

Jal Jeevan Samvad

June | 45th Edition | Year 2024



Har Ghar Jal
Jal Jeevan Mission

Building Partnership
Changing Lives



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45th Edition

June 2024

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Note from the desk of Additional Secretary & Mission Director...



New Delhi
30th June, 2024

As we welcome the month of June, one of the hottest months of the year, we are reminded of the timeless significance of water. Water is not just a resource; it is essential for life. Throughout history, water has symbolised purity and has been a key to prosperity.

रहिमन पानी राखिये , बिन पानी सब सूना।
पानी गए न ऊबरे, मोती, मानस, चून।।

Today, the importance of water is more evident than ever. This summer, we experienced unprecedented temperatures, highlighting the urgent need for sustainable water management. Climate change has increased the frequency and severity of heatwaves, impacting millions and emphasising the need for resilience and adaptation.

With this pressing need, our commitment to providing safe and adequate drinking water to every rural household through tap connections remains stronger. This mission is about enhancing quality of life, promoting health and well-being, and ensuring that future generations inherit a world where water is valued and preserved.

Over the years, we have learned that meaningful progress often stems from behavioural change. Jal Jeevan Mission aims to instill this change by encouraging communities to adopt water-saving practices towards sustainable water management. This collective behavioural shift is essential for driving the objectives of JJM forward and achieving long-term water sustainability.

The theme for this month's Jal Jeevan Samvad , "Drinking Water: Well-being and Prosperity," aligns perfectly with our Mission's core objectives. Access to clean drinking water is essential for public health, reducing waterborne diseases, improving nutrition, and enhancing overall quality of life. Reliable piped water supply systems also boost local economies, empower women and children by reducing the burden of water collection, and contribute to the prosperity of rural communities.

This JJM journey has been one of collective effort and shared responsibility. It is inspiring to see communities, local governments, and organizations come together to champion water conservation and management. Initiatives like rainwater harvesting, watershed management, and rejuvenating traditional water bodies are key to our strategy and are showing promising results. Similarly, water quality testing and treatment are crucial in reducing arsenic and fluorosis in affected areas, ensuring that the water we provide is safe and healthy. This is why Jal Jeevan Mission has brought deep impact on the communities at large through the supply of clean, safe and adequate drinking water.

We extend our heartiest congratulations to the States of Rajasthan and West Bengal (at the time of print), for crossing 50% coverage this month however, that State has to channelise all its efforts and energy to reach out to each and every household in rural areas in time-bound manner. As we move forward, we ought to remember that our collective actions today will determine the well-being and prosperity of tomorrow.



This issue covers numerous stories from rural India where clean water has driven development, and we are thankful to our RWPF partner – INREM Foundation, for taking the lead in collating these stories for the month.

Whether in achieving gender parity or improving health, clean water is our biggest strength moving forward. An ecosystem for innovation is necessary to sustain these gains, and from that perspective, the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare has initiated 'Stop Diarrhoea Campaign' to be implemented in collaboration with all stakeholders. With the support of our partners and stakeholders, we look forward to the success of this important initiative which begins on 1st of July 2024.

With the onset of the monsoon, it is crucial to focus on water testing, rainwater harvesting, and conservation. This season reminds us of the importance of preserving and managing our water resources effectively. Jal Shakti Abhiyan – Catch the Rain, a multi-pronged approach to conserve this precious resource is already operational throughout the country.

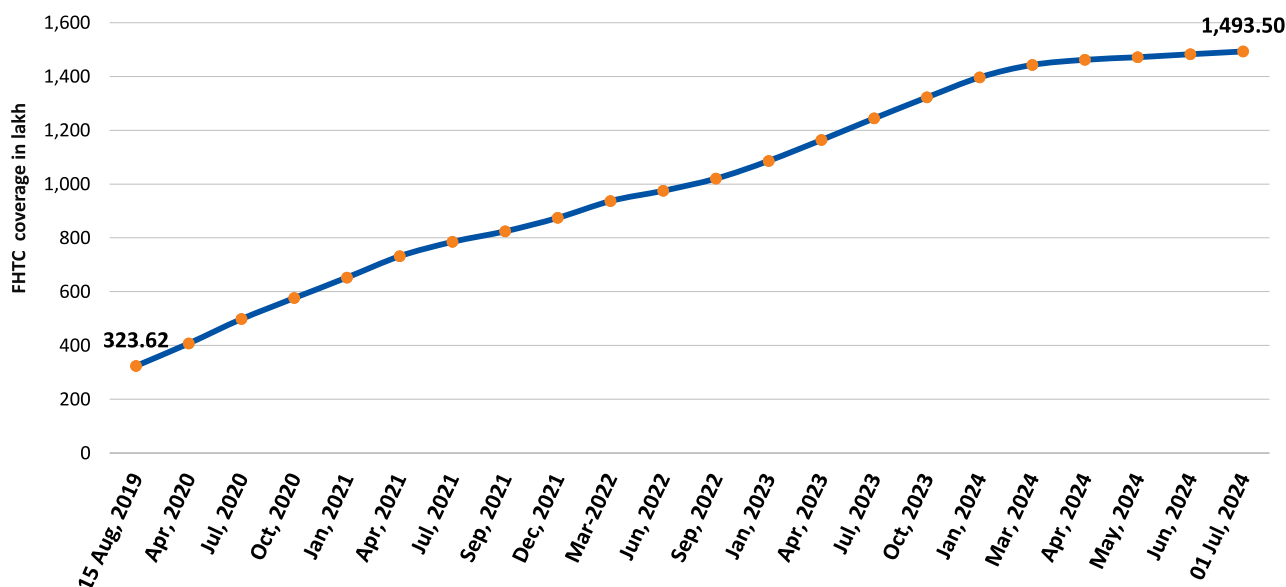
Thank you for your continued support and commitment to Jal Jeevan Mission. It is this collaborative approach that will keep us moving on the path to success.

[Chandra Bhushan Kumar]

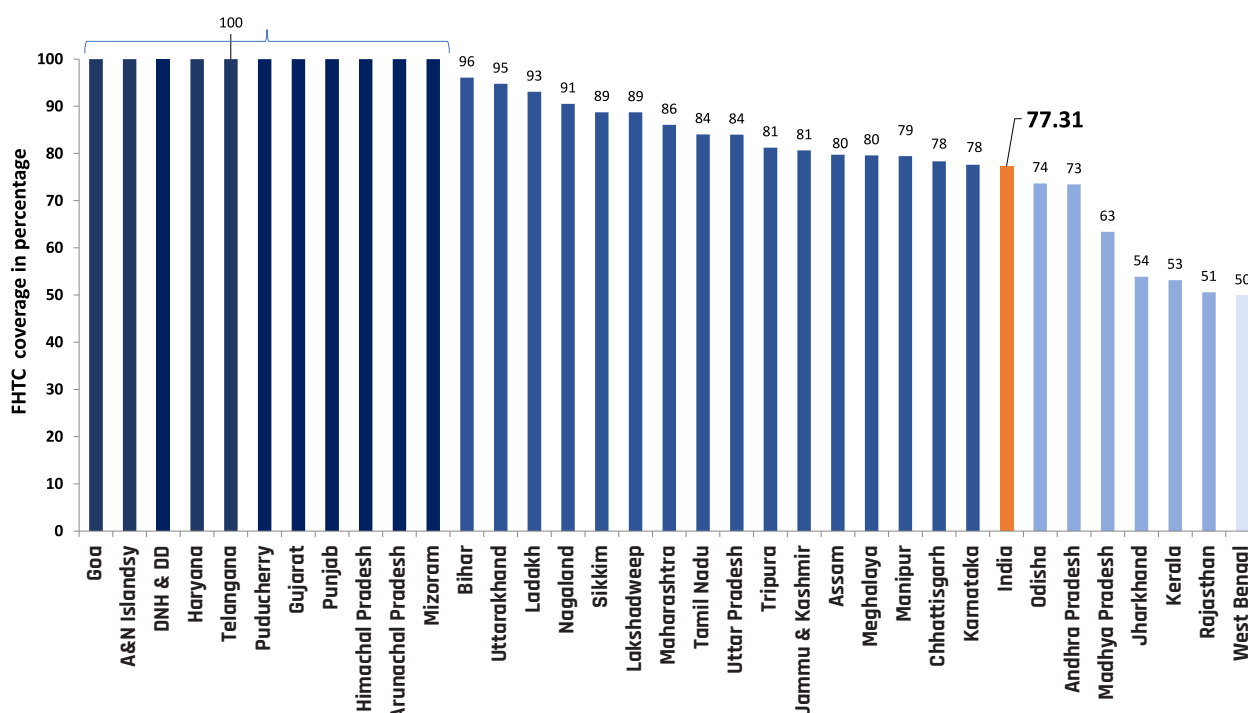


Testing water to ensure quality at all times

Progressive coverage - Functional Household Tap Connection (FHTC) (as on 30.06.2024)



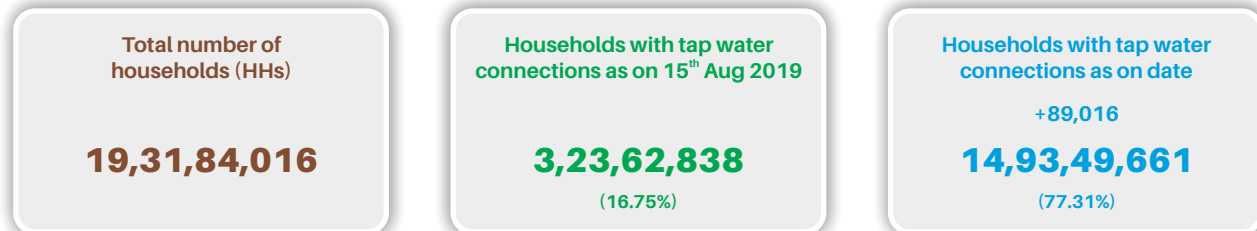
Comparative FHTC coverage status of States/ UTs (as on 30.06.2024)



As on 30th June, 2024

Source: JJM-IMIS

India | Status of tap water supply in rural homes



Households provided with tap water connection since launch of the Mission

11,69,86,823 (72.74%)

