत रुचि है और अभी मैं लाईवलीहुड कॉलेज में सिलाई का फैशन डिजाइनर का कोर्स कर रही हूँ। अपने दोनों बच्चों को तैयार कर उन्हें आंगनबाड़ी और स्कूल भेज मैं घर का पूरा काम 9 बजे तक निपटा कर लाईवलीहुड की बस से सिलाई प्रशिक्षण के लिए चली जाती हूँ और शाम को 4 बजे वापस आ जाती हूँ जिससे शाम को भी पानी मिल जाता है। अब तो पूरा दिन ही व्यवस्थित हो गया है।

इस प्रकार जल जीवन मिशन के माध्यम से मुझे पानी भरने के श्रम से मुक्ति तो मिली है साथ ही समय की बचत होने से मुझे अपने स्वरोजगार के सपने को भी साकार करने का मौका मिला है। सिलाई प्रशिक्षण पूर्ण होने के उपरांत मेरी घर में सिलाई सेंटर खोलने की योजना है।

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Figure 32: जल जीवन मिशन से पहले और बाद में, श्रीमती सुमित्रा भास्कर | श्रोत: दंतेवाड़ा, पीएचईडी

# Evolution of Drinking Water Programmes in India: A Gram Panchayat Perspective

– Chanchal Kr. Modi, Team Leader, NPMU, NJJM

## Background

Access to clean and safe drinking water has been a central concern in rural India, where over two-thirds of the population resides. Historically, Gram Panchayats (village councils) have played a crucial role in the planning, implementation, and monitoring of rural drinking water schemes. As the institutional backbone of rural governance, their involvement has evolved alongside national water policies and technological advancements. As we celebrate Panchayati Raj Diwas, this article attempts to explore the journey of drinking water programmes in India through the lens of the Gram Panchayat, highlighting key phases, policy shifts, and grassroots experiences.

## Early Years: Community-Led Water Management (Pre-1970s)

Before the advent of formal drinking water schemes, rural communities in India, under the informal leadership of local elders and Panchayats, relied on traditional water sources like wells, ponds, and tanks. Water management was largely community-driven, with Panchayats overseeing the maintenance of local sources and ensuring equitable distribution. However, these systems were vulnerable to droughts, contamination, and social exclusion, often disadvantaging marginalized groups.

## Institutional Beginnings: National Water Supply Programmes (1970s–1980s)

The government's first major intervention came with the Accelerated Rural Water Supply Programme (ARWSP) launched in 1972. It aimed to provide basic drinking water to rural habitations, primarily through hand pumps and tube wells.

During this phase:

- ◆ **Gram Panchayats had limited involvement**, as the programme was heavily centralized and executed by Public Health Engineering Departments (PHEDs).
- ◆ Local bodies were mainly passive recipients, responsible only for safeguarding infrastructure post-implementation.
- ◆ Issues of sustainability and community ownership began surfacing due to lack of local participation.

## Decentralization and Demand-Driven Approaches (1990s–2000s)

A paradigm shift occurred in the 1990s, aligned with the broader policy push for decentralization following the 73rd Constitutional Amendment (1992), which empowered Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs).

### Key developments:

- ◆ The Sector Reform Project (1999) and later the Swajaldhara

Programme (2002) adopted a community-based, demand-driven model.

- ◆ Gram Panchayats were given a central role in planning, implementation, operation, and maintenance of water supply systems.
- ◆ Funding mechanisms included partial financial contributions (10%) from the community, promoting ownership and accountability.
- ◆ Capacity-building of Panchayats became a focus, with support from NGOs and district authorities.

These programmes marked a turning point where Panchayats began transforming from passive participants to active custodians of water supply systems.

## Consolidation and Scaling Up: National Rural Drinking Water Programme (NRDWP, 2009)

The launch of the NRDWP further strengthened the role of Gram Panchayats by emphasizing sustainability, water quality monitoring, and long-term source sustainability.

