Jal Jeevan Samvad

August | Volume 7 | Issue 8 | Year 2026

Har Ghar Jal
Jal Jeevan Mission

Building Partnership
Changing Lives

District/ Village
Dialogues Series

**Articles by
Deputy Advisor, NJJM
and DC/DMs of 4 districts**



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Design: Arif Khan

Edition: 71st (August 2026)

Publisher: **Arun Kumar,** Under Secretary (DDWS)
National Jal Jeevan Mission, Ministry of Jal Shakti, New Delhi - 110 003
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Minister of Jal Shakti on Jal Jeevan Mission



C R Patil
Minister of Jal Shakti

नल से नव निर्माण तक। माननीय प्रधानमंत्री श्री Narendra Modi जी के दूरदर्शी नेतृत्व में शुरू हुआ जल जीवन मिशन केवल एक योजना नहीं, बल्कि ग्रामीण भारत के जीवन में आया एक ऐतिहासिक परिवर्तन साबित हो रहा है। आज देश के गांवों में पेयजल आपूर्ति के लिए विश्व की सबसे बड़ी ग्रामीण जलापूर्ति व्यवस्था खड़ी की गई है। करोड़ों घरों तक नल से जल पहुंचाने के लिए विशाल जलाशय, इंटेक संरचनाएं, जल शोधन संयंत्र, पंपिंग स्टेशन, ओवरहेड टैंक और लाखों किलोमीटर लंबी पाइपलाइन नेटवर्क का निर्माण किया गया है। यह आधुनिक भारत के सबसे बड़े जन-कल्याणकारी बुनियादी ढांचा अभियानों में से एक है। लेकिन जल जीवन मिशन की असली सफलता केवल अवसंरचना निर्माण में नहीं है। अब मिशन का अगला चरण "इन्फ्रास्ट्रक्चर से सर्विस डिलीवरी" की ओर बढ़ चुका है। लक्ष्य केवल नल कनेक्शन देना नहीं, बल्कि हर ग्रामीण परिवार को नियमित, सुरक्षित, गुणवत्तायुक्त और भरोसेमंद पेयजल सेवा सुनिश्चित करना है। जल जीवन मिशन 2.0 के तहत संचालन एवं अनुरक्षण, जल गुणवत्ता निगरानी, सामुदायिक भागीदारी, स्रोत संरक्षण और तकनीक-आधारित सेवा प्रबंधन पर विशेष बल दिया जा रहा है।...

- Hon'ble Union Minister, Jal Shakti
Posted on X handle, 04th August, 2026

Minister of State, Jal Shakti on Jal Jeevan Mission



V. Somanna
Minister of State for Jal Shakti

During the Monsoon Session, held a series of meetings with Hon'ble Members of Parliament from various States to review the implementation of the Jal Jeevan Mission and address constituency-specific drinking water issues in coordination with State Governments. These consultations reflect our commitment to ensuring effective implementation, timely resolution of challenges, and accelerated progress towards providing safe drinking water to every rural household.

- Hon'ble Minister of State, Jal Shakti
Posted on X handle, 7th August, 2026



Foreword

Safe drinking water, sanitation and hygiene are not amenities; they are the foundation on which health, dignity and opportunity stand. When WASH services are strong, everything around them grows, from school attendance and public health to women's empowerment, nutrition and livelihoods. This is why India's efforts in the water and sanitation sector have consistently been guided by the larger vision of inclusive and sustainable development.

Over the years, the Mission has created one of the world's largest rural drinking water infrastructures. However, the true measure of success lies not merely in the creation of assets, but in ensuring that every rural household continues to receive safe, adequate and reliable drinking water services on a sustained basis. This requires equal attention to operation and maintenance, source sustainability, water quality surveillance, institutional strengthening and community ownership. The experiences presented in this edition clearly demonstrate that sustainable service delivery is achieved when technology, governance and citizen participation work together.

The experiences presented in this edition clearly demonstrate that sustainable service delivery is achieved when technology, governance and citizen participation work together. Equally important is the active involvement of public representatives, as reflected in the interactions of Hon'ble Minister of Jal Shakti with Members of Parliament from different States during the month. Such engagements provide valuable feedback from the field, strengthen local accountability and reinforce the shared commitment of governments, institutions and communities towards ensuring reliable drinking water services for every rural household.

Reliable drinking water services can only be sustained when water sources are protected, groundwater resources are managed responsibly and local institutions actively participate in planning and oversight. Gram Panchayats, Village Water & Sanitation Committees, women-led groups and community volunteers are increasingly emerging as custodians of rural water infrastructure and resources. At the same time, initiatives such as Jal Arpan, Jal Seva Ankalan and the Decision Support System are helping strengthen accountability, informed decision-making and public participation.

As we look ahead, our collective effort must remain focused on transforming water infrastructure into dependable public service delivery systems. Sustainable water security will require continuous collaboration between governments, local institutions and communities. By strengthening local capacities, promoting Jan Bhagidari and safeguarding our water resources, we can ensure that the gains achieved under Jal Jeevan Mission continue to improve the quality of life of rural families for generations to come.



Ashok K. K. Meena
Secretary,
Department of Drinking Water & Sanitation



Note from the desk of

Additional Secretary & Mission Director...

The articles and experiences featured in this edition of *Jal Jeevan Samvad* reflect the evolving priorities of rural drinking water service delivery and the collective efforts being undertaken across States, districts and villages to strengthen sustainability under Jal Jeevan Mission.

Beyond infrastructure creation, the focus today is increasingly on ensuring reliability of services, strengthening local institutions, improving water quality surveillance and creating systems that can sustain the benefits of *Har Ghar Jal* over the long term. In Khowai district, Tripura, the integration of School Water Clubs, SHG-led awareness activities, FTK-based water quality testing and source sustainability interventions presents a comprehensive model of community-centred service delivery. Similarly, the work undertaken in Didwana-Kuchaman, Rajasthan highlights how technology-enabled monitoring through SCADA systems, systematic water quality surveillance and structured operation and maintenance arrangements can help address long-standing water quality challenges. The convergence-led approach adopted in Chatra, Jharkhand, combining source sustainability, grievance redressal, community mobilisation and digital monitoring, provides valuable lessons for districts seeking to strengthen service reliability and local ownership. At the village level, the experiences shared during Sujal Gram Samvad by Gram Panchayats from Kolhapur, Panna, Barabanki and Charkhi Dadri reaffirm that sustainable drinking water services are best secured when communities actively participate in operation and maintenance, water quality monitoring and resource management.

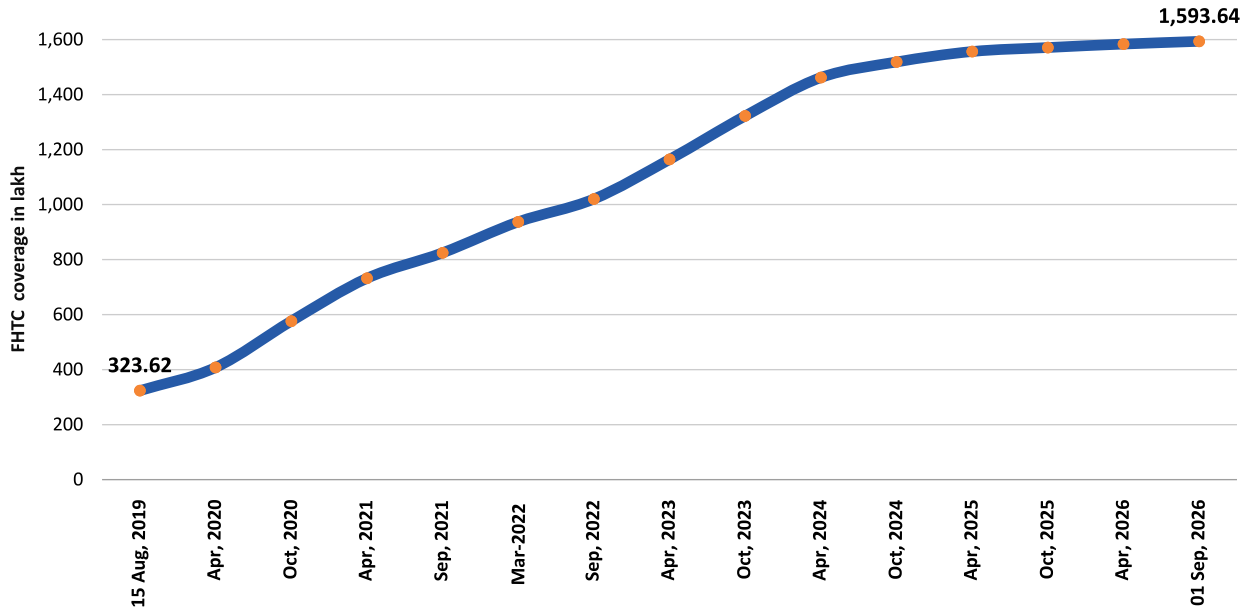
The special District Collectors' interaction on source sustainability and the growing emphasis on scientific assessment of drinking water sources further reflect the need to combine field knowledge with data-driven planning.

During my field visit to Deoghar, Jharkhand and Sultanganj, Bihar this month, I had the opportunity to interact with community members, Village Water & Sanitation Committees and district officials. The commitment displayed by Gram Panchayats, frontline workers and community members provides confidence that the gains achieved under Jal Jeevan Mission can be sustained for future generations.

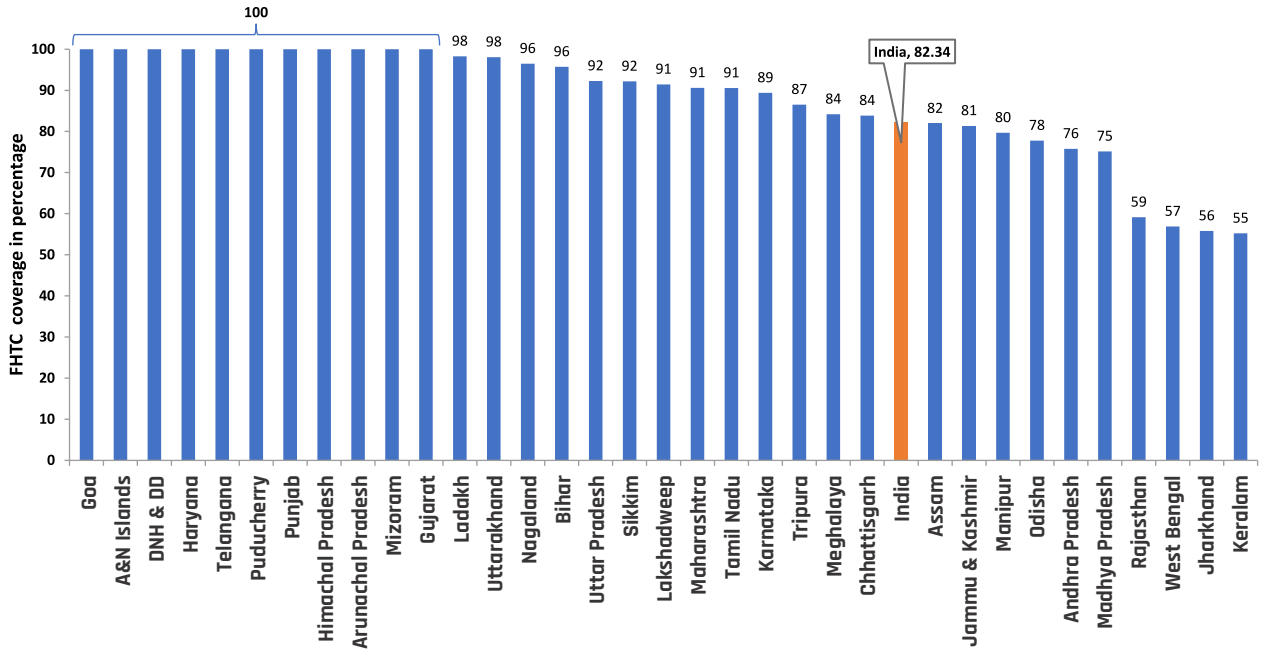
As we move forward, the continued success of Jal Jeevan Mission will depend upon strong partnerships among States, districts, Gram Panchayats and communities. Sustainable rural water security is a shared responsibility that requires continuous learning, innovation and collective action. I hope the experiences documented in this edition inspire wider adoption of good practices and contribute to strengthening reliable, community-owned and sustainable drinking water services across rural India.