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

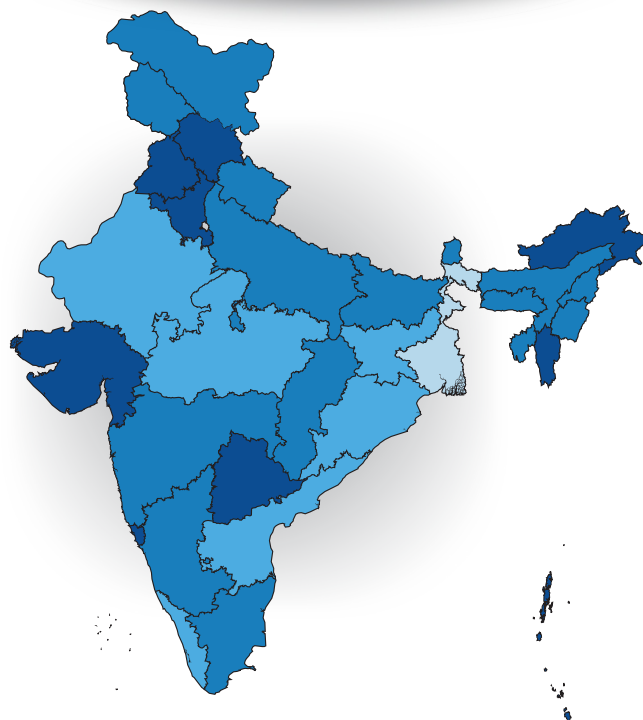
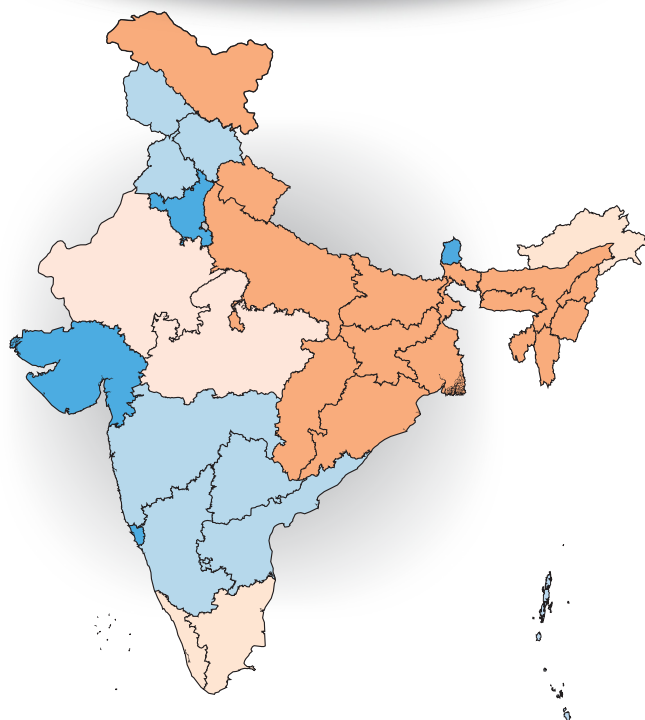
100% FHTC States/ UTs

Goa, A & N Islands, Puducherry, D&NH and D&D, Haryana, Punjab, Telangana, Gujarat



As on 15th August, 2019

As on 30th June, 2024



0 to <10%


10% to <25%

25% to <50%

50% to <75%

75% to <100%

100%



Safe water from taps for 0.14 billion rural Indians stretches the realm of possibilities

- Sunderrajan Krishnan,
Executive Director and Navneet Mishra,
COO - Partnerships, INREM Foundation

“Every person matters”, this message comes out loud and clear by the progress made under 'Har Ghar Jal' programme which is being implemented by Jal Jeevan Mission. The Department of Drinking water and Sanitation (DDWS) is ensuring that drinking water which is a basic human right is not too far away for every household residing in rural India.

For long, water supply in villages is considered a matter of natural blessing, people were dependant on local water source until the announcement of 'Har Ghar Jal' programme. From 1951 to 2019 the focus of government programmes was on providing safe drinking water through handpump, protected well, stand post as delivery points. The

National Water Quality Sub-Mission (NWQSM) was launched in February 2017 with the objective to make provision for safe drinking water to Fluoride and Arsenic affected habitations. NWQSM was the first programme that really went deep into providing a solution to water quality issues which is now subsumed into the Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM).

Habitation was a unit of planning for the water supply in rural India before Jal Jeevan Mission. This itself is a leap in the unit of planning from the Gram Panchayat (GP) and village which still remain the last post for many other critical services. If we compare with other services - public health, early age nutrition, education, irrigation - having a larger unit of planning is sufficient for these programmes. The

only others that are comparable are postal services, roads and electricity that need to reach every home. Safe water supply to every home is indeed a tall aim for India, given that per capita water availability of 1486 cubic metres, has a wide variability, with Kerala on one hand, but we also have Rajasthan, within the same country which struggles with water availability and limited rainfall. Adding to this, many districts of the country face the problem of fluoride or arsenic, if not, salinity, nitrate, iron and specific biological contaminants which are present in local groundwater. Since our farm irrigation with groundwater serves 65%-75% of our farming needs, we also have a serious local competition between irrigation and domestic water supply to ensure water security in every village.



Given the above challenges, even a statement such as “Ensuring safe water to every home” for India is a brave move and a significant step towards the well-being of rural India. Initiating the flagship programme 5-years back, the programme overcame every hurdle including the COVID-19 pandemic that impacted the speed of the programme due to the restrictions imposed back in 2020-2021. However, today we see 140 Million tap connections which has ended the drudgery of over 14.93 Crore households. Today, over 77% households are getting water through taps.

Ensuring safe drinking water has also meant investment on Water Quality Monitoring and Surveillance (WQM&S) which is a top priority under NJJM, with a total of 2131 laboratories established to conduct regular water quality tests, including 1534 NABL accredited laboratories. In the year 2024-25 over 1.7 Million samples have been tested, identifying approximately 55 thousand instances of contamination. Remedial action has been taken in more than 20 thousand cases, highlighting the proactive approach to addressing the water quality concerns nationwide there is need for a faster turnaround time.

While we celebrate this collective achievement of the country, some of the future steps that will ensure sustainability are:

- ◆ **Taps need to keep running:** Water security is a critical concern at several levels and programmes such as Jal Shakti Abhiyaan and Atal Jal Yojana are tackling the water availability question through large scale water conservation campaigns, local participatory governance, and data-charged local water management

- ◆ **Clean water needs to sustain:** The euphoria over water within your home for the first time is seen to be believed. However, for this water to remain pure, we need action from “Source to Mouth”. It is not just the responsibility of water supply engineers, but also village communities and families themselves to maintain the purity of water and ensure that water pipelines are health-giving pipelines
- ◆ **Infrastructure needs to sustain:** Climate change provides a serious threat to the precious

water infrastructure that we are now building. Recurrent floods, long droughts and uncertain monsoons, will make the future tougher. But smart tools are available to reasonably predict and brace for the future.

Jan Bhagidari se Jal Bhagidari has been the motto of NJJM. Together, we need to solve the Water problems. The problem of the last person in the line should be our common problem and it is only our collective vigilance that will keep alive the gains made with this transformative and collective national effort. ■



Clean water is the reason for the smile

Clean and Safe Water: Maharashtra's Success with Electro Chlorination

- Bhawna Badola, Programme Director and Haresh Patel, Senior Programme Manager, Piramal Foundation

Safe and clean drinking water was a major concern in the villages of Maharashtra which posed a serious problem for its residents. People were consuming contaminated water for drinking and cooking purposes which led to adverse impact on each one's health. Due to daily intake of contaminated water residents of the area suffered from bacterial infection.

The government was aware of the situation and clearly realized that urgent action was required to mitigate the growing problem. Decision was taken to tackle the problem head-on through use of technology called Electro Chlorination. It helps in auto chlorination without the risk of human intervention leading to errors which is often less or more use of chlorine when done manually by an individual.

Electro Chlorination, known for its efficacy in water purification without complexity, became the cornerstone of Maharashtra's ambitious goal. The technology, leveraging electrolysis to produce chlorine from salt solution, promised safe drinking water without the risks associated with traditional methods. By the end of last year, over 2,500 installations had been completed across 8,000 villages, marking significant progress towards ensuring water safety for all. The well-being of the residents in these villages was ensured. They are getting safe and clean drinking water of prescribed quality through taps under 'Har Ghar Jal'.

To make sure the plan was working, the Piramal Foundation undertook water quality testing in 15 villages where Electro Chlorination technology was put to use. The survey, tests and assessment confirmed that Electro Chlorination made water safer thereby improving the health of everyone who consumed it.

The strong linkage between water quality and health is profound and direct. Contaminated water, often associated with bacteria, viruses, and pollutants, poses significant health risks to communities relying on it for drinking and daily use. Consumption of such water can lead to a range of waterborne diseases, including diarrhea, cholera, typhoid, and dysentery, particularly affecting the children, elderly and those with weak

immune systems. Ensuring access to clean and safe drinking water is therefore crucial not only for preventing illnesses but also for promoting overall health and well-being in communities worldwide. Nobel Laureate Dr. Michael Kremer's study states that providing safe water can reduce infant deaths by almost 30%, with potential to prevent 25% of under-five deaths in India (a whopping 1,36,000 child deaths annually).

The impact was significant and immediate in Dahisar T.Tarapur and Kudan village of Palghar district in Maharashtra, where Electro Chlorinators were commissioned. Sunita a resident says, "I have seen transformation in our lives. I used to worry endlessly about my children



Devices for electro chlorination





TDS Indicator

falling ill as we were forced to drink contaminated water every day. But now, with safe and clean drinking water reaching our doorstep, my children are thriving. Our frequent visits to the doctor has reduced. I am able to save money which would go as fee to the doctor and medicine for the ailing. Clean water has truly changed our lives."

However, a number of challenges were encountered during its implementation. The Piramal Foundation's field survey highlighted gaps in operator training and maintenance. *Jalsurakshaks*, were tasked with operating the Electro Chlorinators. They often lacked comprehensive knowledge of chlorine dosing and its critical link to water quality. Addressing these gaps became imperative to maintain the efficacy of the water supply systems.

To bridge these gaps, the Foundation proposed capacity-building initiatives. It recommended intensive training sessions for *Jalsurakshaks* and Village Water and Sanitation Committee (VWSC) members for operation and chlorine testing. Moreover, they advocated for the installation of automatic chlorine monitoring sensors to ensure consistent water quality which was being supplied in households, schools, anganwadi centres and other public institutions.

Looking ahead, Maharashtra remains steadfast in its commitment to provide clean and safe water to its people. With a comprehensive roadmap that includes ongoing maintenance and community engagement, the state aims not only to meet immediate needs but also to foster long-term health and prosperity. As Maharashtra continues to refine its approach, the SVS stands as a beacon of hope and progress—a testament to what can be achieved through innovation, collaboration, and unwavering determination.