Key features:

- ◆ Greater financial and administrative devolution to Panchayats.
- ◆ Formation of Village Water and Sanitation Committees (VWSCs) under Gram Panchayats to manage schemes at the village level.

- ◆ Emphasis on convergence with other schemes like MGNREGA for water conservation efforts.

Despite the increased responsibilities, challenges such as capacity gaps, bureaucratic delays, and inconsistent funding often hampered effective execution.

### Jal Jeevan Mission (2019 - Present): Towards Har Ghar Jal

The **Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM)**, launched in 2019, represents the most ambitious drinking water initiative in India, aiming to provide **Functional Household Tap Connections (FHTCs) to every rural household**.

Gram Panchayats have been considered at the heart of JJM while envisioned for planning and implementing:

- ◆ They are entrusted with the **implementation of Village Action Plans (VAPs)**.
- ◆ JJM mandates the **100% formation of VWSCs**, which act as sub-committees of the Gram Panchayats.
- ◆ Panchayats are responsible for **monitoring water quality, ensuring operation and maintenance, and mobilizing local participation**.
- ◆ The programme emphasizes **capacity building** of Panchayat members through training and technological support like online dashboards and mobile apps.

### Success Stories and Innovations

Across India, many Panchayats have embraced the JJM vision:

- ◆ In Maharashtra and Gujarat, Gram Panchayats have adopted solar-powered water supply systems.
- ◆ In Kerala, Panchayats have led successful rainwater harvesting and source sustainability efforts.

- ◆ In Assam, the 'Jal Doot' program engages students as water champions to promote awareness about water conservation and quality. This initiative aims to foster a sense of responsibility among the youth towards sustainable water practices.

These are just some of the examples, there are other innovative initiatives in many other states to enhance water supply and management in rural areas.

### Challenges and the Road Ahead

Despite a robust framework, several challenges must be addressed to fully empower Gram Panchayats:

- ◆ **Capacity Building:** Many Panchayats lack technical expertise or managerial experience. Training programs must be scaled up to equip them with the necessary knowledge and tools.
- ◆ **Financial Autonomy:** While funds are allocated under JJM, Panchayats often face bottlenecks in utilizing them effectively for drinking water.
- ◆ **Community Participation:** True decentralization demands that the entire community is actively involved. Social mobilization and awareness campaigns can galvanize collective action and increase accountability. Most importantly, community needs to know the importance of water
- ◆ **Convergence with Other Schemes:** Water management is linked with sanitation, health, and natural resource management. Panchayats need support in integrating efforts across schemes for holistic water security.
- ◆ **Source Sustainability:** Ensuring the sustainability of water sources amid climate change is critical.

### The Way Forward

To realize the vision of "Har Ghar Jal," it is imperative that Gram Panchayats evolve from mere implementers to true custodians of rural water systems. This means:

- ◆ Institutionalizing Village Water & Sanitation Committees (VWSCs) under the Gram Panchayat as legal entity, with representation from women and marginalized communities.
- ◆ Establishing Public-Private-Community Partnerships (PPCPs) for technology infusion, innovation, and scalable O&M solutions.
- ◆ Creating digital dashboards and transparent monitoring tools to strengthen accountability and public engagement.
- ◆ Promoting local water governance models that integrate traditional knowledge with scientific approaches.

### Conclusion

The evolution of drinking water programmes in India reflects a growing recognition of the Gram Panchayat as a pivotal institution in rural water governance. From being passive recipients to becoming active planners and managers, Panchayats have journeyed far.

As the Jal Jeevan Mission moves into completion phase, the success of India's rural water strategy hinges on strengthening these grassroots institutions and enabling them to sustainably manage water as a community resource. Jal Jeevan Mission is more than a scheme—it is a movement toward water democracy. Anchoring this mission in the Gram Panchayat system not only enhances its sustainability but also deepens democratic decentralization. Empowered, capable, and inclusive Panchayats can be the driving force behind a water-secure rural India, where every household has access to safe, adequate, and sustainable drinking water.