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

Progressive coverage - Functional Household Tap Connection (FHTC) (as on 31.08.2026)



Comparative FHTC coverage status of States/ UTs (as on 31.08.2026)



- Graphical representation by Arpan De Sarkar, NPMU-NJJM

As on 31st August, 2026

Source: JJM-IMIS

India | Status of tap water supply in rural homes

Total number of households (HHs)	Households with tap water connections as on 15th Aug 2019	Households with tap water connections as on date
19,35,54,073	3,23,62,838 (16.72%)	+284 15,93,64,282 (82.34%)

Households provided with tap water connection since launch of the Mission

12,70,01,444 (78.79%)

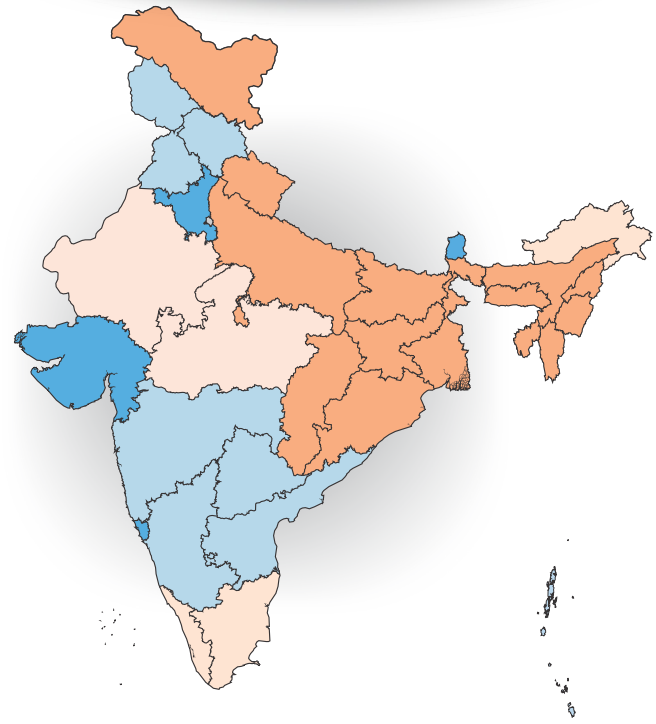
Har Ghar Jal [100% HHs with tap water connections]

100% FHTC States/ UTs

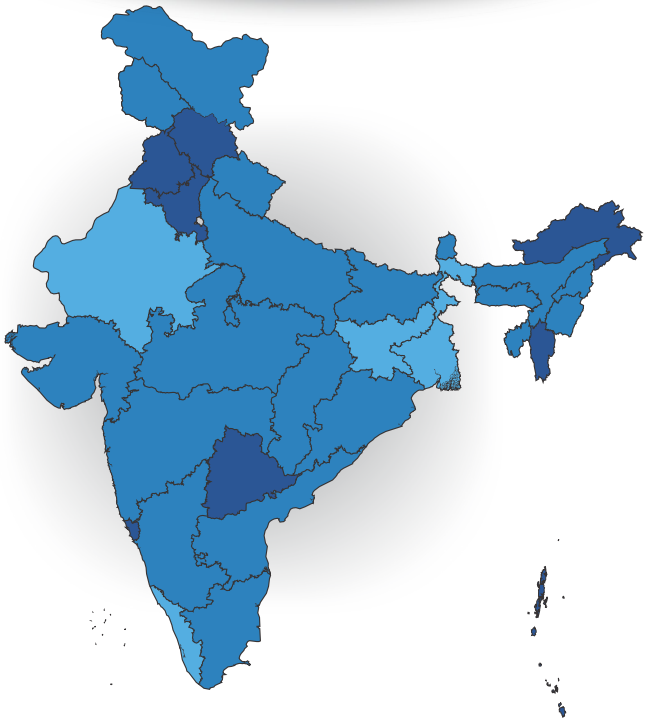
Goa, A & N Islands, Puducherry, D&NH and D&D, Arunachal Pradesh, Haryana, Punjab, Telangana, Mizoram, Himachal Pradesh

100% FHTC Districts	100% FHTC Blocks	100% FHTC Panchayats	100% FHTC Villages
195	1,962	1,34,395	2,91,843

As on 15th August, 2019



As on 31st August, 2026



0 to <10% | 10% to <25% | 25% to <50% | 50% to <75% | 75% to <100% | 100%

Interaction with Members of Parliaments by MoJS

- **Lopamudra Panda,** NPMU-NJJM

As part of the continued engagement with elected representatives to strengthen the implementation of Jal Jeevan Mission 2.0, Shri C.R. Patil, Minister of Jal Shakti interacted with Hon'ble Members of Parliament from West Bengal, Haryana, Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra during August 2026. These interactions provided an important platform for reviewing the progress of the Mission, discussing state-specific challenges, and obtaining valuable suggestions from public representatives for ensuring sustainable and equitable drinking water service delivery in rural areas. The meetings also reinforced the collaborative approach of Jal Jeevan Mission by bringing together policymakers, elected representatives and administrators towards the shared objective of ensuring safe and reliable drinking water for every rural household. Similar interactions with Members of Parliament from other States and Union Territories will also be conducted to further strengthen stakeholder engagement and support the effective implementation of Jal Jeevan Mission 2.0 across the country.

Interaction with Members of Parliament from West Bengal

On **5 August 2026**, Union Minister of Jal Shakti Shri C.R. Patil chaired a detailed review meeting with Hon'ble Members of Parliament from West Bengal on the progress and effective implementation of Jal Jeevan Mission. The meeting was attended by Shri V. Somanna, Hon'ble Minister of State for Jal Shakti, Dr. Sukanta Majumdar, Hon'ble Minister of State, Government of India, Dr. Ajay Kumar Poddar, Hon'ble Minister, Public Health Engineering Department,



Figure 1: Interaction with Members of Parliament from West Bengal | Source: MoJS office



Figure 2: Interaction with Members of Parliament from West Bengal | Source: MoJS office

Government of West Bengal, Shri Bhaskar Bhattacharya, Hon'ble Minister of State, along with senior officials from the Ministry of Jal Shakti and the Government of West Bengal. Discussions focused on key issues such as water quality, arsenic and salinity affected areas, source sustainability, completion of ongoing projects, drinking water supply in tail-end habitations, ground-level implementation progress and Operation & Maintenance (O&M) of rural water supply systems. Members of Parliament shared valuable suggestions and field experiences to strengthen implementation and improve service delivery. The deliberations reaffirmed the commitment of the Central and State Governments to work together towards ensuring safe and quality drinking water for every rural household under the leadership of Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi.

Interaction with Members of Parliament from Haryana

On **6 August 2026**, an interaction with Hon'ble Members of Parliament from Haryana was held at Haryana Bhawan, New Delhi, to deliberate on the effective implementation of Jal Jeevan Mission 2.0. The meeting was attended by Shri Manohar Lal Khattar, Hon'ble Union Minister for Housing and Urban Affairs, Shri Krishan Pal Gurjar, Hon'ble Minister of State for Cooperation, and Shri Ranbir Gangwa, Hon'ble Minister, Public Health Engineering Department, Government of Haryana, along with Shri V. Somanna, MoS, MoJS and senior officials from the Ministry of Jal Shakti and the State Government. The discussions focused on timely and effective implementation of Jal Jeevan Mission 2.0, strengthening Jan Bhagidari and ensuring sustainable access to quality tap water services for rural households. Members of Parliament shared valuable suggestions and practical experiences from their constituencies, highlighting opportunities for further improving rural water supply management and community participation. The interaction underscored the importance of active involvement of elected representatives in supporting



Figure 3: Interaction with Members of Parliament from Haryana | Source: MoJS office



Figure 4: Interaction with Members of Parliament from West Bengal | Source: MoJS office

implementation efforts and strengthening local ownership.

Interaction with Members of Parliament from Madhya Pradesh

Continuing the outreach, a detailed interaction with Hon'ble Members of Parliament from Madhya Pradesh was held on **11 August 2026** at Madhya Pradesh Bhawan, New Delhi. The meeting was attended by Dr. Virendra Kumar, Hon'ble Union Minister for Social Justice and Empowerment, Shri V. Somanna and Shri Raj Bhushan Choudhary, Hon'ble Ministers of State for Jal Shakti, Shri Durgadas Uikey, Hon'ble Minister of State for Tribal Affairs, and Hon'ble Members of Parliament from the State. During the interaction, Members of Parliament shared valuable feedback on the progress of Jal Jeevan Mission in their constituencies, with discussions focusing on source sustainability, quality of infrastructure, regular water supply, Operation & Maintenance (O&M) and practical implementation challenges faced at the local level. The meeting highlighted the importance of leveraging field-level experiences and public representatives' feedback to accelerate timely and quality implementation of rural water supply schemes through coordinated efforts of the Central and State Governments.



Figure 5: Interaction with Members of Parliament from Madhya Pradesh | Source: MoJS office



Figure 6: Interaction with Members of Parliament from Madhya Pradesh | Source: MoJS office

Interaction with Members of Parliament from Maharashtra

Subsequently, on **12 August 2026**, an interaction with Hon'ble Members of Parliament from Maharashtra was held at Maharashtra Sadan, New Delhi, to review the progress of Jal Jeevan Mission in the State. The meeting was attended by Shri V. Somanna, Hon'ble Minister of State for Jal Shakti, Smt. Raksha Khadse and Shri Ramdas Athawale, Hon'ble Ministers of State, and Shri Gulabrao Patil, Hon'ble Minister for Water Supply and Sanitation, Government of Maharashtra, along with senior officials from the Ministry of Jal Shakti and the State Government. Members of Parliament shared important suggestions and constituency-specific experiences related to rural drinking water supply and implementation of Jal Jeevan Mission. Discussions focused on strengthening implementation, addressing local challenges and ensuring effective delivery of services at the grassroots level. The interaction reiterated the commitment to sustain the achievements of Har Ghar Jal and ensure safe, adequate and reliable tap water supply to every rural household under the leadership of Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi.

Way Forward

The Ministry of Jal Shakti will continue this series of interactions with Members of Parliament from other States and Union Territories, providing a structured platform for sharing field-level experiences, addressing implementation challenges and strengthening collaborative efforts for effective implementation of Jal Jeevan Mission 2.0. Such engagements are expected to further deepen Jan Bhagidari, improve service delivery and contribute towards achieving the vision of sustainable Har Ghar Jal across rural India.



Figure 7: Interaction with Members of Parliament from Maharashtra | Source: MoJS office

Interaction with Students and Faculty of SVNIT, Surat under the One-Day-One-University Initiative

- **Lopamudra Panda**, NPMU-NJJM

An interactive session with students and faculty members of Sardar Vallabhbhai National Institute of Technology (SVNIT), Surat was organised by the institute on 17 August 2026 under the 'One-Day-One-University initiative. Shri C.R. Patil, Hon'ble Union Minister of Jal Shakti attended the session along with Shri Ashok K.K. Meena. The programme provided a platform for engaging young minds on critical issues relating to rural drinking water supply, sanitation, sustainability and innovation.

The session was followed by an engaging interaction with students and faculty members, who raised questions relating to research opportunities, internships, field-based projects, innovation challenges and technology-enabled solutions for the water and sanitation sector. Shri Patil actively engaged with students and faculty members in the discussion. The discussions highlighted the significant potential of academic institutions in contributing to evidence-based solutions for challenges faced by rural communities.

During the interaction, students and faculty members raised questions relating to research opportunities, internships, field-based projects, innovation challenges and technology-enabled solutions for the water and sanitation sector. The discussions highlighted the significant potential of academic institutions in contributing to evidence-based and locally relevant solutions for challenges faced by rural communities.