Maharashtra's effort shows what can happen when people are determined to solve a big problem. They didn't just want a quick fix—they wanted a sustained solution. As they keep going, their promise remains strong: "Clean water for everyone, no matter where they live"

Maharashtra's commitment to addressing this critical public health issue through innovative and sustainable means exemplifies their dedication to improve the lives of their people. As they continue to expand and refine their approach, the journey towards ensuring clean water for all remains steadfast – a beacon of hope and progress in rural Maharashtra. ■



Devices for electro chlorination

Rajasthan's Remarkable Progress

Traditional Rituals Showcase Joy Among Locals With Increasing Tap Connection

- Utkarsha Rathi, NJJM;

Dr. Suneet Sethi, State HRD & IEC Consultant, PHED and Ashok Rajpurohit, IEC Consultant, Distt. Barmer, Rajasthan

Rajasthan has made significant strides under the Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM), achieving 50% of its goal for functional household taps. This accomplishment is remarkable, given the state's geographical challenges and its arid and semi-arid regions prone to drought and water scarcity, particularly during harsh summers. The mission's impact on improving the quality of life in rural and remote areas is monumental. When JJM was announced in August 2019, only 10.91% of rural households had tap water connections. By January 2024, over 42 lakh water connections had been provided, a significant achievement considering the harsh climate and water scarcity in this region. Numerous areas in Rajasthan have seen notable improvements in water availability.

This progress is particularly beneficial in a state like Rajasthan, which frequently experiences extreme heatwaves and is highly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change. The availability of tap water helps mitigate the severe water shortages that typically arise during the intense summer months. Access to reliable water sources is crucial for maintaining health and hygiene during heatwaves, which can exacerbate dehydration and heat-related illnesses. The mission not only addresses immediate water needs but also enhances the resilience of rural communities against the adverse effects of a changing climate and reduces migration of people from village in search of water and livelihood for better amenities and economic well-being.

A notable example of JJM's impact is Dudu, where the mission has been transformative. In Dudu initially, only 33.39% of rural households had potable tap water. Following the mission's implementation, this figure rose to over 94.76%. This progress highlights the success of JJM in enhancing water accessibility in rural Dudu, significantly improving life of its residents' through 'ease of living'. This success was made possible only by political will, diligent efforts of implementing agencies, and active community participation.

यह है राजस्थान का बधावा गीत

कोरी-कोरी कुलिया मैं दही ए जमाया जी राज
चढ़ते हाकीम का मैं सुन मनाया जी राज
आज की घड़ी म्हारै शुभ का बधावा जी राज
कोठी कै अन्दर नौ मन राई जी राज
चढ़ते हाकीम की मैं बाँटी बधाई जी राज
आज की घड़ी म्हारै.....
कोठी कै अन्दर नौ मन सोना जी राज
अपने हाकीम बिन सब जग सूना जी राज
कोठी के अन्दर नौ मन धनिया जी राज
अपने हाकीम बिन कौए नहीं बनिया जी राज
आज की घड़ी.....
कोठी के अन्दर नौ मन जीरा जी राज
अपने भाई बिन कोई वीरा नहीं जी राज
आज की घड़ी.....
सुला की लकड़ी मेरे हाकीम न मारी जी राज
कुछ मारी कुछ लाड़ लड़ाया जी राज
सोना की संटी मेरे देवर न मारी जी राज
देवर की मारी में तो पीहर चाली जी राज
आज की घड़ी.....
नीला सा घोड़ा मेरे हाकीम न लियो जी राज
गोरी न मना कर घर लाया जी राज
पिछली बातों सब छोड़ो जी राज
घर अपना बसाओ जी राज

Dudu is known for its stepwells which is ingeniously designed reservoirs that served as multi-functional oases in often arid landscape. These pools of water are often accessed by single grand staircase or by multiple geometrically designed steps adorned by intricate carvings. Stepwells collect rainwater during the monsoon season storing it for dry months. Stepwells harvest rainwater with their elaborate catchment areas channeling rainwater into the well. The steps act as filters allowing sediment to settle while water flowed downward. The depth of stepwells ensured cooler temperatures and the water surface remained shaded preventing rapid evaporation.

The stepwells date back to 2nd millennium BCE. Its construction peaked during medieval period which reflects fusion of Hindu, Jain and Islamic architectural styles. British rule led to neglect and abandonment of many stepwells. Efforts are being made by the State Government to restore these structures.

With very limited rainfall, new schemes had to be designed as certain regions of Rajasthan face extreme water scarcity with women being forced to walk miles in search of a pot of water to quench their thirst. Getting water within the household was not even a dream for the villagers living in the Thar desert. But for the people of Barmer it has become a reality.

The happiness of receiving the tap connections echoed in the Barmer region as well. The arrival of tap water connections has been a cause for celebration. The villagers welcomed the new tap connections with traditional rituals and ceremonies, reflecting the immense joy and relief brought about by having a reliable water supply. Folk songs (Badhawa) were sung, Tilak ceremo-



Chand Baori, a stepwell situated in the village of Abhaneri near Jaipur, Rajasthan

nies were performed, and Mangal Aarti was conducted to mark this significant milestone. These celebrations underscore the profound impact that access to clean water can have on communities that have long struggled with water scarcity.

The Jal Jeevan Mission's success in Rajasthan can be attributed to several key factors. Firstly, the political will and commitment at both the state and central government levels have been crucial in driving the mission forward. The allocation of resources, both financial and human, has been instrumental in ensuring the mission's implementation.

Secondly, the involvement of local communities has played a pivotal role. The mission has actively encouraged community participation, with villagers taking lead role in planning, implementation, monitoring and taking ownership of the infrastructure created. This sense of responsibility has been critical in

ensuring the sustainability of the water supply systems.

Women are playing a lead role in water management. Among the many stories is that of Meera Bai and Rani Lohar from Pandli village in Udaipur who are working hard to bring about a change in their lives through the 'Har Ghar Jal' programme of Gol.

Meera Bai, a 40-year-old, recalls her past struggles of fetching water. For years her daily routine was to get up early and start walking with empty pots to get walk for the household chores. As hours were spent on just looking for, filling and getting water she was left with very little time for other works and herself. She wanted relief from this ordeal and 'Har Ghar Jal' provided her this opportunity. In one of the interactions she learnt about Jal Jeevan Mission. She discussed this within her ward and was determined to take lead to bring about a change for a better tomorrow.

She was instrumental in sensitizing and mobilizing the community of joining government efforts with tap water connection in every rural home. People found it difficult to believe that water can actually reach their premises. After multiple rounds of meetings, deliberations with government officials they agreed to contribute their share in laying the pipelines. She led efforts to collect ₹392,000 as community contributions. Today, Meera Bai organizes meetings, raises awareness, and educates villagers on water conservation, promoting its use for kitchen gardens. Her leadership ensured the mission's successful implementation and demonstrated the power of women's empowerment in improving community welfare.

Similarly, Rani Lohar, an Anganwadi helper, was determined to ensure that all the families in her village receive water through taps. Rani, along with others held long meetings with the community explaining the benefits of the programme and the importance of

clean and safe water for direct consumption. Through consistent efforts, Rani collected ₹370,000 from the community contributions which is being used for O&M. Rani and her team are closely monitoring the implementation. Rani's determination and the support of village women led to the mission's success, showcasing the power of community collaboration and women's leadership in driving positive change. Today, villagers are grateful for the clean water supply in their homes.

The stories of women leaders like Meera Bai and Rani Lohar exemplify how community leaders, particularly women, have been at the forefront of this movement.

The impact of the Jal Jeevan Mission extends beyond just providing water. It has led to significant improvements in health, hygiene, and overall quality of life in the beneficiary communities. Access to clean water has reduced the incidence of waterborne diseases, improved sanitation, and enabled better hygiene practices.

Women and children, who traditionally bear the burden of fetching water, now have more time for education, work, and other productive activities.

Moreover, the mission has also had positive economic impacts. With a reliable water supply, agricultural productivity has improved, enabling kitchen gardens and other small-scale farming activities. This, in turn, has enhanced food security and provided additional income sources for rural households.

In conclusion, the Jal Jeevan Mission's achievements in Rajasthan, are a testament to the power of collective effort, community participation, and dedicated leadership. The mission has not only provided much-needed water supply but has also brought about transformative changes in the lives of rural communities. As the mission continues towards its goal of providing functional household tap connections to all, it stands as a model of success in addressing water scarcity and improving rural livelihoods. ■



Women performing rituals of Tilak and Mangal Arti on Tap Connection in Barmer District.



Health, well - being and development with piped water

A case study from Telangana

- Suneetha Sapur, COO - Communities, INREM Foundation

The provision of piped water supply is not merely a way to ensure drinking water security and reduce hardship; it also has significant positive effects on the overall health and well-being of rural communities. This is clearly demonstrated in the villages of rural Nalgonda district of Telangana, where a sustained piped water supply has led to widespread benefits, including a reduced disease burden.

High fluoride-contaminated water has been prevalent in Nalgonda district since the 1930s. Due to widespread exposure to such contaminated drinking water which is used by the people for direct consumption or cooking. A number of people have been affected by skeletal fluorosis. Since 2018, the water supply programmes have been developed for the entire district, and INREM Foundation has been measuring the reach of rural water supply and its impact on public health.

One indicator of a safe water supply and its impact which can be seen on health in Nalgonda is the prevalence of fluorosis. Dental fluorosis prevalence decreased from 13% in 2018 to 5% in 2023. No new skeletal fluorosis cases are now observed in the sampled 40 villages of the district. However, non-skeletal fluorosis and the existing skeletal fluorosis situation still continues because of the low reversal rates of these problems.

To enhance better water-related well-being and health impacts, the Nalgonda district administration has put in place convergence efforts that help maximize the impacts of a safe water supply. One such intervention is the support provided to skeletal fluorosis patients in the district. The Fluorosis Rehabilitation Centre at the Public Health Centre (PHC) level in Marriguda Mandal has served around 2,500 patients and provided relief with physiotherapy, nutritional supplementation, and other support.

To address anemia in endemic areas of fluorosis, the Anemia Mukta Bharat guidelines emphasize that providing iron supplementation alone is not sufficient; the fluoride content in food and water must also be restricted. ANMs working in

fluorosis-affected villages were educated on these recommendations. During their prenatal visits, the ANMs raise awareness about the importance of using safe water for drinking and cooking and avoiding food items high in fluoride content.

The Nalgonda district ICDS also recognized the value of safe water delivery for drinking water and food for all Anganwadis. For this purpose, every Anganwadi worker has been inducted into a training program that brings together safe water quality, nutritional importance, and health training. As a result of such training, Anganwadi workers have tested water quality and reported it to the Water Supply Department's MIS system. Any problems, such as bacterial contamination, are



Women at the helm of water management in Telangana



Chlorination of water tank in progress

which will bring overall well-being and development to the district.

There is an increased demand for safe water for cultivation in Nalgonda. As an arid region, Nalgonda heavily depends on groundwater for agriculture, which is often high in fluoride content. Under Mission Bhagiratha, 142 irrigation tanks were restored to improve the groundwater level. Even though Mission Kakathiya aimed to improve irrigation of crops, it resulted in lowering the dilution of fluoride levels in the groundwater and improving the sustainability of the water source.