# Poshan Pakhwada: Shuddh Jal aur Swachhta Se Swasth Bachpan campaign

*“Purn Poshan Ki Shuruwaat, Shuddh Jal aur Swachhta Ke Saath”*

– Amit Kumar Ranjan, NPMU, NJJM

To support the 7<sup>th</sup> edition of “Poshan Pakhwada” under Ministry of Women & Child Development started from 8<sup>th</sup>-23<sup>rd</sup> April 2025, DDWS has supported the campaign by promoting the campaign. The department's campaign was themed “Shuddh Jal aur Swachhta Se Swasth Bachpan” (Clean Water and Sanitation for Healthy Childhood), with a tagline “Purn Poshan Ki Shuruwaat, Shuddh Jal aur Swachhta Ke Saath” focusing specifically on clean water practices and sanitation as crucial elements for a child's nutrition and overall health.

Poshan Pakhwada aims to combat malnutrition through behaviour changes at individual, family, and community levels, etc. DDWS issued an advisory to all States/ UTs to conduct extensive community-level activities to underline the critical role

of safe drinking water and sanitation practices in preventing malnutrition and diseases.

Planned activities includes:

- ◆ **Shuddh Jal and Swachhta Drive:** Conducting community sessions on safe drinking water, sanitation practices, hand hygiene, composting, and waste management.
- ◆ **Capacity Building for Anganwadi Workers:** Sensitization sessions and training on safe water consumption and good sanitation practices to aid in better counselling for mothers.
- ◆ **Awareness Generation for Lactating Mothers:** IEC activities by Anganwadi and ASHA workers on safe drinking water and sanitation to enhance community health.

- ◆ **Smart Poshan Anganwadi Certification:** Recognizing top-performing Anganwadi Centers for maintaining high hygiene and nutrition standards.
- ◆ **Swachh Jal, Sundar Aangan Initiative:** Improving sanitation facilities at Anganwadi centers with community and Self-Help Groups (SHGs) involvement, including murals and child-friendly water stations.
- ◆ **Awareness Rallies:** Community mobilization focusing on preventing waterborne diseases through proper sanitation and hygiene.

The impacts of the Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM), spearheaded by DDWS, have been instrumental in improving water accessibility and quality in rural areas across the country. By leveraging innovative technologies, community engagement, and sustainable practices, JJM has brought about positive transformations in water resource management, sanitation infrastructure, and hygiene practices, thereby enhancing the overall health and well-being of communities.

Department has also complement the efforts of WCD by promoting the campaign over social media platforms which is an integral part of the campaign, utilizing hashtags #DDWSJoinsPoshanPakhwada and #PoshanPakhwada to maximize outreach and impact.



Figure 33: Display of benefits of consumption of clean tap water at anganwadi kendra at Manpura, Madhya Pradesh | Source: PHED, Madhya Pradesh

## Meetings

Capacity Building Commission (CBC) organized “Innovative Financing for Public Projects: Building Water Resiliencies with Jal Jeevan Mission in Assam- A dialogue on outcome-linked models for sustainable service delivery” on 22<sup>nd</sup> April, 2025 at Assam Bhawan, New Delhi. In collaboration with Government of Assam & Capacity Building Commission, the talk brought together senior policymakers, financial experts & development leaders to find innovative, sustainable financing models for water governance. The Meeting was attended by Secretary, DDWS along with Joint Secretary-NJJM and State government officials. During the meeting, progress of Assam State under Jal Jeevan Mission i.e, 1.6% tap connections in 2019 to 81% leads with community-first reforms was also highlighted and CBC proud to support this mission by blending grassroots capacity with outcome-based delivery.



Figure 34 and 35: Discussion by Secretary, DDWS & participants of the meeting | Source: CBC

India & Denmark: The 6th meeting of the Steering Committee for Cooperation between Jal Jeevan Mission & Danish Environmental Protection Agency was held on 08.04.2025 under Co-chairmanship of AS&MD-NJJM & H.E. Ambassador of Denmark to discuss phase-II Cooperation between the two countries.