Addressing the gathering, the Hon'ble Minister of Jal Shakti shared



Figure 8: Minister of Jal Shakti is interacting with students and faculties | Source: SVNIT, Surat



Figure 9: Minister of Jal Shakti is addressing students and faculties | Source: SVNIT, Surat

Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi's vision of "Har Ghar Jal, Har Ghar Swachhata" and emphasized the importance of transforming water conservation into a people's movement through "Jal Sanchay-Jan Bhagidari". He expressed appreciation for the innovative ideas and solutions presented by students for addressing water and sanitation challenges and noted that universities and colleges are important centres of innovation and scientific research. He highlighted that active participation of academic institutions is crucial for developing practical, scalable and cost-effective solutions to address grassroots challenges in the water and sanitation sector.

Shri Ashok K.K. Meena, Secretary, DDWS, encouraged students and researchers to collaborate with State Water and Sanitation Missions, district administrations, Gram Panchayats and local implementing agencies to develop field-ready solutions that can strengthen rural drinking water and sanitation services. He emphasized that innovation, technology, community participation and scientific research will play an increasingly important role in advancing sustainable service delivery under Jal Jeevan Mission 2.0 and Swachh Bharat Mission (Grameen).

The interaction underscored the important role that educational institutions, researchers and young innovators can play in advancing the vision of a Jal-Surakshit and Swachh Bharat. It also reinforced the belief that the combined strength of youth, science, innovation and Jan Bhagidari can accelerate progress towards sustainable water security and improved sanitation outcomes across the country.



Figure 10: Secretary, DDWS delivering his presentation | Source: SVNIT, Surat

India's Experience in Evidence-Based Water Governance Shared at World Water Week 2026

- **Lopamudra Panda**, NPMU-NJJM

India's experience in implementing large-scale rural drinking water programmes was showcased at World Water Week 2026, where Shri Ashok K. K. Meena, Secretary, Department of Drinking Water & Sanitation (DDWS) participated in the panel discussion on "Evidence for Action: The UN Water Conference Academic Hub" on 24 August 2026. The session focused on strengthening the science-policy interface and exploring how research and evidence can be translated into actionable outcomes for global water governance in the lead up to the 2026 UN Water Conference.

The discussion brought together leading experts and practitioners from across the world, including Professor Kaveh Madani, Director of the United Nations University Institute for Water, Environment and Health (UNU-INWEH) and recipient of the 2026 Stockholm Water Prize. Deliberations centred on the role of research, innovation and evidence-based decision-making in improving water governance systems and accelerating implementation on the ground.

Sharing India's experience in implementing Jal Jeevan Mission, one of the world's largest rural drinking water programmes, Shri Meena highlighted how evidence-based policymaking and community-led implementation have emerged as key drivers of progress. He emphasized the importance of implementation-oriented research, service delivery outcomes, source sustainability, policy-ready knowledge products and community-generated evidence in strengthening drinking water security. He noted that with nearly 158 million rural households receiving tap water connections under the Mission, improvements driven by evidence and innovation have the potential to positively impact millions of lives across rural India.

The Secretary highlighted the importance of integrating data, technology and field-level learning into programme implementation. He observed that evidence-based improvements in areas such as water quality monitoring, source sustainability, digital governance, asset management and local institutional strengthening can significantly enhance the sustainability and reliability of drinking water services. He further emphasized that effective water governance requires continuous feedback between researchers, policymakers and implementing agencies to ensure that solutions remain responsive to local needs and emerging challenges.

During the discussion, Shri Meena also highlighted the role of the Dr. Syama Prasad Mookerjee National Institute of Water and Sanitation (SPM-NIWAS) in promoting research, capacity building and knowledge management in the water and sanitation sector. He noted that the institution is playing an important role in converting field experiences and implementation learnings into actionable knowledge products that can inform policy and programme improvements.



Figure 11: Secretary, DDWS virtually joined the panel discussion | Source: NJJM



Figure 12: Secretary, DDWS speaking with attendees | Source: NJJM

Emphasising the need for stronger global partnerships, he called for greater collaboration among governments, academic institutions, research organisations and development partners to transform implementation experiences into shared learning and measurable action. He observed that many of the challenges associated with water security, sustainability and climate resilience are global in nature and can benefit from collective learning and exchange of experiences.

The participation of DDWS at World Water Week 2026 highlighted India's growing contribution to global discussions on water governance and sustainable development. The session reaffirmed India's commitment to bridging the gap between science and policy, promoting evidence-based decision-making, and sharing lessons from Jal Jeevan Mission and other large-scale initiatives to support global efforts towards water security, sustainable development and improved quality of life.



10th Edition of Sujal Gram Samvad: Showcasing Community-led Rural Water Governance Across India

- **Lopamudra Panda**, NPMU-NJJM

The Department of Drinking Water and Sanitation (DDWS), Ministry of Jal Shakti, organised the 10th edition of Sujal Gram Samvad on 25 August 2026, reaffirming its commitment to strengthening community-led management of rural drinking water systems under Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM) 2.0. Conducted as a multilingual virtual dialogue, the Samvad provided a unique platform for direct interaction between senior officials of the Department and Gram Panchayat representatives, Village Water and Sanitation Committees (VWSCs), frontline workers and community members from across the country. Unlike conventional review meetings, Sujal Gram Samvad seeks to bring grassroots voices to the forefront, enabling policymakers to understand local experiences, challenges and innovations that are shaping sustainable rural drinking water service delivery.

The Samvad was chaired by Shri Ashok K.K. Meena, Secretary, DDWS, in the presence of Shri Kamal Kishore Soan, Additional Secretary & Mission Director, National Jal Jeevan Mission (NJJM), along with senior officers from the Department. Representatives from four Gram Panchayats, namely Vasnoli-Dhanagarwada in Maharashtra, Choupra in Madhya Pradesh, Naanmau in Uttar Pradesh and Todi in Haryana, participated in the interaction and shared their experiences on village-level operation and maintenance (O&M) of rural water supply systems. The event also witnessed participation from State Mission Directors, District Collectors, District Water and Sanitation Mission officials, Jal Sahiyas, Jal Bahinis, Jal Sakhis, teachers, students, Anganwadi workers and community institutions.

Community Ownership at the Core of JJM 2.0

In his opening address, Shri Ashok K.K. Meena emphasized that the sustainability of rural drinking water systems ultimately depends upon active community ownership and



Figure 13: Secretary, DDWS addressing during 10th SGS | Source: NJJM

local accountability. Referring to the spirit of the 73rd Constitutional Amendment, he highlighted the need for effective devolution of Funds, Functions and Functionaries to Panchayati Raj Institutions, enabling Gram Panchayats to play a greater role in managing village water supply systems. He stressed that the experiences emerging from villages provide valuable lessons for strengthening programme implementation and ensuring long-term sustainability.

The Secretary highlighted the efforts being made by Gram Panchayats across the country in areas such as water quality monitoring, grievance redressal, source protection, financial management, greywater management and citizen awareness. He underlined that participation of women, youth and local institutions through Village Water and Sanitation Committees is essential for ensuring reliable service delivery and fostering a sense of ownership among communities.

The discussions during the Samvad covered a wide range of issues related to uninterrupted operation of water supply systems, skilling of local operators, water quality testing and disinfection, financial sustainability through user charges, source sustainability, prevention of leakages and community participation in O&M. At the heart of all these discussions was a common theme: empowering Gram Panchayats and communities to take responsibility for the management and sustainability of their drinking water assets.

Voices from the Gram Panchayats

Maharashtra



Vasnoli-Dhanagarwada Gram Panchayat, Kolhapur District, Maharashtra

- Locally Managed Solutions for Remote Tribal Communities
- Active community participation
- Automated timer-based water supply system
- 100% coverage

The interaction began with Vasnoli-Dhanagarwada Gram Panchayat of Kolhapur district in Maharashtra in Marathi language. Representatives from the village highlighted how active community participation has become the foundation of their water supply management system. The village, located in a remote and challenging terrain, the tribal dominant populates had historically faced difficulties in accessing drinking water due to dependence on spring sources located in forested areas. Forest and wildlife-related constraints further complicated the situation. But with arrival of Jal Jeevan Mission the tribal GP has access to quality water supply reducing their age-old burden.



Figure 14: GP and community interacting in Marathi language | Source: NJJM

District officials explained that locally adapted solutions have been developed to overcome these challenges. Automated timer-based systems have been installed to regulate water distribution, reducing the need for villagers to travel through difficult forest terrain for daily operation of

water systems. The village has achieved full household tap water coverage while ensuring efficient management of the scheme. The initiative has not only improved delivery service but has also reduced operational costs.

Appreciating the innovation, Shri Ashok K.K. Meena highlighted the potential of smaller and locally managed water supply systems for remote tribal communities and suggested exploring support through PM-JANMAN and Dharti Aaba initiatives. The discussion underscored the importance of designing solutions suited to local geographical conditions while keeping communities at the centre of decision-making.

Madhya Pradesh



Choupra Gram Panchayat, Panna District, Madhya Pradesh

- Women-led water quality testing using FTKs
- Trained local operators for O&M
- ₹100 monthly user charge for sustainability
- Panchayat Darpan-enabled transparent monitoring

One of the most insightful interactions during the Samvad was with Choupra Gram Panchayat in Panna district of Madhya Pradesh in Hindi language. The discussion provided a vivid illustration of how Jal Jeevan Mission has transformed everyday life for rural families. Villagers shared that prior to receiving household tap water connections, families had to depend on distant sources and spend considerable time and effort fetching water. The availability of tap water at home has significantly reduced drudgery and improved access to safe drinking water, particularly benefiting women, elderly persons and children. Drawing from the village interaction, community members explained that households now receive clean drinking water at their doorstep, allowing families to devote more time to education, livelihoods and other productive activities.



Figure 15: GP and community interacting in Hindi language | Source: NJJM

Responding to questions regarding water quality and regularity of supply, village representatives noted that maintaining public confidence in the water system has become a key priority of the Gram Panchayat. Trained operators regularly monitor the scheme, while women members trained in the use of FTKs undertake routine water quality testing. Their participation has strengthened local surveillance mechanisms and helped ensure that water supplied to households remains safe and reliable. The interaction clearly demonstrated how women are increasingly emerging as important stakeholders in rural water governance, moving beyond beneficiaries to become active custodians of service quality.

The village also shared its approach towards operation and maintenance. Local technical operators have been trained and are available to address routine operational issues, ensuring timely response to faults and uninterrupted service delivery. The Gram Panchayat has created systems for monitoring service delivery and maintaining village infrastructure,

thereby improving accountability and responsiveness. Community awareness and ownership have further strengthened the sustainability of the scheme.

A particularly notable aspect was the Gram Panchayat's emphasis on financial sustainability. The village collects a monthly user charge of **₹100 per household**, which contributes towards meeting electricity expenses, routine repairs, maintenance requirements and other O&M costs. The willingness of the community to contribute financially reflects growing confidence in the service and recognition of the importance of sustaining water infrastructure over the long term.

District and State officials further highlighted how technology is supporting transparency and accountability in the district. Geotagging under the Sujalam Bharat initiative has been completed, while real-time feedback on water services is being collected. The Panchayat Darpan dashboard provides transparent information on user-charge collection and enables monitoring of the performance of Panchayats in water-related activities. Together, these interventions demonstrate how community participation, local leadership and technology can work together to create a sustainable rural water management ecosystem.

Uttar Pradesh



Naanmau Gram Panchayat, Barabanki District, Uttar Pradesh

- Improved access to safe drinking water in homes and schools
- Gram Sabha-led community participation and awareness
- User-charge based O&M model
- Jal Sarthi App and groundwater monitoring initiatives

Representatives from Naanmau Gram Panchayat in Barabanki district highlighted the positive impact of household tap water connections on everyday life while speaking in Hindi. Community members shared that access to safe drinking water has improved significantly since the implementation of Jal Jeevan Mission. A school student participating in the interaction noted that reliable water availability in educational institutions has improved access to drinking water and sanitation facilities within school premises.