The example of Nalgonda district shows us that by holistically looking at water supply, we can bring larger benefits to human society while also supporting livestock and animals. The prosperity of rural communities is closely tied to the availability of clean water, which supports not only human health but also agricultural productivity and livestock health. With improved planning, coordination between the departments and community, we can further increase the benefits and make sure that sustained impacts are made with safe water. ■

addressed. To ensure the continuity of testing water quality, coordination between the RWS department and ICDS was created. The H₂S testing kits were provided to the Anganwadi teachers during their sectoral meeting, and the test results were communicated to the mandal assistant engineer and the village sarpanch.

Even though centralised chlorination is done on a regular basis, one challenge still is bacterial contamination of water due to poor maintenance of water supply storage tanks at the local level. Such villages are being identified and training is being provided to ensure that tanks are cleaned regularly, and safe water is ensured. It was also observed that many of them were not willing to consume mission Bhagiratha water, even though it is safe and free. People were adopted to using water purification gadgets, they felt these instruments provide safe drinking water and the water filtered at home was better and of improved quality in comparison to that with Mission Bhagiratha. These challenges emphasize on the importance of behavioural change campaigns, which should and must be part of safe water supply programmes.

Overall well-being also ensures drinking water for the livestock. High fluoride water or wastewater from industries is affecting the well-being of cattle and prosperity of the community, thereby influencing the livelihood potential of cattle herders and milk producers. Some villages are provisioning the water supply into cattle troughs and ensuring that safer water is provided to animals. However, in the future, we need to bring this into the planning process and assure safe water for animals,



Elderly woman accessing water through tap



Women in leadership and their participation in good governance

- Amar Prakash, State Programme Director, WaterAid

Introduction

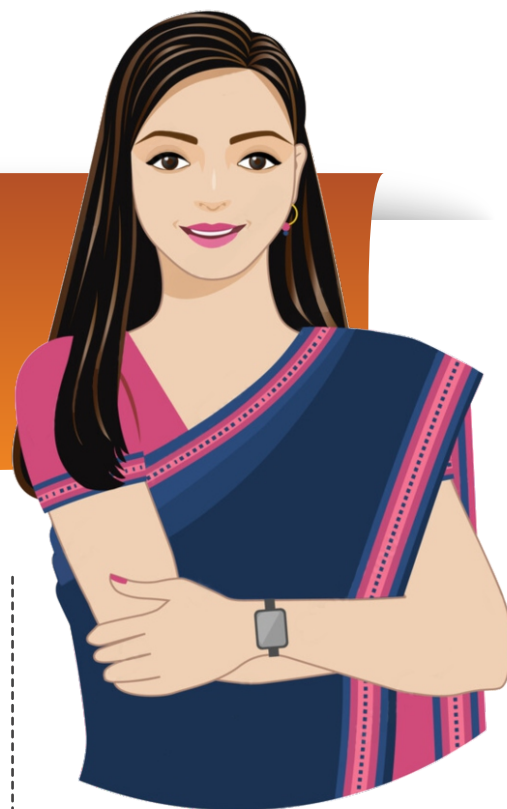
Located 15 kms away from the block head quarter in Icchawar, Biccholi is a small village of Kudi Panchayat in Sehore district of Madhya Pradesh. The village is home to 225 households. There are 8 wards in the village which are divided into 4 mohallas. During the 1980's there was only one hand pump and a pond in the village which served as the main water sources for the residents of Icchawar.

In the year 2000, the number of hand pumps increased to five that were provided by the government, keeping into account the growing population and increased demand for water. As the number of hand pumps and borewells swelled in 2010, it was clear that the existing water sources were inadequate for all the families residing in the village who faced acute problem of drinking water during summers. Women, men and children had to travel approximately 2 kms every day in search of water. The disputes and quarrels to get water for the daily needs were frequent. People would fight to fill in their buckets at almost each water source. All this greatly impacted the women as they often shared the brunt of ensuring water availability in the homes for the family. The women and young girls primarily shouldered the responsibility of arranging water for the family.

With the launch of Har Ghar Jal programme under Jal Jeevan

Mission, a decentralised service delivery of safe drinking water through the panchayats was made a reality. The Mission, a beacon of hope was envisioned to end this age-old drudgery faced by women of rural India. The Mission is implementing the programme in partnership with State government/ UT administration and various development partners who are associated with WASH. Over 200 organisations are part of the Rural WASH Partners Forum which includes Sector Partners and Key Resource Centres.

WaterAid India, is a State Lead and provides Technical Support to Public Health Engineering Department (PHED) in Madhya Pradesh. The piped water supply work in Biccholi village was initiated in the year 2020.



The journey began with a preliminary meeting with the panchayat and formation of an active Village Water and Sanitation Committee. Care was taken to ensure representation by women, members from Scheduled Caste/ Scheduled Tribes and even tail end households of the far flung habitations in the village.

The prime focus of the initiative was to build the capacity of women and hone their leadership skills. Here the leadership was not restricted to just



Women getting trained on use of Field Test Kit

the position, instead it included involving women to demonstrate leadership under each key component of piped water supply system. The training ensured proper governance at the panchayat level. Roles, responsibilities and accountability of the Village Water and Sanitation Committee and panchayat was defined to ensure transparency for better service delivery.

It took one and half years of continuous engagement in Biccholi, by the team of WaterAid India to build the capacity of the key stakeholders at village level. Women from each habitation were selected and trained on water quality and use of Field Test Kit (FTK). Regular meetings in form of Jal Chaupals and inter-personal communication with community was held. Training sessions were organized for members of VWSC and panchayat with the aim to equip them with the nuances of Har Ghar Jal programme, its management right from planning to monitoring and functioning of the scheme. Participatory Rural Appraisals (PRA) were undertaken to understand the village geography, demography and to contextualise the current drinking

water status and future needs. The women are no longer just beneficiaries under the, but are playing an important role in planning, implementation and management of the programme. Women are stepping out of the four walls of their houses and performing the role of decision makers. They are getting empowered and play a key role in the development of the village.

Capacity building and handholding support to VWSC and panchayat representatives were provided in a regular and phased manner. Training on roles and responsibilities of each stakeholder under key component of JJM were defined and explained in detail, thereby equipping the women with adequate knowledge to enable them understand the complexity of the rural drinking water supply programme, its management and to build confidence to analyse situations and data with regard to the scheme and hold the service providers accountable to ensure regular access of safe drinking water for the community. The scheme became fully functional in the year 2022 and since then there has been no looking back.

Beacon of Hope and Community led management of PWSS

Having seen the hardships, the community was committed to end this drudgery through Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM). A detailed village action plan through participatory process was developed for Biccholi and submitted to PHED. A total of 228 connections were provided under Har Ghar Jal programme. With availability of safe drinking water at the doorstep, the VWSC and Panchayat were committed to ensure sustainability of the scheme. Having been equipped with the nuances, the committee swung into action and as a first step towards sustainable Operation & Maintenance (O&M), village level norms for water supply was developed and passed through a gram sabha resolution.

As per the norms set, to ensure equitable distribution of safe drinking water to all the households in the village a roster for habitation wise supply was developed. Each habitation is supplied water every day for 30 mins in the morning. During summers the committee decided to supply water for 15- 20 mins in the evening. Responsibilities were allotted to members of VWSC. Each member was allocated a particular habitation for one-on-one interaction. The task of the pump operator was defined, with primary work of ensuring timely supply water every day. VWSC was directed to keep a check on the wastage of water at all the delivery points. Relaxations were given to 2 marginalised and 3 institutional and religious establishments by the Gram Panchayat. As an incentive to encourage community to pay the water users charges in a timely and regular manner, the committee decided to give a rebate of Rs. 200/- towards annual fee if the payment was made at one go for the entire year in advance. Many people came forward



Community meeting to explain the water situation in the village





Happy Faces as drudgery from water collection comes to an end

and paid annual charges to avail the discount. Notices were issued to regular defaulters by the VWSC.

A detailed O&M plan for managing and maintaining the piped water supply system was developed and passed in the gram sabha through a resolution. To ensure funds with the Panchayats towards operation & maintenance, an amount of Rs. 100/- per household was fixed as User tariff from each family. The fee was fixed based on the expected expenditure that would be required in its maintenance. A receipt is given by the panchayat to all those who made on payment, ensuring proper record of funds received. An amount of Rs 2.50 lakh was collected as User Fee for the FY 2022-23 by Biccholi. The monthly collection of User charge is approximately Rs 22,500/-. The VWSC maintains an average closing balance of Rs. 5,000 every month.

In addition to this, the committee has collected Rs. 67,500 as community

contribution. Having been trained on basic repairs and maintenance, the responsibility of the pump operator is to maintain the water supply structures and resolve minor issues. The pump operator is engaged by the panchayat. Since implementation of the scheme, no major breakdown have been reported and minor issues are generally resolved within a day. The panchayat maintains a small inventory of spare parts including a spare motor to address the problem during emergencies.

Annual audit of accounts is facilitated by the panchayat and the details of the income vis-a-vis expenses for the piped water supply in the year is also shared with the community by the VWSC and the panchayat.

Door-to-door collection of water charges is usually led by the women members of the VWSC. Self Help Groups (SHGs) in the village collaborated with the panchayat to encourage community to pay the water user

charge, generate awareness on safe handling of water and prevention of water wastage at the household level. ■

Key Takeaways

Since the commissioning of the scheme two and half years ago, water is being supplied every day in Biccholi. To attain an impact at this level it is important that involvement of the community is ensured. Women of the village played a key role towards community mobilization and demonstrate leadership in their own right to ensure regular supply of water through taps in a sustained manner in the long-run. Decentralization of services is only possible if all the stakeholders involved in the process enable them to understand the nuances of water supply management. Availability of water in every rural household of Icchawar village has ensured well-being of the people.

Raising Awareness on linkages between Health and Drinking Water through IEC

- Soumya Sahai, Senior Associate;
Mirza Shadan, Director, Global Health Strategies (GHS)



5 years ago, the Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM) set out to make taps a ubiquitous feature in Indian households, transforming the way communities procure, drink and manage their private water supply. Over the course of its operations, the Mission made significant strides to realize this ambitious vision, achieving 77.33% coverage for functional household tap water connections (FHTCs) in India, translating into 14.93 crore households having access to high-quality and sufficient piped water supply. As the Government charts the road ahead to achieving 100% FHTC coverage and ensuring water equity and security for all, it becomes critical to sustain the momentum of JJM, identifying key successes and mapping targeted solutions to cover remaining gaps.

One such area, where JJM offers critical learnings is in leveraging Information, Education and

Communication (IEC) to promote safe water practices and thereby improve public health and wellbeing. A key focus of this approach has been to impress upon communities the health benefits of utilizing JJM's safe and tested piped water, encouraging continuous uptake of its services and incentivizing community participation in the maintenance of village-level assets. Through this approach, the Mission has also been nurturing a '*Jan Andolan*' for water in the country, transforming the way communities perceive, use and preserve water at the grassroot-level.