Figure 36 and 37: Steering committee meeting in progress | Source: NJJM



**A**S&MD-NJJM chaired an orientation meeting of National WASH Experts empaneled by SPM NIWAS for ground truthing of implementation of JJM across States/ UTs on 30th April, 2025 through VC. During the meeting, Joint Secretary-Water made a brief presentation about the formats and details of reporting format. The meeting was attended by NWEs and senior officers from the department.

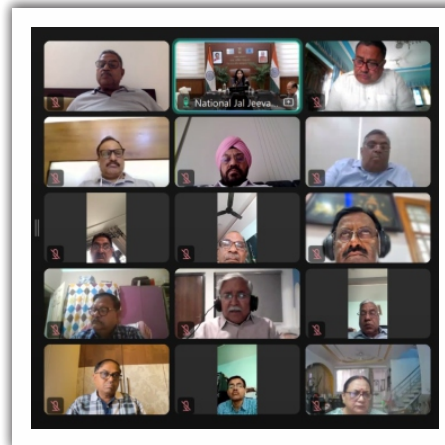


Figure 38 and 39: AS&MD-NJJM during his address to NWEs | Source: NJJM

## PM Award

**दे**श के यशस्वी प्रधानमंत्री श्री नरेंद्र मोदी जी द्वारा आज नई दिल्ली में आयोजित 17वें सिविल सेवा दिवस के अवसर पर "विकसित भारत" कार्यक्रम में उत्तर प्रदेश ने एक बार फिर राष्ट्रीय स्तर पर अपनी प्रभावशाली उपस्थिति दर्ज कराई। नमामि गंगे एवं ग्रामीण जलापूर्ति विभाग, उत्तर प्रदेश के अपर प्रमुख सचिव श्री अनुराग श्रीवास्तव जी को राष्ट्रीय जल जीवन मिशन के अंतर्गत संचालित "सोलर-पावर्ड वॉटर स्कीम्स" की सफल और नवाचारी क्रियान्वयन के लिए वर्ष 2023 के सार्वजनिक प्रशासन में उत्कृष्टता हेतु प्रधानमंत्री पुरस्कार से "इनोवेशन-स्टेट" श्रेणी में सम्मानित किया गया। यह पुरस्कार न केवल उत्तर प्रदेश के प्रशासनिक कौशल और नवाचार की पहचान है, बल्कि यह प्रमाण है कि राज्य सतत विकास, स्वच्छ ऊर्जा और जल संरक्षण जैसे महत्वपूर्ण क्षेत्रों में राष्ट्र को दिशा देने का कार्य कर रहा है।



Figure 40: Honable PM with awardees of 17th Civil service Day | Source: Social Media handle of PM

## JJM in Media

### 9 संकल्प...

पहला संकल्प – पानी बचाने का संकल्प।

दूसरा संकल्प – एक पेड़ माँ के नाम।

तीसरा संकल्प – स्वच्छता का मिशन।

चौथा संकल्प – वोकरा फॉर लोकल।

पांचवा संकल्प – देश दर्शन।

छठा संकल्प – नैचुरल फार्मिंग को अपनाना।

सातवां संकल्प – हेल्दी लाइफस्टाइल को अपनाना।

आठवां संकल्प है – योग और खेल को जीवन में लाना।

नवां संकल्प है – गरीबों की सहायता का संकल्प।

संस्कृत मंदिर परिसर में पानी नदी, 9 अप्रैल 2025

**C R Paatli** @CRPaatli · Apr 10  
माननीय प्रधानमंत्री श्री @narendramodji सर के नेतृत्व में भारत आज एक जल क्रांति का साक्षी बन रहा है। शुद्ध जल और स्वच्छता केवल सुविधाएँ नहीं, बल्कि एक संरक्षक, संरक्षक और समृद्ध भारत की नींव है।

पोषण पखवाड़ा 2025 के 7वें संस्करण के अवसर पर जल शक्ति मंत्रालय के तहत पोषण एवं स्वच्छता विभाग (DOWS) द्वारा 8 से 23 अप्रैल 2025 तक सक्रिय भागीदारी निर्माह ज रही है।