Figure 16: GP and community interacting in Hindi language | Source: NJJM

The village further highlighted the role of Gram Sabha meetings in promoting responsible water use, water conservation and community participation. User charges of ₹50 per household per month are collected to support operation and maintenance activities, reflecting the community's contribution towards sustaining the system. District officials also shared details of regular DWSM meetings, groundwater assessments and the use of the Jal Sarthi App for disseminating groundwater-related information.

Haryana



GP: Todi Gram Panchayat, Charkhi Dadri District, Haryana

- Community-led O&M model
- Locally appointed pump operators and plumbers for O&M
- Differential user-charge system for inclusivity
- Timely leakage repair and service continuity

The interaction with Todi Gram Panchayat in Charkhi Dadri district showcased a robust model of community-led operation and maintenance. Villagers explained in Haryanvi dialect how locally appointed pump operators and plumbers play a central role in ensuring timely repair of leakages and addressing operational issues. The community has established a participatory O&M mechanism that ensures continuous service delivery and quick resolution of complaints.

To support sustainability, the village collects monthly user charges of ₹40 from General category households and ₹20 from SC/BC households. These funds are utilised for repair and maintenance of pipelines and village infrastructure. State officials highlighted that although Haryana has already achieved Har Ghar Jal status, efforts continue to focus on maintaining and sustaining the gains achieved under the Mission.



Figure 17: GP and community interacting in Haryanvi dialect | Source: NJJM

Key Messages and Way Forward

In his concluding remarks, Shri Kamal Kishore Soan, Additional Secretary and Mission Director, NJJM, appreciated the efforts of District Collectors and Gram Panchayats in strengthening rural water supply systems. He emphasized the importance of sensitising Panchayat representatives, pump operators and local functionaries on technical aspects such as valve operation protocols to ensure equitable water distribution across all habitations. He also highlighted the importance of leveraging the Decision Support System (DSS) for evidence-based planning and monitoring of water resources.

Emphasising the critical importance of source sustainability, he urged all stakeholders to undertake continuous efforts for protecting and rejuvenating drinking water sources. He noted that sustainable management of water resources is essential to ensure uninterrupted drinking water services for present and future generations. The 10th edition of Sujal Gram Samvad demonstrated how Gram Panchayats across diverse geographies are taking ownership of rural water supply systems through community participation, financial contributions, local capacity building and innovative governance mechanisms. The experiences shared by the participating villages reaffirmed that sustainable rural drinking water services depend not only on infrastructure creation but equally on empowered communities, accountable institutions and collective responsibility. As Jal Jeevan Mission 2.0 moves forward, such grassroots dialogues will continue to provide valuable insights and strengthen the vision of community-managed and sustainable *Har Ghar Jal*.



Figure 18: AS&MD, NJJM addressing during 10th SGS | Source: MoJS office



11th Edition of District Collectors' Peyjal Samvad: Strengthening District-led Action for Sustainable Rural Drinking Water Services

- **Lopamudra Panda,** NPMU-NJJM

The Department of Drinking Water and Sanitation (DDWS), Ministry of Jal Shakti, organized the 11th edition of District Collectors' Peyjal Samvad through video conferencing, bringing together District Collectors, District Magistrates, Deputy Commissioners, State Water and Sanitation Mission officials, and senior officers from DDWS and National Jal Jeevan Mission (NJJM). The platform continues to serve as an important mechanism for fostering peer learning, reviewing implementation progress, and sharing practical solutions for strengthening rural drinking water service delivery under Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM) 2.0. The Samvad was chaired by Shri Ashok K.K. Meena, Secretary, DDWS, in the presence of Shri Kamal Kishore Soan, Additional Secretary & Mission Director, NJJM, and senior officials from DDWS and States.

Over the years, District Collectors' Peyjal Samvad has emerged as a unique knowledge-sharing forum where districts present innovative practices, discuss implementation challenges, and learn from each other's experiences. In the 11th edition, special emphasis was placed on strengthening district-level institutional mechanisms, accelerating source sustainability initiatives, enhancing community participation, improving grievance redressal systems, and promoting convergence with various development programmes to ensure long-term sustainability of rural drinking water services. Four districts, namely Uttara Kannada (Karnataka), Khowai (Tripura), Didwana Kuchaman (Rajasthan), and Chatra (Jharkhand), showcased innovative approaches and successful interventions that can be adapted and replicated by other districts across the country.

Strengthening District-Level Governance and Source Sustainability

Addressing the gathering, Shri Ashok K.K. Meena, Secretary, DDWS, emphasized the pivotal role of District Water and Sanitation



Figure 19: Opening remark by Secretary, DDWS | Source: NJJM

Missions (DWSMs) as the primary institutional mechanism for planning, monitoring, and coordination of rural water supply programmes at the district level. He urged all districts to conduct regular DWSM meetings and ensure timely uploading of proceedings on the JJM IMIS portal. He highlighted that strong institutional mechanisms at the district level are critical for sustaining the gains achieved under Jal Jeevan Mission and for ensuring effective implementation of JJM 2.0.

He also stressed the importance of leveraging the Decision Support System (DSS) for scientific assessment of source sustainability and evidence-based planning. Recognising the monsoon season as a crucial period for water conservation efforts, he called upon districts to intensify the "Catch the Rain – Jal Sanchay Jan Bhagidari" campaign by mobilising Gram Panchayats, VWSCs, Self-Help Groups, schools, colleges and community institutions. He underscored the need to promote rainwater harvesting, groundwater recharge and water conservation measures to strengthen long-term drinking water security.

Secretary, DDWS further urged districts to expedite Jal Arpan ceremonies for completed schemes after due commissioning and trial runs, facilitating formal transfer of assets to Gram Panchayats and encouraging community ownership. Highlighting the achievement of more than two lakh villages and over one lakh Gram Panchayats attaining Har Ghar Jal certification, he emphasized that these achievements must now translate into sustained community-led management and efficient operation and maintenance of rural water supply infrastructure. He also stressed convergence with programmes such as VB-GRAM-G, effective utilization of Finance Commission grants, and collection of user charges at the village level for sustainable O&M.

Sujalam Shakti: Women at the Centre of Water Governance

A key feature of the Samvad was a detailed presentation on the implementation roadmap of **Sujalam Shakti**, an initiative focused on strengthening community participation through women-led village support groups. The initiative envisages empowering women as key stakeholders in water quality surveillance, source sustainability planning, awareness generation and community mobilisation. By building capacities of women at the grassroots level, Sujalam Shakti seeks to strengthen local ownership and improve sustainability of rural drinking water systems across villages.

The initiative aligns closely with the broader vision of Jal Jeevan Mission, which places communities at the centre of water governance and service delivery. Empowering women not only enhances monitoring and accountability but also contributes to long-term behavioural changes related to water conservation, water quality management and sustainable use of resources.

District Innovations and Best Practices

Uttara Kannada, Karnataka: Geospatial Planning for Water Security

Representatives from Uttara Kannada, led by Smt. K Lakhsmi Priya, Deputy Commissioner, and Dr. Dileesh Sasi, CEO, Zilla Panchayat, showcased the district's comprehensive approach towards sustainable rural drinking water service delivery in a geographically diverse region characterised by coastal belts, forests and hilly terrain. The district has undertaken extensive source sustainability initiatives involving mapping of lakes, open wells and borewells, supported by geospatial technologies, groundwater assessments and local resource inventories.

The district shared how Gram Panchayats are preparing long-term

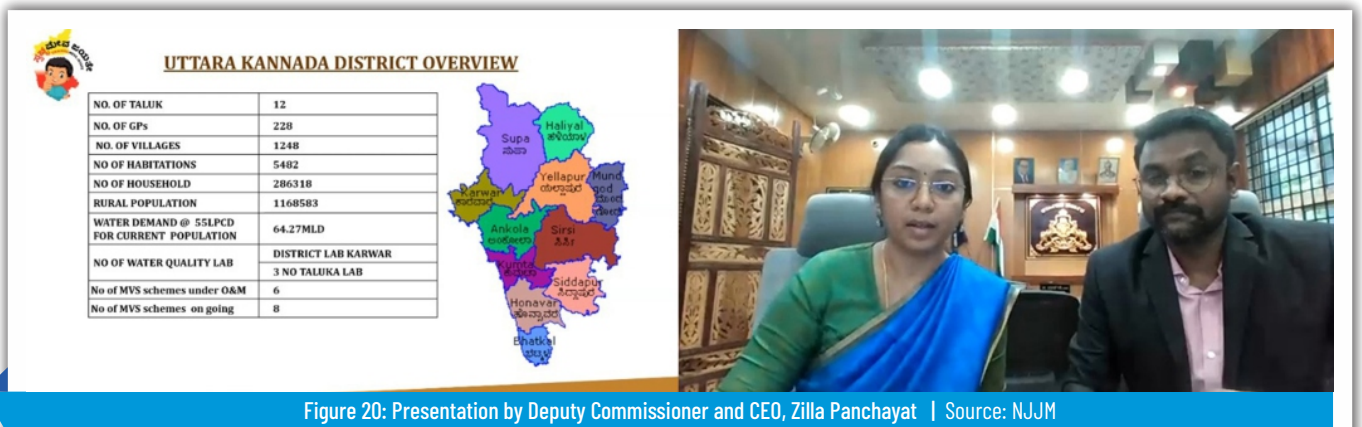


Figure 20: Presentation by Deputy Commissioner and CEO, Zilla Panchayat | Source: NJJM

sustainability plans based on scientific assessments and local resource mapping. Convergence with multiple programmes has been adopted to strengthen water security over the coming years. Regular coordination with the Forest Department has helped in securing permissions and clearances required for implementation of Multi-Village Schemes in environmentally sensitive areas. Capacity building of Panchayat Development Officers, regular meetings of VWSCs, and joint inspections by engineers and Panchayat functionaries have strengthened local governance and accountability mechanisms. Public disclosure of water supply information at Gram Panchayat level and active community engagement through Gram Sabhas have further enhanced transparency and citizen participation.

Khowai, Tripura: Community Mobilisation and Behaviour Change

The presentation by Shri Rajat Pant, District Magistrate and Collector, Khowai, highlighted a strong community-centred approach towards rural drinking water service delivery. The district has institutionalised regular DWSM and DISHA meetings, geo-tagged monitoring systems, third-party quality audits and structured handover of completed schemes to Gram Panchayats through Jal Arpan ceremonies.

Particularly noteworthy was the district's emphasis on Information, Education and Communication (IEC) activities. Khowai has actively involved schools, SHGs and line departments in awareness generation and capacity building efforts. School Water Clubs have been established where SHG women train students in water quality testing using Field Test Kits. The district mascot “Nirmal Modi” is being used extensively in awareness campaigns, while more than 6,000 SHG women are actively engaged in community outreach and mobilisation activities.

The district also demonstrated strong convergence for source sustainability through catchment protection, afforestation, groundwater recharge measures and greywater management interventions. Rainwater harvesting structures have been established in all Anganwadi Centres, while collaboration with Krishi Vigyan Kendras supports awareness among farmers regarding water conservation and sustainable resource management.

Didwana Kuchaman, Rajasthan: Addressing Fluoride and Salinity Challenges

Shri Avdhesh Meena, District Collector, Didwana Kuchaman, presented the district's efforts in tackling long-standing drinking water quality challenges arising from fluoride and salinity contamination in groundwater. Historically, these issues have contributed to cases of dental and skeletal fluorosis, highlighting the importance of reliable access to safe drinking water.

To address these concerns, the district has focused on strengthening surface water-based regional water supply systems and expanding rural tap water coverage. Equal emphasis has been placed on source sustainability through convergence with MGNREGA and other development programmes. Traditional water conservation structures such as Tankas have been rejuvenated, water bodies restored, and rainwater harvesting interventions promoted across water-scarce regions.