However, despite monumental progress, certain challenges remain. In many parts of the country, particularly those with abundant natural water resources, JJM encounters the problem of a low value perception for water. Communities lack awareness about the critical importance of JJM's high-quality piped water in improving their health and wellbeing, and

continue to consume unsafe, untreated water available in local lakes, ponds, wells etc. In such areas, the erratic uptake of piped water poses a health risk, making communities vulnerable to water-borne diseases. Secondly, the low awareness around the linkages of drinking water and health also results in wasteful use of JJM's water, with beneficiaries spending the precious supply on washing cattle, irrigating fields etc. Such irrational consumption again stunts the potential of the programme to improve community health.

As the government looks at the road ahead, addressing these behavioural challenges will prove critical in enhancing the wellbeing of communities and sustaining the beneficial impact of JJM on-ground. In this context, IEC will prove essential, and there are three IEC approaches that must be highlighted for scale-up and adaptation across states and districts in the years to come.



Making IEC Resonate with Communities

First, the integration of folk art and cultural traditions into IEC resources and messaging is critical to enhance their impact. This approach ensures that through IEC, JJM can build a stronger emotional connection between people and water and make the messaging resonate with the socio-cultural sensibilities of communities. Various state missions and district officers have adopted this approach in their IEC efforts and demonstrated its potential to drive positive behavioural change. For instance, states like Andhra Pradesh have been utilising the folk theatre of *Kalajatha*, to disseminate critical messaging on water and health amongst communities and promote good water practices. In Assam the popular medium of mobile theatres has been used to engage the youth with water and raise awareness about its linkages with health and wellbeing. Rajasthan too has been leveraging the rich corpus of local folk songs and dances to increase community involvement in JJM and induce positive behaviour change.

Implementing IEC in the local language is also crucial to reaching the maximum number of people and fitting the local socio-cultural context. When doing so, it is important that IEC materials are not merely translated from English or Hindi but are originally created in the local languages. This approach emphasizes drawing on the distinct idioms, stories, and humour of the local languages to convey messages effectively to communities and ensure they hold relevance to the target audience. The messaging can also be tailored for different audience groups, for example: women in SHGs

could be communicated about the importance of clean water focusing on protecting the health of the family; healthcare workers can be trained on disseminating information on the morbidity, mortality and the economic costs associated with diseases like diarrhoea and cholera reiterating the importance of clean water.

Gamifying IEC for Behaviour Change

An innovative approach to IEC, that holds immense potential for community engagement and awareness building is gamification of communications. Through simple games like 'Snakes and Ladders' or 'Hopscotch', familiar to children, youth and elders alike, messaging on water, health, hygiene and responsible water can be effectively disseminated. The hands-on nature of games ensures that participants remain engaged throughout, and, most importantly, enhances the recall value of messages disseminated. In some parts of India, for instance, West Bengal, the potency of this approach has been demonstrated for IEC.

Strengthening Peer-to-Peer Learning for IEC

Finally, in the years to come, it is vital to create peer-learning opportunities and platforms, to enable diverse States / UTs and organizations part of the Rural Water Partners Forum (RWPF) to share their best practices in IEC. This could also be expanded to learnings and linkages with the Health Department to align the activities related to communications on water-borne diseases which further strengthen the narrative on the relationship between water,

health, well-being and prosperity. This would ensure that proven best practices and innovations in IEC in their respective regions, can be identified for scaling across the country, to raise awareness around water and health. Over the last two years, Global Health Strategies (GHS), in association with the Gates Foundation, has been fostering such opportunities through national-level consultative discussions and workshops for States/ UTs and RWPF organizations. In May of this year, one of the biggest such workshops was organized at SPM-NIWAS, Joka, Kolkata, bringing together representatives from 23 States/ UTs and 10 RWPF organizations in a national-level consultative meeting and training on IEC. The workshop proved critical in identifying innovative IEC practices for scale-up, and charting solutions to address shared challenges to implementing IEC.

As the government looks at the road ahead, it is important to strengthen IEC and effectively leverage its potential to raise awareness around water, health and well-being, and induce positive behaviour change amongst communities. While Jal Jeevan Mission has made remarkable progress in transforming the way Indian households' access and manage their water supply, the journey is far from over. Leveraging IEC to raise awareness about the health benefits of safe drinking water, fostering community ownership, and integrating local traditions and languages into communication strategies will be critical in sustaining the momentum of JJM. By doing so, we can ensure that every household in India has access to safe, high-quality piped water, ultimately improving public health and wellbeing across the nation. ■

समुद्र का पानी खारा कैसे हुआ

- रचना गहिलोत बिष्ट, राष्ट्रीय जल जीवन मिशन



एक गांव में दो भाई रहते थे। पिता के मरने के बाद सारी सम्पत्ति बड़े भाई ने अपने नाम कर ली थी और छोटे भाई को बस एक बोरी गेहूँ दे कर घर से बहार निकल दिया था। इस तरह बड़ा भाई तो धनवान और छोटा भाई दरिद्र हो गया था।

एक बोरी गेहूँ आखिर कितने दिन तक चलता। कुछ ही दिनों में छोटे भाई के पास भरण पोषण के लिए कुछ भी नहीं बचा। छोटे भाई का परिवार भूख से बेहाल और गरीबी से परेशान था।

"आप के बड़े भाई के पास तो कितना सारा पैसा है, वह चाहे तो हमारी मदद कर सकते हैं। आप को उनके पास जा कर मदद की गुहार करनी चाहिए", छोटे भाई की पत्नी ने अपने पति को समझाते हुए कहा।

पत्नी के कहने पर छोटा भाई अपने बड़े भाई के घर की ओर चला ताकि मिल कर सहायता मांग सके। बड़े भाई ने पूरी बात अनसुनी कर छोटे भाई को अन्न का एक दाना भी देने से इंकार कर दिया। दुखी मन से जब छोटा भाई अपने घर को लौट रहा था तो रास्ते में उसकी मुलाकात से एक वृद्ध से हुई।

वृद्ध अपने सर पर लाठी का भारी गट्टर लिए जा रहा था। वृद्ध ने छोटे भाई से पूछा, "बेटा तुम बहुत दुखी लगते हो, क्या दुख है तुम्हें"।

छोटे ने वृद्ध को अपना दुख दर्द विस्तार से सुनाया। वृद्ध ने कहा, "धीरज रखो! तुम लकड़ियों का गट्टर मेरे घर पहुंचा दो तो मैं तुम्हें ऐसी वस्तु दूंगा जिस से तुम्हारी सारी परेशानी खत्म हो जाएगी"। एक तो वृद्ध साथ ही वह ऐसा भारी गट्टर उठा लिए जा रहे थे जो उनके लिए उठाना बहुत ही मुश्किल था, छोटे ने सोचा की मेरे पास कुछ काम तो हैं नहीं क्यों न इनकी मदद ही कर दूँ।

छोटे ने गट्टर को सर पर धरा और वृद्ध के साथ चल दिया। घर पर गट्टर धरने के बाद जब छोटा वापिस मुड़ा तो वृद्ध ने भेंट स्वरूप पत्थर की आटा पीसने वाली चक्की छोटे को दी। वृद्ध ने छोटे को बताया, "यह साधारण चक्की नहीं है। इसे सीधे हाथ पर घुमाओगे तो जो मांगोगे तो वह मिलेगा और वह तब तक मिलता रहेगा जब तक उसे उल्टा नहीं घुमाओगे। अपनी इच्छा कर सीधे चक्की घुमाओ और रोकने के लिए उलटी चक्की घुमाओ"।



वृद्ध के द्वारा दी गयी चक्की ले छोटा अपने घर को चल पड़ा। छोटे की पत्नी बच्चों समेत भूखी प्यासी बैठी पति की बाट जोह रही थी। पति के हाथ में चक्की देख उसका मुँह ही लटक गया। उदास हो पत्नी ने अपने पति से कहा, “घर में खाने को एक दाना भी नहीं और तुम चक्की लिए चले आ रहे हो। इस चक्की का हम क्या करेंगे।”

छोटे भाई ने बिछोना माँगा, पत्नी अनमने मन पुरानी चादर ले आयी। छोटे भाई ने चादर बिछा कर उस पे चक्की रखी और दबे स्वर में चक्की से कहा, “चक्की रानी, चक्की रानी मुझे चावल चाहिए।” जैसे ही छोटे ने दाहिने तरफ चक्की घुमाई उस में से चावल गिरने लगा। थोड़ी ही देर में पूरा चादर भर गया। छोटे ने चक्की बाये तरफ घुमाया और चावल आना बंद हो गया। कुछ ही देर में और भी मन मर्जी की चीज़े माँगीं। छोटे, उसके पत्नी और बच्चों ने चक्की के सामने अपनी मांग रखी और सभी चीज़े मिलने लगी। कुछ ही देर में मालपुए, पूरी-सब्जी के ढेर लग गए। तरह-तरह की मिठाई से कमरा सज़ा गया। फिर सभी प्रकार की आराम की चीज़े, नौकर-चाकर, महल-अटारी सब हो गए।

छोटा भाई अपने परिवार के साथ अब ठाट-बाट से रहने लग गया। कुछ ही दिनों में पास पड़ोसियों और रिश्तेदारों के बीच बात फैलते देर न लगी की छोटे भाई का भाग्य बदल गया है। रोज़ ही दावतें होने लगी और लोगो को बुला कर पकवान परोसे जाने लगे। बढ़ते-बढ़ते यह खबर बड़े भाई तक भी पहुँची। बड़े भाई ने इस शान का रहस्य जानने का मन बना लिया। बड़े भाई और भाभी दोनों अब बड़े ही मीठी-मीठी बातें कर छोटे से यह राज़ जानने में सफल हो गए। यह पता चलने पर की छोटे के पास एक जादूई चक्की है, दोनों बड़े भाई भाभी

ने उसे चुराने का बना लिया और फिर क्या एक दिन बड़े भाई ने चक्की अपने छोटे भाई के घर से चुरा ली।

बड़े को पता था की वह चक्की ले कर घर नहीं जा सकता क्योंकि पकड़े जाने का डर था इसलिए उस ने चक्की को नाव में रखा और समुद्र में नाव खेने लगा। ज़रूरत भर खाने का सामान बड़े भाई ने नाव में पहले से ही रख लिया था ताकि भोजन में दिक्कत न होए। तब तक समुद्र का पानी मीठा होता था तो खाना पकाने में कोई दिक्कत नहीं थी।

कुछ देर में बड़े को एहसास हुआ की जल्दबाज़ी में वह नमक रखना तो भूल ही गया है। बिना नमक के खाने में स्वाद ही नहीं आ रहा था।

नाव समुद्र में बहुत दूर तक जा पहुँची थी और पकड़े जाने के डर से घर जाना ठीक न जान बड़े भाई ने चक्की से नमक की कामना करी और चक्की दाहिने ओर घुम्मा दिया। चक्की से नमक निकलने लगा। चक्की घूमती रही और नमक निकलता जा रहा था। बड़े भाई को अपनी इच्छा रोकने का तरीका पता ही नहीं था। चक्की से नमक निकलता जा रहा था और नाव भर जाने के बाद अब नमक समुद्र में जाने लगा। नमक का ढेर इतना बढ़ गया और नाव का भार इतना हो गया की नाव बड़े भाई, चक्की समेत समुद्र में डूब गयी। कहते हैं की अभी भी चक्की से नमक निकलता जा रहा है, इसीलिए समुद्र का पानी खरा हो गया है।

स्रोत: बुंदेली लोककथाएं
चयन एवं संपादन: शरद सिंह
प्रकाशन - साहित्य अकादमी
समुद्र का पानी खारा - पृष्ठ 240



STOP

DIARRHOEA CAMPAIGN



1ST JULY to 31ST AUGUST 2024

An advisory signed by the Secretaries of six ministries was issued on 12th June 2024 by the Department of Drinking Water and Sanitation (DDWS) for starting a campaign on 'STOP Diarrhoea' with the slogan 'डायरिया की रोकथाम, सफाई और ORS से रखे अपना ध्यान'. The six ministries which have joined hands for this campaign are – Ministry of Health & Family Welfare, Ministry of Women and Child Development, Department of Drinking Water & Sanitation, Ministry of Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs, Ministry of Rural Development and Ministry of Steel.