यह पहला पहला एवं सात फिफा मंत्रालय की 'स्वास्थ्य और स्वच्छता' योजना के इस संस्करण को संरक्षक बनाती है, जिसका उद्देश्य प्रत्येक वर्ष के पोषण और स्वच्छता विभाग को सुनिश्चित करना है।

हम वर्ष पोषण पखवाड़ा की थीम "शुद्ध जल और स्वच्छता से स्वस्थ भविष्य" है, जो हमें सात को रक्षात्मक करता है कि स्वस्थ पोषण और स्वच्छता बच्चों के पोषण और उनके संपूर्ण स्वास्थ्य के लिए अत्यंत महत्वपूर्ण आधार है।

शुद्ध एवं स्वस्थ जल है कि पोषण पखवाड़ा 2025 में सक्रिय भागीदारी और शुद्ध जल व स्वच्छता के प्रति जागरूकता बढ़ाकर हम एक स्वस्थ, पोषण और समृद्ध भारत के निर्माण में महत्वपूर्ण भूमिका निभाएंगे।

#PoshanPakhwaada2025 #JalShakti #SwachhBharatMission



**CSCeGov** @CSCeGov · Apr 18  
जल की समस्या से निजात पाने के लिए CPGRAMS पोर्टल पर शिकायत दर्ज करें।

जल जीवन मिशन- हर घर जल नहीं मिल रहा-सुचारु जल से अपनी शिकायत अप अवैत दर्ज कराएं, अपने नजदीकी CSC सेटर पर जाएं और CPGRAMS के जरिए, दर्ज करें अपनी शिकायत।

प्रति शिकायत रु. 50.

CSC-CPGRAMS grievance

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### Health and sanitation as the pillars of a healthy India

In the World Health Day (April 7), as leaders reflect on the foundations of human well-being, India stands tall with a transformative vision: health and sanitation are not separate pursuits, but are the twin pillars of a robust, resilient nation. Under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, India has undertaken a sanitation and water revolution that has not only changed the way we live but also how we thrive.

Rural missions that made a difference  
The story of modern India cannot be told without acknowledging the contribution of the Swachh Bharat Mission (SBM) - Gramin and the Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM). These programmes are not just about toilets and tap water alone. They represent a shift in the soul of the nation. These rural missions symbolise dignity, equity, and, above all, health.

When the Prime Minister launched the SBM from the ramparts of the Red Fort in 2014, he ignited a movement that has reached every Indian household, making it a people's movement - a Jan Andolan that was anchored in behavioural change and inter-generational equity. In 2014, India had declared itself Open Defecation Free (ODF) and taken significant steps towards achieving SDG 6.2 (to focus on achieving access to adequate and equitable sanitation and hygiene for all by 2030) and also ending open defecation. It was a bold step.

The SBM has been a powerful public health intervention. A World Health Organization (WHO) report released from 2014 to 2017, through the sanitation mission, over three lakh diarrhoeal deaths were averted. The Gates Foundation reported in 2017 that there were 38% higher cases of wasting among children in non-ODF areas. A UNICEF study (2017) found that 50% of women 15 and older getting a toilet at home and ODF facilities saved 150,000 annually in health care costs, ensuring higher savings. The SBM has improved environmental sanitation. Garbage collection in ODF villages is 42% times less. Globally, ensuring improved health resilience in rural communities. A OCHA Nature study estimated that 100,000 to 200,000 child deaths are prevented every year due to improved sanitation. These indicators are not incidental, they



Swati Sharma  
National Joint Mission Director

are the result of sustained political commitment, inter-ministerial coordination, and community ownership.  
In 2015, the Jal Jeevan Mission was launched to ensure every rural household receives clean drinking water through a tap connection. This is more than infrastructure. It is an investment in human potential with the reaching socio-economic impact. Research by Nobel Laureate Dr. Michael Kremer has shown that nearly 50% infant deaths can be reduced if safe water is made available to families for drinking and 1.26 lakh child deaths (under five years) can be prevented with universal tap coverage. WHO estimates suggest that the JJM could avert four lakh diarrhoeal deaths with safe drinking water supply at home. And, 5.5 crore lives are saved every day, mostly by women, who had earlier spent time fetching water. State Bank of India research finds that the availability of water within premises led to increased participation by women in agriculture and allied activities.