A notable innovation highlighted during the presentation was the district's SCADA-enabled monitoring system, which facilitates real-time

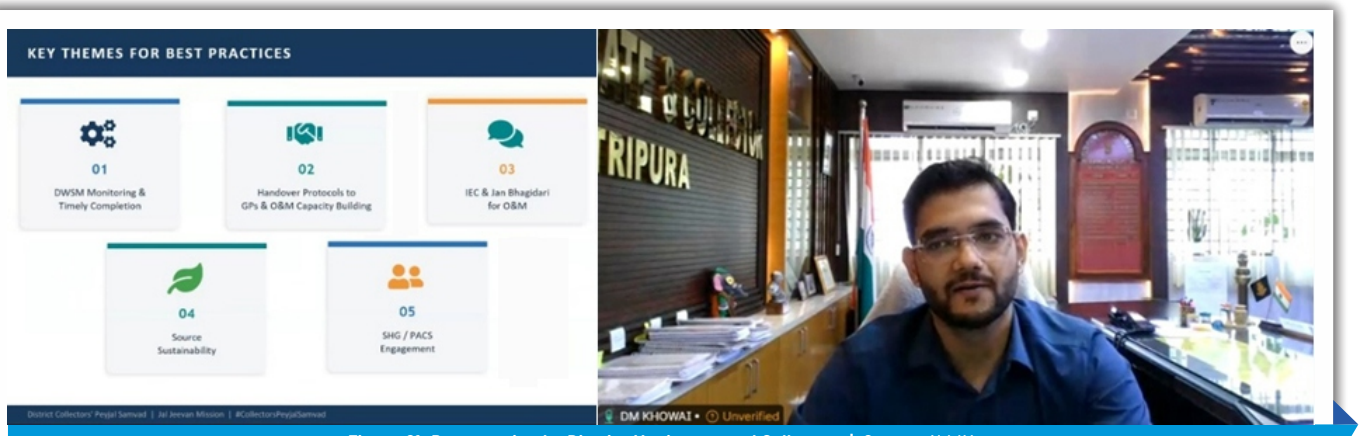


Figure 21: Presentation by District Magistrate and Collector | Source: NJJM

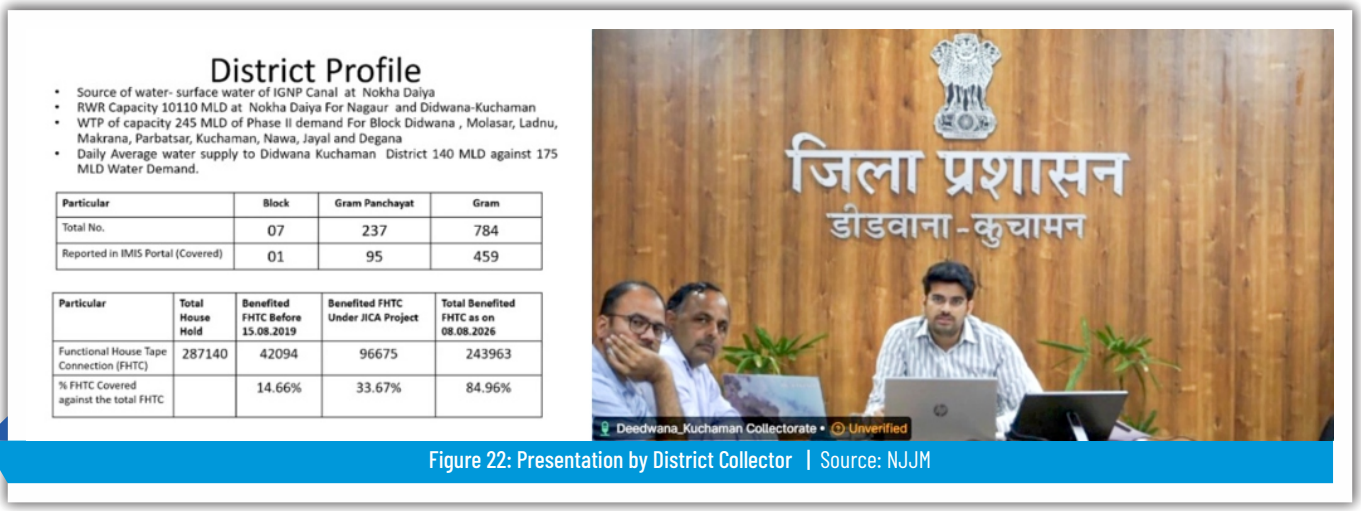


Figure 22: Presentation by District Collector | Source: NJJM

monitoring of reservoirs, water treatment facilities, pump houses and village distribution networks. This technology-driven approach has improved operational efficiency, enhanced monitoring capabilities and strengthened service delivery outcomes.

Chatra, Jharkhand: Convergence-led Grievance Redressal Model

The presentation by Shri Ravi Anand, Deputy Commissioner, Chatra, showcased a convergence-driven model for improving service delivery and addressing drinking water issues at the grassroots level. A key highlight was the innovative **"Peyjal Samasya Nivaaran Pakhwada"**, a dedicated campaign designed to identify and resolve drinking water-related grievances through coordinated action involving the district administration, technical departments, Panchayati Raj Institutions and local communities.

The campaign enabled rapid resolution of issues related to hand pumps, village water supply systems, water shortages and source sustainability concerns. The district highlighted how regular monitoring through DISHA meetings and Panchayat-level reviews, coupled with IoT-enabled remote monitoring systems, has strengthened oversight and improved responsiveness. Capacity building of village youth as pump operators and plumbers, along with women-led water quality surveillance through Jalsahiya cadres, has further enhanced local ownership and sustainability.

Through convergence with MGNREGA and other funding streams, the district has supported construction of thousands of soak pits, rainwater harvesting structures and rejuvenation of ponds and reservoirs, contributing significantly to groundwater recharge and long-term water security. Extensive IEC initiatives such as Jal Shakti Samvads, Jal Yatras and community engagement programmes have helped deepen Jan Bhagidari and strengthen sustainability of drinking water supply systems.

Key Takeaways and Way Forward

Concluding the Samvad, Shri Kamal Kishore Soan, Additional Secretary and Mission Director, NJJM, emphasized the importance of regular

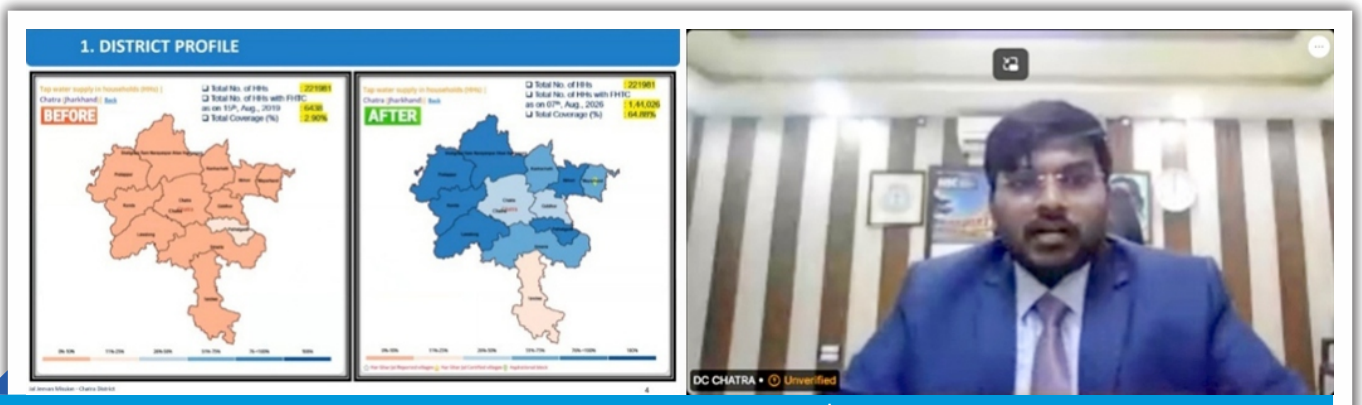


Figure 23: Presentation by Deputy Commissioner | Source: NJJM



Figure 24: Address by AS & MD, NJJM | Source: NJJM

DWSM meetings, district dashboards and District Technical Units in strengthening planning, monitoring and service delivery. He encouraged District Collectors to leverage data-driven decision-making, promote convergence with capacity-building institutions and invest in strengthening local technical capabilities for long-term sustainability of rural water supply systems. Particular emphasis was placed on training women under Sujalam Shakti and creating a cadre of skilled local resource persons to support operation, maintenance and community engagement activities.

The 11th District Collectors' Peyjal Samvad once again demonstrated the value of peer learning and collaborative problem-solving in accelerating progress under Jal Jeevan Mission 2.0. The innovative practices presented by the four districts underscored how strong institutional systems, community participation, technological innovations, grievance redressal mechanisms and convergence-based approaches can collectively contribute towards sustainable and reliable drinking water service delivery. The insights emerging from these presentations provide valuable lessons for districts across the country as India advances towards achieving long-term water security and sustaining the vision of Har Ghar Jal.



Sujalam Shakti:

From Convergence to Collective Action at the Village Level

Strengthening women-led community support for sustainable rural drinking water services under Jal Jeevan Mission 2.0

- **Sumit Priyadarshi,** Deputy Advisor (PHE), NJJM

The journey of Jal Jeevan Mission has brought rural drinking water to the centre of local development. With household tap connections expanding across the country, the focus is now moving beyond the creation of infrastructure towards ensuring that water services remain safe, reliable, sustainable and community-owned.

This extended phase requires stronger engagement at the village level. A drinking water scheme may be designed by engineers and supported through public investment, but its long-term functionality depends on what happens after the infrastructure is created—whether water quality is regularly checked, whether emerging issues are reported in time, whether sources are protected, whether communities participate and whether local institutions are able to respond.

It is in this context that the Sujalam Shakti initiative assumes significance. The initiative seeks to translate State-level convergence into a practical, village-level support mechanism, with women at its centre. The approach brings together the strengths of different departments and institutions while keeping the Gram Panchayat/Village Water and Sanitation Committee (GP/VWSC) at the heart of local service delivery.

From Departmental Convergence to Village Action

Water is a shared responsibility, and sustainable drinking water services require more than one department to work in isolation. Public Health Engineering Departments/Rural Water Supply agencies bring technical expertise in drinking-water systems and water quality. Rural Development and State Rural Livelihood Missions provide access to Self Help Groups and their federations. Panchayati Raj institutions provide the local institutional platform, while the District Water and Sanitation Mission provides the space for coordination and review. Sujalam Shakti seeks to bring these strengths together. The implementation architecture is based on a simple principle:

The State enables, the District drives, and the Village owns

At the State level, the necessary administrative framework, training arrangements, funding provisions, technical support and monitoring systems need to be put in place. At the district level, the District Collector/District Magistrate and DWSM provide leadership for convergence, target-setting, training coordination



Figure 25: Community meeting | Source: NJJM stock

and resolution of bottlenecks. At the village level, the GP/ VWSC and local institutions identify suitable women and anchor their engagement. The result is intended to be a clear handholding chain, where every functionary knows who supports whom, where a problem should be escalated and how it should be resolved.

Women at the Centre of Water Governance

Across rural India, women have traditionally been closely connected with household water management. They understand the everyday realities of water availability, quality, reliability and access. Sujalam Shakti seeks to build on this experience by creating village-level groups of approximately five women. Two members are envisaged to focus on water-quality-related responsibilities, including Field Test Kit (FTK) testing, reporting, sample collection and coordination with laboratories. Three additional members support community mobilisation, Jan Bhagidari, source sustainability and behaviour change communication. The strength of the model lies not simply in creating another group. It lies in giving women a defined role within the existing rural water governance ecosystem.

The Sujalam Shakti group is intended to support—not replace—the Gram Panchayat (GP), Village Water and Sanitation Committee (VWSC) or Pani Samiti, which remain the primary local institutions responsible for planning, oversight and community-level management of rural drinking-water services. The group is envisaged as an additional women-led support mechanism that strengthens the capacity of these existing institutions through defined and complementary roles. The members can contribute to activities such as water-quality testing through Field Test Kits, reporting and sample coordination, community mobilisation, Jan Bhagidari, source sustainability and behaviour change communication.