A two-month long country-wide campaign will start on 1st July and shall end on 31st August 2024. Numerous activities will be conducted in a phased manner. States/ UTs are requested to establish a mechanism for inter-sectoral coordination and collaboration to ensure seamless implementation of diarrhoea management activities. The campaign period is chosen to cover the peak season for diarrhoea and a detailed roadmap has been prepared for the same.

DDWS will be dealing with challenges associated with WASH which would involve execution of the implementation plan, development of communication strategy, setting up monitoring and review mechanism of inter-departmental task forces and undertake capacity building of the various stakeholders associated with the programme. Efforts will be made to intensify the work for ensuring safe WASH in schools, anganwadi centres and public health institutions.

Diarrhoea remains a significant public health concern in the country especially for the vulnerable population and children under the age of 5. As per the data of Sample Registration System 2017-2019, diarrhoea disease remain one of the leading causes of morbidity and mortality in India which contributes to 5.8% of all deaths among children under 5-years of age.

Prevention is the key to diarrhoea management. The main activities for prevention of diarrhoea include access to safe drinking water, improved sanitation, hand washing with soap & water, adequate nutrition including exclusive breastfeeding and optimal complimentary feeding, good personal and food hygiene, health education about infection prevention and importance of vaccination. Early treatment with ORS and Zinc plays a critical role in recovery and helps in avoiding deaths using preventive measures.



There is a strong need for inter sectoral convergence in the implementation of diarrhoea management activities in States/ UTs to ensure a comprehensive approach for diarrhoea prevention, treatment and management. Greater impact and better outcome can be achieved through convergence by reducing the burden of childhood diarrhoea. The activities under the campaign will hover around **Protection, Prevention and Treatment (PPT)**.



The Department of Drinking Water and Sanitation will be undertaking the following activities under the 'STOP Diarrhoea' campaign

1. Assess the availability of clean and functional toilets at schools, anganwadi centre, healthcare facilities and in community toilets;
2. Assess water testing and ensure availability of 24x7 water facility at schools, anganwadi centre, healthcare facility and in community toilets;
3. Train local communities, organizations and government officials on water management, for sanitation and hygiene promotion;
4. Establish and strengthen village water and sanitation committee (VWSC) to manage local water resources and sanitation facilities thereby ensuring community involvement in maintaining hygienic standards;
5. Launch public awareness campaign on the importance of water hygiene and its impact;
6. Scale-up Swachh Bharat Mission (Grameen) to achieve and sustain faecal sludge management in rural areas;
7. Organize drives to promote functional household tap water connection in rural institutions;
8. Engage with local communities, civil society organizations and empower them with knowledge and skills to maintain clear water sources and practice safe sanitation behavior;
9. Promote rainwater harvesting techniques like rooftop rainwater harvesting and water storage tanks;
10. Conduct assessment of water supply infrastructure in rural areas to identify leaking pipes that need repair and replacement;
11. Facilitate village walks with Panchayat members to raise awareness about the health risks associated with open defecation and motivate communities to construct and use household toilets.

The other five ministries which have joined hands for the campaign will also be undertaking the activities in their area of work. The tasks they will carry out during the campaign are:

Ministry of Health & Family Welfare

1. Ensure healthcare facility especially for children under 5-years through 'Ayushman Aarogya Mandir Health and Wellness Centre';
2. Develop communication strategy, conduct outdoor IEC through print, social media, television, radio, hoardings and road panels;
3. Carryout door-to-door campaign with ASHA worker, distribute ORS and Zinc as pre-positioning;
4. Mobilize faith-based organizations to spread the message;
5. Conduct role playing and simulation exercises for Community Health Officers (CHOs), Staff Nurses, ANMs;
6. Prepare line listing of dropout and missed out children for immunization and ensure their immunization;
7. Educate families at OPD Wards, Nutrition Rehabilitation Centres on symptoms of diarrhoea ;
8. Launch virtual series on proper handwashing, safe water storage and sanitation practices;
9. Deploy special teams to under served areas for diarrhoea treatment and preventive services;
10. Develop sustainability plan and collect data on the reach of the campaign, impact created and behavior change brought about through surveys, interviews and health facility records;
11. Document success stories and innovative practices on Diarrhoea Management;

Ministry of Women and Child Development

1. Organize sensitization workshops for District and Block officials;
2. List children who are enrolled and affected with diarrhoea in the last 3-4 months at Anganwadi Centre below 5-years of age;
3. Coordinate with Health department for stock of ORS and Zinc at Anganwadi Centre and establish a Corner for it at the Centre;
4. Provide training to Anganwadi worker on monitoring and nutritional assessments to identify children at risk of mal-nutrition;

5. Host community meetings with pregnant and lactating women at Anganwadi centre to discuss common misconception on Diarrhoea and address the questions raised by the care givers;
6. Organize workshop for caregivers on preparing and administering ORS at home and importance of early intervention in managing diarrhoea
7. Partner with nearby Ayushman Aarogya Mandir (AAM) and Health and Wellness Centre and local community organization to organize community events, health fairs, *prabhat pheri* for early detection of diarrhoea;
8. Organize role playing activities and skits to demonstrate hand washing and adoption of hygienic practices;
9. Integrate diarrhoea management education into daily activities at Anganwadi centre through storytelling session and interactive games for children;
10. Establish a system to report diarrhoea cases of children attending Anganwadi centre for tracking treatment and follow-up care through health facility;
11. Conduct home visits for follow-up care and monitor children recovering from diarrhoea episodes;
12. Guide lactating mothers on importance of hydration, balanced diet and adequate calorie intake;
4. Ensure clean and functional toilets alongwith safe drinking water in all the anganwadi centre, residential and sports hostel with repair and maintenance of the infrastructure created;
5. Develop a plan for adequate sampling of water quality testing;
6. Plan uninterrupted supply of clean water in all cities, undertake repair and maintain the water works, clean and repair the overhead water tanks and related infrastructure, ensure proper functioning of STPs for water recycling in convergence with AMRUT programme;
7. Undertake rapid assessment to identify high risk areas to help prevent diarrhoea outbreaks and other water-borne diseases;
8. Collaborate with stakeholders for sensitizing the public on hand washing, ensuring cleanliness and to stop littering;
9. Work on **Protect Prevent Treat (PPT)** strategy, a means to galvanize all resources to intensify cleanliness drive from 14th to 30th June. Maintenance of infrastructure created under the government programme will be undertaken between 1st July to 31st August for diarrhoea and vector borne disease prevention;
10. Integrate activities through inter-departmental coordination for pre-monsoon preparedness, carry out regular monitoring, levy penalty in case of irregularity and take immediate corrective action;
11. Train local communities, organizations and government officials on water management, sanitation and hygiene promotion;
12. Take steps on creating awareness, setting up facilities for sanitation workers;
13. Partner with NGOs, community groups and private sector organizations to reinforce hygiene and sanitation messages;
14. Strengthen Ward level committees, Resident Welfare Organizations, Bull Waste Generators (BWGs) to manage local water resources and sanitation facilities ensuring community involvement in maintaining hygiene standards;
15. Empower local communities/ NGOs with knowledge and skills for maintaining clean water sources and practice safe sanitation behavior in urban slums;

Ministry of Urban Development

1. Conduct special cleanliness drive to prevent open garbage dumping, clear garbage from vulnerable points, eliminate stagnant water and drains, carry out drain desilting especially from food markets, vendor zones, urban slums under Swachh Bharat Mission;
2. Plan daily seamless collection and transportation of waste to the processing plants especially during monsoon season;
3. Conduct drives to clean and maintain the community toilets in high risk zone in urban slums and informal settlements with focus on availability of water and provision of handwashing facility;



16. Promote rainwater harvesting technique such as roof top rainwater harvesting system and water storage tanks;
17. Plan for post monsoon maintenance works required for water and sanitation including solid waste management infrastructure;
18. Integrate with social behavior communication campaign of Swachh Bharat Mission to ensure use of toilets for safe sanitation, waste segregation and non-littering

Ministry of Rural Development

1. Identify high risk pockets with diarrhoea outbreak in the last 1 year based on data from the Department of Health;
2. Organize orientation meeting on STOP Diarrhoea campaign;
3. Conduct meeting with Cluster level federation, village organization, self-help group to create awareness on –
 - a) Importance of keeping surrounding clean;
 - b) Usage of toilets;
 - c) Handwashing;
 - d) Tree plantation;
 - e) Use of safe drinking water
4. Conduct demonstration on proper handwashing with soap and water to support in nutrition counselling focusing on diarrhoea and friendly diets for children;
5. Develop emerging response plan with support of ASHA for managing diarrhoea disease outbreaks during national disasters, such as floods or droughts;
6. Promote community to maintain cleanliness and adopt sanitation through community-based events to promote environmental cleanliness;
7. Undertake Tree Plantation Drive - Green Earth, Healthy Life at villages with support of local NGOs and Department of Horticulture;
8. Promote experience sharing on WASH practices adopted by members and other lessons on WASH

Ministry of Education

1. Ensure cleaning of water banks for prevention of diarrhoea;
2. Develop plan for school-based activities like quiz, poster, essay writing and drawing competition and health education sessions;
3. Organize a drive to assess the availability of clean and functional toilets at schools;
4. Organize drive to assess the availability of functional water storage tanks;
5. Organize Tree Plantation drive – Green Earth, Healthy Life in schools;
6. Train Health and Wellness Ambassadors in schools on diarrhoea prevention and promotion of good hygiene practice;
7. Invite community health officers, staff nurses, ANMs to speak on diarrhoea management, handwashing during morning assembly in schools;
8. Organize '**Bal Swasthya Samvad**' during monthly 'Parent Teacher Meet' with focus on healthy diet, safe and clean drinking water, use of toilets and handwashing;
9. Display posters in school corridors highlighting handwashing and sanitation;
10. Conduct role play activities and skits at schools to demonstrate handwashing techniques and encourage school children to adopt hygienic practices;
11. Launch school wide '**Hygiene Heroes**' programme, where students pledge to maintain good hygiene practices;
12. Facilitate peer-to-peer learning session where old students mentor younger peers on proper handwashing techniques and sanitation practices;
13. Visit nearby Ayushman Arogya Mandir (AAM) – Health and Wellness Centre for health screening;
14. Conduct workshop on nutrition and healthy eating habits, emphasizing the role of proper nutrition and preventing diarrhoea diseases;
15. Give Awards to students on Independence Day. ■

Tanmay Ben brings 'ease of living' in Malegon village at Dang district of Gujarat

- NJJM

Smt. Tanmay Ben Devrambhai Thakre wears multiple hats. As a science teacher, Sarpanch, and Chairman of Pani Samiti, she handles all the responsibilities with utmost sincerity and dedication.