The fight and Swachh Bharat campaign, launched in 2014, has been a game-changer. It has led to a significant improvement in the village level, has further galvanised communities. Thousands of villages have already been declared Swachh Bharat, which is an important marker of India's public health transformation. Improved water and sanitation systems are also leading to reduced out-of-pocket expenditure for rural households, reinforcing the preventive health care model.

On the ground  
Sanitation and water are the first line of defence in public health. They are the invisible shield that protects communities from disease, women from indignity, and children from lost opportunity. A healthy nation is a productive nation. A clean nation is a resilient one.  
Today, more than 80% of India's rural households have tap water connections. Over 90% villages have been declared as ODF Plus, more than 5.07 lakh villages have solid waste management systems, and 5.23 lakh villages have liquid waste management systems in place.

Women are not just beneficiaries, they are also water warriors, sanitation entrepreneurs, and local leaders. Over 2.48 million women have been trained to test water quality, and women-led Self-Help Groups are managing sanitation assets, recycling crates, and even sanitary napkin production. This is the vision of a Viksit Bharat where no child misses school because of a lack of water, no woman walks miles with a pot on her head, and no family loses a loved one to preventable illness.  
The journey to health is the journey to dignity. A leader brings priority. Clean water brings opportunity. Waste management protects the environment. Each link in the sanitation chain connects directly to a healthier, safer society. The lessons we have learnt highlight the importance of inter-ministerial collaboration which is non-negotiable.

It is about convergence  
Since health is not the concern of one Ministry alone, it is the outcome of converged action across water, sanitation, nutrition, education, and rural development. We must recognise that India's model is not just a model, it is a global. Our innovation, community-led models, and use of technology whether through mid-size dashboards, Cultivating Organic Life (CoLife) Resilience Index for GSDMA (Bharat) begin plants, or digital waste management units are blueprints for the world, especially the Global South. Lastly, we must continue to work through a mutual understanding that every rupee invested in Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) yields manifold returns in health, productivity, gender equity, and environmental sustainability.  
India is committed towards progressing forward on the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals and this World Health Day, we need to understand that a healthier India is a stronger India. Good health begins not in hospitals, but in homes with access to clean water, safe sanitation, and a shared resolve. As we move forward, India remains committed to sharing its journey, collaborating globally, and co-creating a cleaner, healthier, and more resilient world.

**Ministry of Tribal Affairs, Govt. of India** @TribalAffairs · Apr 8  
A milestone achievement: 2.9 lakh PYTG households now have functional tap water connections under #JalJeevanMission!

#PMJANMAN  
#HarGharJalSeJal  
#EmpoweringTribalsTransformingIndia



**Chief Minister, MP** @CMMadhyapradesh · Apr 22  
हर घर नल, हर घर जल  
मध्यप्रदेश सरकार का संकल्प

प्रधानमंत्री जनमन योजना और जल जीवन मिशन से बदती डिंडोरी जिले के उफरी गांव की तस्वीर, ग्रामीणों को मिल रहा नल से शुद्ध जल

@PMOIndia @DrMohanYadav51 @minphemp #CMMadhyapradesh



**Arun Sao** @ArunSao3 · Apr 19  
आज ग्राम पंचायत सुकली, लोरमी में जल जीवन मिशन के तहत निर्मित पानी टंकी का स्थानीय जनप्रतिनिधियों एवं ग्रामीणों के साथ निरीक्षण किया।

ग्रामीणों के घरों में जाकर नल से पानी निकाल कर जांच किया एवं जल आपूर्ति को लेकर उनसे सवाल किया। उन्होंने बताया कि, सुबह-शाम समय पर पानी आ रहा है।

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