This distinction is important to avoid creating a parallel institutional structure at the village level. Instead, Sujalam Shakti members should work in close coordination with the GP/VWSC, with clear task assignments, reporting channels and a defined district-level support mechanism. The GP/VWSC can help identify and anchor the members within the village, while the technical departments provide the necessary training, laboratory and technical support. In this manner, the Sujalam Shakti group can act as a bridge between the community and the formal drinking-water service delivery system, bringing timely information and community participation into local decision-making while strengthening, rather than duplicating, the existing institutional framework.

The objective is not to create a parallel village institution, but to strengthen the ability of existing institutions to respond to water-related needs with timely information, community participation and local support.

The District Collector as the Convergence Catalyst

For an initiative involving several departments, the district provides the crucial link between policy and implementation. The District Collector/District Magistrate, along with the DWSM or designated district authority, can bring the concerned departments together, establish clear responsibilities and ensure that implementation does not remain confined to departmental boundaries.

The first step is to convene the relevant stakeholders—PHED/RWS, RD/SRLM, Panchayati Raj and DWSM—on a common district



Figure 26: Water quality testing with FTK by trained women | Source: NJJM stock

platform and establish a shared understanding of the objectives and implementation approach. The District Collector/District Magistrate can provide the leadership required to bring these departments together, clarify their respective roles and responsibilities, and identify named nodal officers who will be responsible for coordination and follow-up. PHED/RWS can lead the technical aspects relating to water quality and drinking-water service delivery, while RD/SRLM can facilitate access to SHGs and CLFs for mobilisation and identification of women members. Panchayati Raj institutions can support Gram Panchayats and VWSCs in identifying and locally anchoring the Sujalam Shakti groups, while the DWSM can provide the overall district-level coordination, review and monitoring mechanism. Alongside this institutional arrangement, the district should establish clear targets, village-wise phasing and timelines, so that every stakeholder is aware of what needs to be achieved, by when, and who is responsible for supporting the process. Such an initial convergence exercise creates the foundation for a coordinated roll-out and ensures that inter-departmental issues have a clearly identified channel for resolution.

The next step is to understand the village-level ecosystem. Which Gram Panchayats have active VWSCs? Where are SHGs and CLFs already functioning? Which villages already have women trained in FTK-based water-quality testing? Which villages should be taken up first?

The next step is to map the existing village-level institutional and community ecosystem so that the Sujalam Shakti initiative can build upon structures that are already functioning. The district needs to identify Gram Panchayats with active VWSCs, assess where SHGs and their federations such as CLFs are already present and active, and identify villages where women have already received training in Field Test Kit (FTK)-based water-quality testing. This mapping will help avoid duplication, facilitate faster mobilisation and make it easier to identify suitable women for the proposed Sujalam Shakti groups. It will also provide a clear picture of the existing support network available in each village and help determine where additional training or institutional handholding may be required. Based on this assessment, the district can then prioritise villages for phased implementation, giving due consideration to the availability of the mobilisation channel, existing trained women and the readiness of the GP/VWSC. Such village-wise mapping provides the foundation for a structured roll-out, ensuring that the initiative begins where the necessary institutional and community support systems are already available and can subsequently be expanded to other villages in a planned manner.

Such mapping allows the district to build on existing institutions rather than creating new structures unnecessarily. The presentation envisages a clear district roll-out process: convene, map villages, choose the mobilisation channel, and nominate and approve members. Where possible, SRLM/SHGs and their federations are to be used as the primary mobilisation channel, while GP/VWSCs identify and recommend suitable women. Preference is given to women already trained in FTK-based water-quality testing for the water-quality roles. This approach can make implementation both faster and more locally rooted.

Training: Turning Participation into Capability

Community participation becomes meaningful when it is supported by knowledge and skills. Once the groups are formed, the next stage is structured training. The two water-quality members need to be equipped for FTK testing, reporting, sample collection and laboratory coordination. The other members require orientation on community mobilisation, Jan Bhagidari, source sustainability and behaviour change communication. Training therefore goes beyond a one-time orientation. It should create the confidence required to perform defined tasks and maintain a regular connection with the technical system.

The State has an important role in enabling this process by providing standard training modules, trainer pools or suitable institutions, and a district-wise batching calendar. At the same time, the district must ensure that trained members are actually deployed and connected to the concerned GP/VWSC. The intention is simple: training should lead to field action.

Connecting the Village to the Technical System

One of the important features of Sujalam Shakti is the proposed connection between community-level action and the formal water-quality and technical support system. A woman conducting an FTK test should not be left with a result in her hand and no clear pathway for action. There must be a defined reporting mechanism, access to laboratory support and a technical escalation route wherever required. This is why the role of PHED/RWS is critical. The technical chain needs to provide clarity on FTK support, sample referral, laboratory coordination, quality assurance and technical escalation. Similarly, digital reporting mechanisms need to be activated so that information generated at the village level can reach the appropriate functionaries in a timely manner.

In this way, the village-level group becomes an important link in the larger water-quality surveillance system.

Jan Bhagidari for Sustainable Water Services

Sustainable water supply cannot be ensured through infrastructure alone. It requires communities to understand the value of water, participate in protecting sources, support responsible use and remain engaged with the operation and maintenance of local systems. This is where the three community and sustainability support members have an important role. Through Jan Bhagidari, they can help strengthen community awareness around source sustainability, water conservation and responsible water use. Their role can also help create a stronger connection between the drinking-water system and the wider community. The larger objective is to move from a model in which the community is only a beneficiary to one in which the community becomes an active partner in sustaining the service.

A Visible Handholding Chain

For a programme involving several institutions, implementation becomes easier when responsibilities are visible. At the State level, the JJM Mission Director/Administrative Secretary needs to ensure the convergence framework and nominate nodal officers. RD/SRLM can provide access to SHG and CLF platforms and support mobilisation and training. Panchayati Raj can facilitate the involvement of Gram Panchayats and VWSCs. PHED/RWS can provide the technical water-quality support.

At the district level, the Collector/District Magistrate and DWSM drive implementation, coordinate training, monitor progress and address bottlenecks. At the village level, the GP/VWSC anchors the Sujalam Shakti group. Such a structure ensures that responsibility does not stop at the formation of a group. There is a defined chain of support behind it.

Making Convergence Work on the Ground

Inter-departmental convergence often sounds simple in principle but becomes meaningful only when it is translated into specific responsibilities. For Sujalam Shakti, this means a formal State convergence order, clearly defined responsibilities, named State and district nodal officers, access to SHG/CLF platforms, Panchayati Raj facilitation and a clear escalation route.

The district should know which villages are being taken up, which institution is mobilising the women, who will provide technical training, where laboratory support will come from and whom to approach when an issue remains unresolved. A useful test of convergence is therefore not the number of meetings conducted, but whether a district knows whom to call, what support to seek and within what timeframe an issue should be resolved.

From Formation to Continuous Support

The formation of Sujalam Shakti groups is only the beginning. Once deployed, each group needs a clear task sheet, reporting route and district contact point. Prescribed digital reporting and laboratory/PHED-RWS linkages need to remain active. The DWSM should periodically review progress and unresolved issues, identify training or equipment gaps and provide refresher support wherever necessary. The model also recognises the importance of appropriate recognition and incentives, wherever approved, to sustain motivation and participation. The operational principle remains clear: the group supports village water-service delivery; it does not become a parallel village institution. This keeps the initiative aligned with the larger objective of strengthening local governance rather than fragmenting it.



Figure 27: Water quality testing with FTK by trained women | Source: NJJM Stock

A Small Group with a Larger Purpose

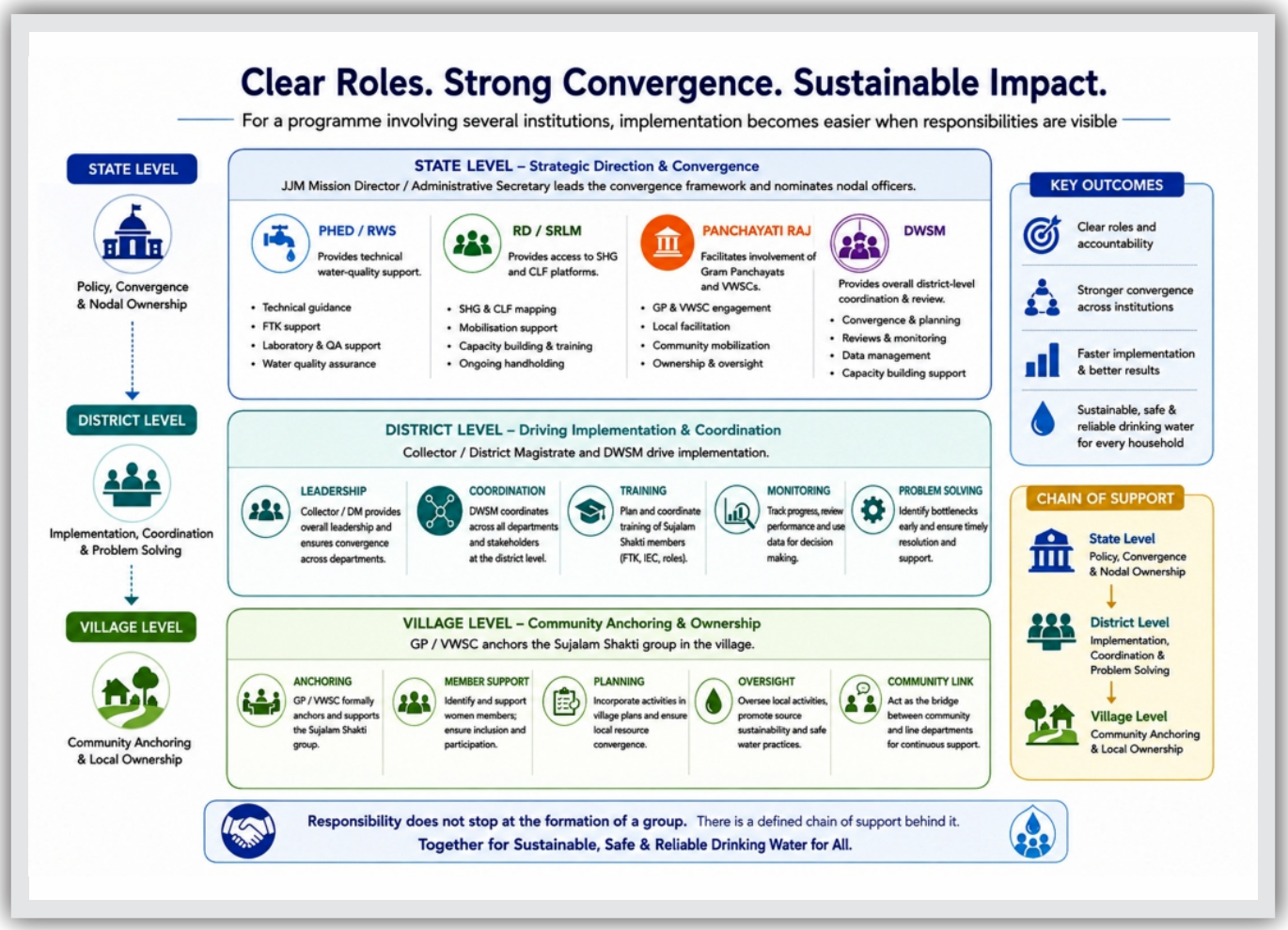
At first glance, a group of five women in a village may appear to be a modest intervention. But its potential significance is much larger. Two women trained to understand and report water-quality concerns can create a stronger first line of surveillance. Three women working on mobilisation and sustainability can help keep the community engaged with its water system.