Tanmay is an exceptional leader who understands the challenges of the region and in particular her village. She works tirelessly ensuring access to safe drinking water in all the 330 rural household, 3 schools and 2 anganwadi centres of Malegaon. The in-village scheme implemented in the village has provisioned drinking water through taps in all the 2,130 residents of tribal village in Malegaon.

With safe and clean drinking water reaching every home it is important to understand that the water is a limited resource which must be consumed judiciously. Tanmay spends time explaining to the villagers why consumption of tap water is important and how it impacts the health as well as growth of a child. The potable water supplied in the village is treated and meets the prescribed standards of BIS 10500 which is fit for direct consumption and cooking.

As a teacher Tanmay inculcates good hygiene habits among her students.

She firmly believes that conservation of water is important for long-term sustainability. She plays a crucial role as President of Pani Samiti and supports its members in frequently conducting water quality tests as a monitoring mechanism to ascertain the quality of water supplied and if leaks at any point is contaminating the water.

She responds to the water grievances raised by the community with regard to drinking water, leakage in pipelines, supply of quality water and ensures that the issues raised by the community is resolved at the earliest in an effective manner.

Working in Dang is pretty tough as the region faces acute water shortage in summers due to rocky terrain and steep slopes, despite receiving heavy rain during the monsoon season. Tanmay is aware of the geographical challenges in Dang and is always looking for innovative ways to improve the water situation in her village. She believes water conservation is the key to a sustainable future and encourages the community to conserve water through various ways like reuse of water and recharge of ground water.

Tanmay's dedication has earned her the respect and admiration of her

students, parents and villagers. Her tireless effort to ensure tap water in every household has transformed the lives of the villagers, especially women and girls. Under her leadership, the Pani Samiti is successfully maintaining the in-village water supply system.

For the operation & maintenance of water supply scheme, every household is paying a monthly user charge of ₹50. The money collected is used for the operation and maintenance of the water supply infrastructure created under Jal Jeevan Mission. The village is 'Har Ghar Jal' certified.

Tanmay is an exceptional community leader who understands the challenges of her village and works tirelessly to provide water in every household. Her experience as a science teacher has helped her in educating and sensitizing the community about the benefits of 'Har Ghar Jal' scheme, and her role as Sarpanch has provided her an opportunity to oversee the rural development projects in her village. Tanmay's leadership and dedication has made her a role model who is bringing about a change in the lives of the villagers by ending their drudgery through tap water connection and 'ease of living'.



Har Ghar Jal: Transforming lives of tribal women in Uttar Pradesh

- NJJM

Jal Jeevan Mission has changed the picture of Bankati village in Shrawasti district of Uttar Pradesh bordering Nepal, which is a certified 'Har Ghar Jal' village i.e., all the 47 rural households are getting assured tap water supply in their homes. The Mission is improving the lives of Tharu tribe, who have been deprived of their rights and basic facilities for years, as they are getting connected to the mainstream of development.

Under Jal Jeevan Mission, State Rural Water Supply Department is changing the fortunes of Tharu tribe. 'Har Ghar Jal' programme is ensuring supply of clean water to the community. It has not only led to the well-being and prosperity of especially women and daughters of the village, but the time saved in fetching water is being used for gainful employment and community work.

A new chapter of self-reliance is being written

The women and girls of Tharu tribe are creating history by writing a new chapter of self-reliance and attaining new skills. Awareness is being created in the community on the rural water supply works being undertaken by Jal Jeevan Mission and how water quality can be ensured by frequent chlorination and water testing.

These tribal women are seeking remedial action from Public Health

and Engineering Department (PHED) for their water related woes. In the past, women of Tharu tribe were confined within the four walls of their house. Jal Jeevan Mission has spread a ray of hope in their lives. Women are stepping out of the four walls, to receive training on water quality testing, its operation, maintenance and water management.

During water testing, the five-member women surveillance committee found that the water contained high level of Iron in Shrawasti district. The problem had to be addressed and remedial action was initiated. By use of Field Test Kit,

women are checking the water on 12 parameters. The water is tested both at source and delivery points. These women are not just taking lead in ensuring that quality water is supplied but are also capacitating the community and motivating them contribute in water management. Now, under Jal Jeevan Mission all Iron affected habitations have been provided with safe tap water.

The young tribal girls of Tharu are sensitizing the community on use of clean water which has brought in a positive change in their lives. Tharu women are writing a new chapter of self-reliance in Uttar Pradesh. ■



Tap water reaches rural households in Uttar Pradesh

Shri Narendra Modi leads NDA to form the national government

- NJJM

On June 11, 2024, Shri Narendra Modi took oath as the Prime Minister for the third consecutive term in the 18th Lok Sabha. Shri Chandrakant Raghunath Patil assumed charge as the Union Minister of Jal Shakti and Shri V Somanna and Shri Raj Bhushan Choudhary are appointed as Minister of State for Jal Shakti.

The Union Minister and MoS were extended a warm welcome by Secretary Department of Drinking Water and Sanitation (DDWS) Smt. Vini Mahajan upon his taking charge in office at Shram Shakti Bhawan, New Delhi. Shri Patil expressed his gratitude to the Hon'ble Prime Minister for entrusting him with the vital responsibility of taking forward the work under 'Har Ghar Jal', the flagship programme of the government which aims to provide tap water connection in every rural household of the country.

Subsequently, a high-level introductory meeting was convened wherein a briefing about the work carried out by the Department of Drinking Water and Sanitation (DDWS), progress made, challenges encountered and way forward was made before the Union Minister and two MoS by Secretary, DDWS in the presence of Dr Chandra Bhushan Kumar, Additional Secretary & Mission Director, National Jal Jeevan Mission (NJJM), Shri Jitendra Srivastava, Joint Secretary & Mission Director, Swachh Bharat Mission (Grameen) (SBMG), and other senior officers. The first social media post which went out



Shri C. R. Patil assumes charge as Hon'ble Union Minister of Jal Shakti



Shri V. Somanna, MoS of Jal Shakti assumes charge

from the handle of MoJS Shri Patil stated, "I am determined that the Ministry of Jal Shakti will set new benchmarks in water conservation,

sanitation, and management. In this direction, we will promote collective efforts and conserve water assets using the latest technology."





Pic: Dignitaries present at the introductory meeting - Smt. Vini Mahajan, Secretary, Drinking Water and Sanitation, Ms. Debashree Mukherjee, Secretary, Department of Water Resources, River Development & Ganga Rejuvenation, along with other senior officials of the Ministry.

Jal Jeevan Mission aims to enhance the quality of life in rural communities and promote sustainable water management practices. Shri V. Somanna, MoS of Jal Shakti will be leading the works as MoS in the Department of Drinking Water and Sanitation, under the Ministry of Jal Shakti. After taking charge, the

Minister expressed gratitude towards the Prime Minister for trusting him with the responsibility of the Ministry and stated, "The last 10 years have witnessed remarkable growth under the dynamic leadership Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi". The Minister expressed firm determination to continue the momentum of

development in the third term of the government. Addressing the media on the occasion, Shri Somanna stated that under the Jal Jeevan Mission, over 11 crore rural households have been added to piped water supply in the last 5 years and now over 76% rural households are receiving 55 litre quality water per person daily. ■



Shri Patil, along with the Ministers of State for Jal Shakti, Shri V. Somanna and Dr. Raj Bhushan Choudhary being briefed by senior officials of the Ministry

Meetings, Events and Workshops

Review Meetings

Smt. Vini Mahajan, Secretary – Department of Drinking Water and Sanitation (DDWS) chaired two crucial review meetings in the month of June to evaluate the progress and status of its implementation across various states. The meeting held on 26th June, 2024, focused on 13 key states, while the meeting of 27th June, 2024, addressed 21 States.

Both the meetings were attended by senior officials from the respective States/ UTs virtually via video conference. The meeting chaired by Secretary DDWS was attended by senior officials from States/ UTs, including Additional Chief Secretaries, Principal Secretaries, Secretaries, Mission Directors, Engineers-in-Chief, and other senior officials. Additional Secretary and Mission Director, National Jal Jeevan Mission (NJJM) made a detailed presentation on the progress, highlighting critical aspects of the mission which is impacting the speed and scale of programme implementation.

The discussion focused on pending approvals for the award of works expected timelines for project saturation, data harmonization efforts, status of geo tagging, current water quality condition. The action points by each State/ UT based on the deliberations held during the third Chief Secretaries' conference was discussed to understand the progress made. The presentation addressed the total

number of works approved, awarded, work orders issued, pace of coverage in schools and anganwadis, skilling of locals on ground, scheme authentication and data harmonization.

The meeting was attended by Joint Secretaries, Directors, and other senior officials from the Mission. These meetings underscored the collaborative effort and commitment across various levels of government to ensure successful implementation of 'Har Ghar Jal' programme under Jal Jeevan Mission, which aims to provide universal access of functional household tap connections to every rural household of India. The discussions emphasized on the importance of coordinated action, meticulous planning, and continuous monitoring to overcome challenges and achieve the mission's ambitious targets, ensuring long-term supply of prescribed quality drinking water to all. ■

Dialogue with Bharti Institute of Public Policy

As part of the ongoing Policy Walk of the Advanced Management Programme in Public Policy (AMPPP), a delegate met with Secretary, DDWS on 26th June, 2024 at New Delhi.

Smt. Vini Mahajan, discussed the challenges and progress of India's rural water supply and sanitation initiatives. She outlined the initial rural development



Review meetings in session





Meeting with delegates from Bharti Institute of Public Policy in progress

efforts that were hindered by limited resources. However, over time, the focus shifted from addressing specific village issues to ensuring community-level water availability, culminating into the goal of providing each household with potable water on premises.