Together, and working through the GP/VWSC, the group can become a bridge between the household, the community, the Panchayat and the technical system. This is the real strength of Sujalam Shakti. It brings the formal administrative structure of the Jal Jeevan Mission closer to the everyday realities of rural communities.

From State Convergence to Village Confidence

The success of Jal Jeevan Mission 2.0 will increasingly depend on the ability to sustain the systems that have been created and to strengthen the institutions that manage them. Sujalam Shakti offers a practical pathway for doing so by combining administrative convergence, women's participation, technical capacity and community ownership. The State provides the enabling environment. The district provides leadership and coordination. The Gram Panchayat and VWSC provide the local institutional anchor. And women from the community become an active force supporting water quality, sustainability and Jan Bhagidari.

The journey, therefore, is not simply about forming another village group. It is about creating a stronger ecosystem around rural drinking water—one in which information reaches the right person, problems are reported early, technical support is accessible, communities remain engaged and local institutions are better equipped to sustain their water services. Sujalam Shakti is, at its heart, a journey from convergence to confidence—from departments working together at the State level to women and communities taking collective action at the village level. As the Mission moves forward, such locally anchored partnerships can help ensure that the promise of Har Ghar Jal is sustained not only through infrastructure, but through capable institutions, informed communities and empowered women.



Transforming Rural Water Security in Didwana-Kuchaman:
A Journey of Technology, Community Participation and Quality Assurance

- **Avdhesh Meena,** Collector & District Magistrate, Didwana-Kuchaman, Rajasthan



Avdhesh Meena

Didwana-Kuchaman, one of Rajasthan's newest districts, is located in a region that has historically faced acute drinking water challenges. Scarcity of freshwater resources, dependence on groundwater with high Total Dissolved Solids (TDS), salinity and fluoride content, and the resulting health concerns such as dental and skeletal fluorosis have been longstanding concerns for rural communities. Ensuring access to safe and reliable drinking water, therefore, has not merely been an infrastructure challenge but a critical public health and quality-of-life imperative for the district.

Jal Jeevan Mission has provided an opportunity to address these challenges through a combination of large-scale infrastructure creation, modern monitoring systems, community participation and robust water quality surveillance. Over the last few years, Didwana-Kuchaman has witnessed a significant transformation in rural drinking water service delivery, supported by systematic planning, strong inter-departmental coordination and continuous monitoring.

Strengthening Access to Drinking Water

At the inception of Jal Jeevan Mission, only 14.66 % of households in the district had access to Household Tap Connections. Through focused implementation efforts, this coverage has increased to nearly 85 %. Out of 2.87 lakh rural households



Figure 28: Water quality testing and sharing reports to village women | Source: DWSM Didwana-Kuchaman

in the district, more than 2.43 lakh households are now benefiting from tap water connections, substantially improving access to safe drinking water in rural areas.

This progress has been driven by the implementation of both Jal Jeevan Mission schemes and the JICA-assisted Rajasthan Rural Water Supply & Fluorosis Mitigation Project. The district's strategy has been to focus not only on expanding infrastructure but also on ensuring that drinking water reaches households in a reliable and sustainable manner.

Addressing Water Quality Challenges through Surface Water-Based Solutions

Given the poor groundwater quality across the district, a conscious decision was made to shift dependence away from local groundwater sources and towards surface water-based drinking water systems. Today, the district's rural water supply largely depends on water sourced from the Indira Gandhi Nahar Project (IGNP) Canal at Nokha Daiya. Dedicated water allocation and large storage infrastructure ensure dependable availability of drinking water for the district.

The system is supported by large raw water reservoirs and a high-capacity water treatment plant that caters to multiple blocks, ensuring treated drinking water reaches rural habitations across the district. This approach has been instrumental in mitigating fluoride- and salinity-related challenges while improving the quality and safety of drinking water supplied to rural households.

Technology-Enabled Monitoring for Improved Service Delivery

One of the distinguishing features of Didwana-Kuchaman's approach has been the adoption of technology for real-time monitoring and operational efficiency. The district has implemented a SCADA-based monitoring system that enables real-time observation of pump operations and overhead reservoir filling up to the Village Transfer Chamber level. This has strengthened oversight, improved operational responsiveness and facilitated timely corrective action whenever issues arise.

Field inspections and periodic review meetings complement these technological interventions. Continuous monitoring of system performance allows the district administration and implementing agencies to identify bottlenecks, address operational issues promptly and ensure uninterrupted supply of safe drinking water. The use of technology has also enhanced accountability and brought greater transparency to the management of rural water supply infrastructure.

Building a Robust Water Quality Surveillance Framework

In a district where water quality has historically been a major concern, ensuring reliable surveillance mechanisms remains a top priority. Water quality monitoring is undertaken regularly at source level, with chemical parameters being tested daily at the laboratory located at Nokha Daiya. In addition, periodic testing for heavy metals is undertaken to ensure compliance with prescribed drinking water quality standards.

A particularly effective practice adopted in the district is a structured household-level monitoring system. Every month, water samples from three household tap connections in ten villages of each block are collected and sent for laboratory analysis. This helps assess actual water quality being received by rural households and enables timely identification and resolution of any emerging concerns.

The district has also focused on strengthening community participation in water quality surveillance. ANMs and ASHA Sahyoginis have been trained in the use of Field Test Kits (FTKs), enabling them to undertake basic water quality testing at the village level. This decentralized approach has enhanced local



Figure 29: Water quality testing by trained woman | Source: DWSM Didwana-Kuchaman

awareness while strengthening confidence in the safety of drinking water supplied to households.

Community-Centred Operation and Maintenance

Ensuring sustainability of drinking water systems requires clear institutional arrangements and active local participation. The district has adopted a structured operation and maintenance model in line with the principles of Jal Jeevan Mission 2.0. Under this arrangement, major infrastructure such as clear water reservoirs, pump houses, overhead tanks and transmission pipelines up to the Village Transfer Chamber are maintained by the Public Health Engineering Department (PHED).

Village Water and Sanitation Committees (VWSCs), supported by Jal Nal Mitras, are responsible for village-level distribution, valve operation and addressing minor leakages within the village network. This clearly defined division of responsibilities has improved efficiency while promoting local ownership of water supply systems. To strengthen these arrangements further, Jal Mitras are being provided training on valve operation, leakage detection and basic maintenance practices.

Regular pipeline patrolling and prompt resolution of complaints have helped minimise disruptions and ensure continuity of service delivery. The district's experience indicates that combining technical support from PHED with community-level management creates a strong foundation for sustainable operation and maintenance.

Promoting Jan Bhagidari through IEC and Community Engagement

Community participation has been a critical pillar of implementation in Didwana-Kuchaman. Information, Education and Communication (IEC) activities are regularly conducted through Gram Sabha meetings, schools, health institutions and village-level awareness campaigns. These initiatives aim to sensitise communities on water quality, water conservation, source sustainability and their role in maintaining village water supply systems.



Figure 30: Observation of Jal Arpan Diwas | Source: DWSM Didwana-Kuchaman

Self-Help Groups and community organisations are actively involved in these efforts, helping build awareness and encouraging responsible water-use practices. Such initiatives have contributed to stronger community ownership and increased participation in operation and maintenance activities at the village level.

Towards Sustainable Rural Water Governance

As the district moves from infrastructure creation to long-term service sustainability, emphasis is increasingly being placed on institutional strengthening and community ownership. In line with Jal Jeevan Mission 2.0 guidelines, completed schemes are being handed over to Gram Panchayats and VWSCs through the Jal Arpan process. The district has targeted handover of infrastructure in 212 villages covered under ten completed schemes, marking an important step towards community-led management of rural water supply assets.

The experience of Didwana-Kuchaman demonstrates that addressing rural drinking water challenges requires more than infrastructure alone. Sustainable solutions emerge when investments in water supply systems are complemented by robust water quality monitoring, technology-enabled management, community ownership and continuous awareness generation. By combining these elements, the district is working towards ensuring that every rural household not only receives a tap connection but also benefits from a reliable, safe and sustainable drinking water service for years to come.

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Reviving Rural Water Supply: How Chatra District Achieved Water Security

- **Ravi Anand,** Deputy Commissioner, Chatra, Jharkhand



Ravi Anand

Water security remains a critical challenge in many parts of rural India, particularly in regions characterized by hard-rock hydrogeology and limited groundwater availability. In Chatra district of Jharkhand, ensuring sustainable access to safe drinking water required a shift from conventional approaches towards a model that combines infrastructure development, technology-enabled monitoring, community participation and convergence of resources. Over the past few years, the district has undertaken a series of initiatives under Jal Jeevan Mission and allied programmes to strengthen rural water supply systems, improve service delivery and enhance long-term source sustainability.

The district's approach has focused on building a convergence-led and community-centred framework for rural water security. By combining infrastructure expansion with source sustainability measures, local capacity building, digital monitoring and citizen participation, Chatra has sought to move from reactive water management towards a more sustainable and resilient service delivery model.

The Scale of Transformation: From 2.9% to 64.88% Coverage

In August 2019, at the launch of the national **Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM)**, Chatra district stood at a foundational baseline: only **6,438 rural households** out of 2,21,981 had functional household tap connections (FHTC)—a mere **2.90% coverage rate**.

By August 2026, intensive administrative execution expanded that footprint exponentially to **1,44,026 households**, achieving an impressive **64.88% FHTC coverage**. This dramatic leap required coordinating infrastructure across **12 blocks, 154 panchayats, and 1,333 villages** to support a population exceeding 10.4 lakh people.



Figure 31: Field Visit By D.C, Chatra | Source: DWSM Chatra

Infrastructure and Hydrogeological Shift

Chatra strategy recognizes that infrastructure must adapt to changing climate realities. Recognizing the exhaustion of hard-rock groundwater aquifers, the district shifted its focus toward surface-water reliance.

- **Multi-Village Schemes (MVS):** The district deployed 09 large-scale surface water-based MVS networks that draw sustainably from reliable dams and reservoirs, out of which 5 MVS schemes draw water from a common raw water supply source at the Telaiya Dam in Chatra District**.**
- **Single Village Schemes (SVS):** To supplement these networks, **4,867 groundwater-based SVS units** provide targeted, localized distribution across dispersed habitations.

To maintain this vast footprint without a continuous bureaucratic presence, the administration introduced the **"Village Gang" model**. Local rural youths are systematically trained as plumbers, fitters, and pump operators. Once a project is completed, the infrastructure is formally transferred to village-level **Village Water and Sanitation Committees (VWSCs)**, empowering communities to handle immediate technical maintenance independently.

Real-Time Monitoring and Multi-Tiered Governance

A common pitfall of rural infrastructure pipelines is a lack of accountability post-construction. Chatra resolved this by creating a highly responsive, technology-driven grid:

1. **IoT-Enabled Remote Monitoring (RMS):** Sensors installed across Single Village Schemes stream continuous flow data directly to the automated **JharJal Dashboard**.
2. **Rapid Grievance Redressal:** A centralized 24x7 district control room ingests complaints via the CPGRAMS portal, WhatsApp, and the JharJal web interface.
3. **Post-Repair Telephonic Auditing:** Operators directly call rural citizens after a ticket is marked "resolved" to independently verify their satisfaction before closing the file.

This digital framework is supported by multi-tiered governance meetings. Regular project updates are reviewed by the Deputy Commissioner alongside local MPs and MLAs to hold field contractors strictly accountable to implementation timelines.

Jan Bhagidari: Women-Led Water Surveillance

The backbone of Chatra's strategy is **Jan Bhagidari (Community Participation)**. Through collaborative initiatives featuring Information, Education, and Communication (IEC) strategies—including wall writings, *Nukkad Nataks* (street plays), and mobile LED awareness vans—the district built a culture of water conservation and collective ownership.