Further she emphasised the need for policies grounded in the current resource base and priorities, highlighting the role of data and information in policy formulation. She said that the transitions from identifying problem areas to ensuring comprehensive water access reflect changing ground realities and priorities along with the importance of using technology, such as large databases and Artificial Intelligence (AI), for effective monitoring and evaluation.

She highlighted the importance of collaboration across government departments, academia, civil society, and communities. She expressed that engaging communities and building their capacities were crucial for sustainable infrastructure management and mentioned that women and self-help groups (SHGs) play a significant role in driving change.

Smt. Mahajan concluded the session by reiterating the need for networks and collaboration to address public concerns effectively. ■



Secretary, DDWS being presented with a memento by Bharti Institute of Public Policy

Ministry of Jal Shakti celebrates the 10th International Day of Yoga

Union Minister for Jal Shakti, Shri C.R. Patil participated in the grand event of 10th International Yoga Day (IYD) - themed 'Yoga for Self and Society' - at the historic Chowk Fort in Surat. Shri Patil participated in the Yoga session and said, "Yoga is a unique means to make life stress-free, healthy and joyful." He encouraged people to practice yoga and make life healthy, happy and harmonious, while bringing in positive change in oneself as well as society.

Minister of State for Jal Shakti and Railways, Shri V. Somanna participated in the IYD event at the Police Parade Ground, Tumkuru. He expressed gratefulness to the Hon'ble Prime Minister for illuminating the world with the power of yoga and paving the way for a happier and healthier humanity.

Minister of State for Jal Shakti, Dr. Raj Bhushan Choudhury practiced yoga at Shram Shakti Bhawan in New Delhi. The Minister was accompanied by senior officers and staff of the Department of Water Resources, River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation (DoWR, RD & GR). Dr. Choudhury said, "under the leadership of Shri Narendra Modi, yoga and spirituality has become incomparable throughout the world and has increased the prestige of India."

Celebrating the IYD 2024, over 60 officials of the Department of Drinking Water and Sanitation (DDWS) participated enthusiastically in the Yoga sessions at Pandit Deendayal Antyodaya Bhawan, CGO Complex in New Delhi. ■



Senior officials of DDWS participating the Yoga Day event in the office premises

Workshop-cum-Orientation programme on 'Jal Shakti Abhiyan: Catch the Rain-2024' was organized in New Delhi

- NJJM

Workshop-cum orientation programme organized by the National Water Mission (NWM), Department of Water Resources, River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation (DoWR), Ministry of Jal Shakti was graced by Union Minister of Jal Shakti Shri C. R. Patil and Minister of State for Jal Shakti, Dr. Raj Bhushan Choudhury.

The orientation programme was held primarily for the Central Nodal Officers (CNOs) and Technical Officers (TOs) of 'Jal Shakti Abhiyan: Catch the Rain – 2024' (JSA: CTR 2024) campaign, in New Delhi on 24th June 2024. These officers will be visiting the 151 focused districts to oversee effective implementation of the campaign. While addressing the CNOs and TOs, the Union Minister said, "I am committed for a water secure future through action-oriented policy and planning."

Smt. Vini Mahajan, Secretary Department of Drinking Water and Sanitation (DDWS) addressed the CNOs and TOs at Dr Ambedkar International Centre, New Delhi. During the inaugural address, Smt. Mahajan urged all the CNOs to carry the JSA: CTR campaign forward as a government approach for sustainable future. She emphasized on the leadership role played by the women under the water supply programme and their efforts in source sustainability to ensure availability of water in the long-run.



Hon'ble Union Minister of Jal Shakti inaugurates Jal Shakti Abhiyan Workshop at Dr Ambedkar International Centre

During the workshop, Dr Chandra Bhushan Kumar, Additional Secretary & Mission Director, National Jal Jeevan Mission, made a detailed presentation on the Mission and outlined the important aspects, progress made, current status and interventions made. The checklist developed by the Mission for the CNOs and TOs was shared which covered the different aspects which needs to be discussed during the field visit with the district officials and village level functionaries. The central team of CNO and TO will be undertaking two visits to the allotted districts.

The JSA:CTR-2024 campaign which started on 9th March 2024 will continue till 30th November 2024 in all the districts covering both rural and

urban areas. The theme for this year is 'Nari Shakti se Jal Shakti' focusing on the pivotal role of women in water conservation.

Addressing the audience, the Union Minister Shri Patil appreciated the efforts made by the Ministry of Jal Shakti in water sector. He emphasized upon scaling up the actions towards meeting the cumulative water demand. He spoke of the Surat Municipal corporation model wherein treated water was supplied to industries at a cost-effective tariff along with the implementation of sustainable afforestation. The Minister stressed upon involvement of NGOs working in water sector for effective implementation of various schemes implemented by the Ministry especially in rural areas. Shri





Secretary, DDWS speaking at the workshop

Patil assured his commitment for a water secure future through action-oriented policy and planning. He opened the doors of the Ministry to the general public on raising their concerns related to water related issues and sought suggestions in person including social media platforms.

Secretary DDWS Smt. Vini Mahajan emphasized on working with urban authorities as well as rural agencies for scaling up the installation of rainwater harvesting structures. She addressed that our main source of water is rainwater, therefore our water bodies should be ready to receive the maximum amount of rainfall. All efforts should be made to

catch the rain, where and when it falls.

In the wrapping-up session, Secretary (Department of Water Resources, River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation) Ms. Debashree Mukherjee observed that the prolonged heat wave in the current year has an adverse impact on the water security in the country, which can be mitigated effectively by increasing water storage in the water bodies, ponds, ground water, reservoirs. Jal Shakti Abhiyan: Catch The Rain campaign can be an effective tool to get ready for addressing the challenge of increasing water storage by desilting of water bodies, maintenance of rain

water harvesting structures. The success of the campaign is primarily dependent on getting the district authorities enthused and motivated for effective implementation of the campaign. She stressed that we need to bring the local civil society organizations and district authorities together at a common platform to implement the campaign. Usage of local media can be a tool for effective dissemination of the advantages of the campaign. Central Teams can also assess the saturation of anganwadis, schools, with the creation of rainwater harvesting structures in their premises. The teams can impress upon the district authorities for completing geo-tagging of water bodies.

The event witnessed presentations on various important topics including 'The District Waterbody Atlas', which is significant to water conservation and sustainability efforts in India by the National Water Informatics Centre (NWIC). 'The rainwater storage and recharge structures including defunct bore-wells' showcased practical solutions to enhance water availability through efficient rainwater harvesting techniques by the Central Ground Water Board (CGWB).



Hon'ble Union Minister of Jal Shakti delivers keynote address

Empowering the Future

National Conference on Climate Change Awareness, Health, and Hygiene in Schools across Uttar Pradesh

- Madhuri Shukla,
Communications Associate,
UNOPS



20th May 2024, witnessed a significant gathering of dignitaries, government officials, ambassadors, and students at the National Conference on Climate Change Awareness, Health, and Hygiene in Schools at the India Habitat Centre, New Delhi. The conference had representatives from 11 districts of Uttar Pradesh. The national conference was convened in collaboration with TERI – The Energy and Resources Institute. The event marked culmination of a six-month-long capacity-building campaign initiated by the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS). The initiative aimed to educate and empower over 27,000 students in 162 schools across 137 villages, turning the young ambassadors as change agents for water, sanitation,

hygiene (WASH), menstrual health, and climate change.

The was attended by senior government officials, Ambassador of Denmark and Sudan, UN country representative. Through the deliberations the conference aimed to educate the youth on climate change, water conservation, and public health, aligning with Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) 3, 6 and 13, which focus on good health, well-being and prosperity of the people residing in rural India,

With tap water reaching over 77% of the rural households, it is important to understand that water will be available in the long-run only if we use it judiciously, recharge, recycle ensuring its availability and sustain-

able management for taking urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts, respectively.

Empowering Students as Champions of Change

Shri. Vinod Mishra, Country Manager of UNOPS, provided insights into the programmes success in teaching children about water source sustainability, groundwater quality monitoring, climate change mitigation plans, and water conservation. He hoped that the model developed by UNOPS team should be replicated in other districts of Uttar Pradesh and pan India. Shri. Mishra emphasized the importance of hands-on, participatory approaches, noting that workshops at both the cluster and district levels became hubs of



learning and community engagement. Despite challenges such as the implementation of the model code of conduct and heatwaves, the programme was successfully completed, demonstrating its resilience and effectiveness.

Government and International Support

Secretary General of the National Human Rights Commission, Shri. Bharat Lal, also the founding Mission Director of the Jal Jeevan Mission, highlighted the role of UN agencies in enhancing government initiatives. He discussed Jal Jeevan Mission's goal of providing clean tap water nationwide. Praising UNOPS's involvement in this effort, particularly in the drought-prone Bundelkhand region. Shri. Lal spoke about the 100-day campaign under the Jal Jeevan Mission which aimed at supplying piped water to anganwadi centers, ashramshalas, and schools. It was a move to ensuring piped drinking water supply in learning institutes for drinking and cooking midday meals which will lead to their improved health and well-being. He added, "investing in children is key to achieve a developed India, Vikshit Bharat by 2047.

Shri. Shombi Sharp, UN Resident Coordinator to India, stressed on the severity of climate crisis, noting the intertwined nature of climate and child rights. He praised India's Jan Andolan concept for fostering community engagement and generate solutions to address climate crisis. Shri Sharp said, 'Har Ghar Jal programme will go a long way to help achieve the 2030 SDG goals and support the vision of a developed India by 2047.

H.E. Shri. Freddy Svane, Ambassador of Denmark, emphasized the urgent need to reduce energy consumption and protect natural resources. He highlighted Denmark's Green Strategic Partnership with India, focusing on energy, water, green financing, and climate collaboration. He urged individual responsibility and action to combat the climate crisis, sharing personal examples of reducing carbon footprint and highlighting the importance of harnessing India's demographic dividend.

H.E. Dr. Muawia Elbukhari, Ambassador of Sudan, emphasized the critical importance of water conservation. He noted that educating students about water conservation at this

stage prepares them to become true leaders in their communities.

Celebrating Student Champions and Future Commitments

The conference featured a panel of students one from each of the 11 districts, who shared their experiences and learnings from the capacity-building programme. Following the launch of the Project Manual, a panel discussion on the role of students as change agents was held.

The strong commitment from all stakeholders to continue supporting and expanding such initiatives underscores the collective effort towards a more sustainable and resilient future.

The National Conference highlighted the power of education and community engagement in addressing well-being, climate change, health, hygiene and prosperity. By empowering students to become ambassadors of change, the initiative has set a precedent for future programmes, ensuring that the youth are equipped with the knowledge and skills necessary to build a sustainable future. ■



Students expressing their learnings on water conservation, menstrual hygiene, and climate change



पेयजल एवं स्वच्छता विभाग
जल शक्ति मंत्रालय
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