This participatory model relies heavily on the **Jalsahiya Cadre**—a dedicated group of **five certified women per village** trained to manage community-level water assets. Operating across all 154 Gram Panchayats, these women utilize Field Testing Kits (FTKs) to execute standardized pre-monsoon and post-monsoon testing directly at public drinking sources. They monitor critical chemical indicators like Fluoride, Iron, pH, Nitrate, and Turbidity, logging results onto the



Figure 32: Jan Jagrukta LED Van | Source: DWSM Chatra



Figure 33-34: Water Quality Testing by Jalsahiya and District NABL Lab | Source: DWSM Chatra

national WQMIS network while managing local tariff collection to ensure long-term financial sustainability. More complex, systematic testing is routed directly to District NABL-accredited laboratories.

Source Sustenance and Ecological Convergence

To secure long-term sustainability, Chatra integrated funds from the **District Mineral Foundation Trust (DMFT), MGNREGA, and Swachh Bharat Mission-Gramin (SBM-G)** to build robust rainwater harvesting networks:

- **Institutional Harvesting:** Built **25 structural Rainwater Harvesting (RWH) units** across schools, Anganwadis, and Panchayat buildings via a ₹433.65 Lakh DMFT allocation.
- **Aquifer Rejuvenation:** Renewed and deep-excavated **27 local ponds and reservoirs** via a ₹681.46 Lakh investment to drastically boost surface storage capacities.
- **Runoff Management:** Constructed **5,310 community soak pits** connected to rural hand pumps to eliminate waterlogging and direct greywater back into drying groundwater aquifers.



Figure 35-37: Rainwater Harvesting, Check Dams & Ponds, Community Soak Pits | Source: DWSM Chatra





Figure 38-39: Meeting in Gram Panchayat, Hand Pump Repairing | Source: DWSM Chatra

Campaign Spotlights: "Peyjal Samasya Nivaaran Pakhwada"

The practical impact of Chatra's convergence model was vividly demonstrated during the **Peyjal Samasya Nivaaran Pakhwada** (Drinking Water Problem Resolution Fortnight), held from April 24 to May 11, 2026.

Special Gram Sabhas were organized to identify pipeline leakages, broken hand pumps, and functional gaps. Joint inspection teams consisting of Sub-Divisional Magistrates (SDMs), Block Development Officers (BDOs), and technical engineers conducted field visits alongside mobile repair units.

The campaign delivered rapid, tangible outcomes:

- **Short-Term Triage:** Received and successfully resolved **2,546 hand pump complaints** and **212 SVS pipeline leakage issues**.
- **Long-Term Interventions:** Addressed 104 complaints in critical dry zones by drilling **40 new tube wells** and sanctioning **64 High-Yielding Drilled Tuberells (HYDT)** funded by DMFT and district untied resources.

By pairing strict administrative oversight with active community engagement, Chatra has successfully shifted its water strategy from emergency management to long-term sustainability. With **113 villages already certified as "Har Ghar Jal"** via formal Gram Sabha joint verifications, the district provides a scalable model for rural water security across India.

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Figure 40: HGJ Certification "Gram Sabha" | Source: DWSM Chatra

Khowai District's Integrated Approach to Sustainable Rural Drinking Water Security

- **Rajat Pant,** District Magistrate and Collector, Khowai, Tripura



Rajat Pant

Khowai district in Tripura has been steadily building a rural drinking water system designed to last — one that combines close administrative monitoring, financial convergence, community ownership, and long-term protection of water sources. The district administration's approach under the Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM) reflects a shift from simply laying pipelines to ensuring that every household connection remains functional, safe, and supported by a source that can sustain it for years to come.

Of the district's 73,219 households spread across 69 villages, 63,777 have already been provided Functional Household Tap Connections (FHTCs), with the remaining households expected to be covered shortly. Eleven villages have been certified as Har Ghar Jal Villages, and 17 Gram Panchayats have been declared Har Ghar Jal Gram Panchayats, marking significant progress toward universal, reliable tap water access in the district.

Governance Built on Regular Monitoring

The district administration has put in place a structured governance framework to keep implementation on track. Regular meetings of the District Water and Sanitation Mission (DWSM) and DISHA review scheme-wise progress, resolve bottlenecks, and track corrective action. This is reinforced by geo-tagged monitoring of every work site, with stage-wise photographs uploaded to state dashboards and the Sujalam Bharat Project Monitoring Tool, and by independent third-party quality audits carried out at critical stages such as excavation, pipe laying, road restoration, reservoir construction, and final commissioning. Payments to contractors are linked to physical verification and quality clearances, ensuring accountability at every stage, while designated nodal officers with a defined escalation matrix maintain field-level oversight and grievance redressal. Once schemes are completed, they are formally handed over to Gram Panchayats through Jal Arpan, transferring both responsibility and ownership to the local level.

Converging Resources to Reach Remote Habitations

To extend coverage into remote tribal habitations that are otherwise



Figure 41: Use of renewable energy-a cost effective approach | Source: DWSM, Kowahi

difficult to serve through mission funds alone, the district administration has converged 15th Finance Commission grants with MPLADS funds to purchase two 6000 lit water tankers to supply clean drinking water to water scarce villages where tap connection has not reached yet. This convergence approach has allowed the administration to close last-mile gaps and bring safe water access to some of the district's more inaccessible pockets.

Community Participation at the Core

The administration has placed strong emphasis on Jan Bhagidari, or community participation, treating it as essential to the long-term sustainability of water infrastructure. Extensive IEC activities have been carried out involving schools, Self-Help Groups (SHGs) and line departments, supported by the district's own mascot, "Nirmal Moti"- an elephant who is the swachhata superhero created to popularise messages on sanitation, safe water handling, conservation, and hygiene among residents.

School Water Clubs have been established across the district, where SHG women train students in water quality testing using Field Test Kits (FTKs), building awareness and testing skills among the next generation. More broadly, over 6,000 SHG women are engaged in community mobilisation efforts district-wide. Among them, 627 women have been trained in FTK usage and have together completed 539 water quality tests, forming the foundation of what is envisaged, under JJM guidelines, to grow into a dedicated Sujalam Shakti Group for community-led water quality surveillance. Community ownership has also been reflected through the completion of 10 Jal Seva Aankalan exercises and Jal Arpan Diwas celebrations held in two Gram Panchayats.



Figure 42: Injection well structure | Source: DWSM, Kowahi

Protecting the Source, Not Just the Supply

Recognising that reliable water supply depends on the health of its sources, the district administration has undertaken a range of source sustainability interventions. These include catchment area protection, afforestation drives, and construction of groundwater recharge structures. Greywater management has been strengthened through soak pits built in convergence with the Swachh Bharat Mission (Grameen), 15th Finance Commission funds, and VB-G RAM-G. Outreach to farmers, conducted through the Krishi Vigyan Kendra, extends this source-protection approach into agricultural practices as well.

Rainwater Harvesting Across All Anganwadi Centres

A notable achievement in this effort is the completion of Rooftop Rainwater Harvesting cum Soak Pit structures at all 860 Anganwadi Centres (AWCs) in the district, built through dovetailing of resources across schemes. These structures serve a dual purpose — supporting groundwater recharge while managing greywater at these facilities — and stand as one of the district's most visible source sustainability achievements.

Way Forward

Khowai is playing a pioneering role in the implementation of Jal Jeevan Mission, setting benchmarks in community participation, water quality surveillance, source sustainability, and rural water supply management. The district remains dedicated to strengthening public participation through *Jan Bhagidari*, fostering community ownership and accountability in rural water supply management. Through these collective efforts, the district is committed to ensuring that every rural household has access to safe, adequate, and quality-tested drinking water as per the timeline of JJM 2.0.

Strengthening Sustainability, Service Delivery and Community Ownership Initiative of Uttara Kannada

- **K Laxmipriya,** Deputy commissioner & **Dr. Dileesh Sasi,** CEO ZP, Uttara Kannda, Karnataka



K Laxmipriya



Figure 43: Presentation by Deputy Commissioner and CEO, ZP in DCPS | Source: DWSM Uttara Kannada

Uttara Kannada district had the opportunity to present its experience under the Jal Jeevan Mission during the 11th phase of the "Pay Jal Samvad" programme organised by the Ministry of Jal Shakti. The interaction provided a valuable platform to share the district's progress in strengthening rural drinking water service delivery through a combination of infrastructure development, community participation, institutional strengthening and continuous monitoring.

The district comprises 12 taluks, 228 Gram Panchayats and 1,248 villages, covering a rural population of more than 11.68 lakh. Under Jal Jeevan Mission, a total of 965 works have been taken up in the district in four Batches, of which 763 works have been completed and the remaining 202 works are under various stages of progress. Out of the total 2.86 lakh rural households in the district, 2.01 lakh households have already been provided with Functional Household Tap Connections (FHTCs). The total project outlay is ₹966.13 crore, against which an expenditure of ₹557.56 crore has been incurred so far.

The district is implementing 08 Multi-Village Drinking Water Supply (MVS) schemes, comprising 02 Augmentation MVS schemes and 06 MVS schemes under the DBOT.

Jal Seva Ankalan

Community participation and evidence-based service improvement are at the core of Uttara Kannada's approach to rural water supply management. Jal Seva Ankalan has emerged as an important tool for assessing whether villages are receiving regular, adequate, safe and sustainable drinking water services. Village-level assessments are undertaken through Gram Sabhas, enabling communities to directly participate in evaluating service delivery and identifying improvement needs.

To facilitate effective implementation, training programmes were organised for Panchayat Development Officers, Assistant Engineers, Junior Engineers and Assistant Executive Engineers. The information collected through the assessments is analysed by the District Technical Unit (DTU), following which District Improvement Plans are prepared and discussed through institutional mechanisms to address identified gaps. Through this process, Jal Seva Ankalan is helping strengthen transparency, accountability and



Figure 44: Meeting for Jal Seva Aankalan | Source: DWSM Uttara Kannada

community ownership of rural water supply systems.

The district has also made steady progress towards Har Ghar Jal certification. As of August 2026, 391 villages had reported Har Ghar Jal status and 357 villages had completed certification, reflecting sustained efforts to translate infrastructure coverage into verified service delivery outcomes.

Monitoring and Quality Assurance of Jal Jeevan Mission Works

Ensuring the quality, functionality and sustainability of water supply infrastructure remains a key priority. Uttara Kannada has institutionalised a system of joint inspection of pipeline networks, enabling closer coordination between engineering teams and Panchayat functionaries. Regular cleaning and maintenance of overhead tanks are undertaken to ensure uninterrupted and safe water supply to rural households.

Monthly field inspections involving Panchayat Development Officers, Assistant Engineers and Junior Engineers are carried out to monitor the progress and quality of works. Senior district officials also undertake periodic field visits to review implementation and resolve issues at the field level. These measures have strengthened oversight, improved accountability and contributed to timely execution of Jal Jeevan Mission works.

Operation and Maintenance

Recognising that sustainable service delivery depends on robust operation and maintenance systems, the district has placed significant emphasis on strengthening local institutions and building capacities. An important milestone has been the adoption of the O&M Policy by 223 out of 228 Gram Panchayats. In



Figure 45: Meeting for adoption of O&M policy | Source: DWSM Uttara Kannada



Figure 46: FTK training of GP officials | Source: DWSM Uttara Kannada

addition, Gram Panchayat-level O&M budgets have been prepared to ensure timely availability of resources for routine maintenance and emergency repair works.

Capacity-building programmes are being conducted regularly for Panchayat Development Officers to strengthen their understanding of asset management and service delivery responsibilities. Village Water and Sanitation Committees (VWSCs) continue to play a vital role in the operation and maintenance of rural water supply systems. Monthly VWSC meetings are conducted across the district, with proceedings uploaded and monitored to improve accountability and strengthen community ownership of water supply assets.

Water Quality Monitoring

Water quality surveillance forms a critical component of Uttara Kannada's efforts to ensure safe drinking water for rural communities. The district is supported by one district laboratory and three sub-divisional laboratories, which regularly undertake chemical and microbiological testing of drinking water samples collected from rural water sources.

During the current year, more than 4,500 samples were tested for chemical parameters and over 1,100 samples for microbiological parameters. The testing programme facilitated early identification of contaminated sources, enabling timely remedial action and provision of safe alternative drinking water arrangements wherever required. Contaminated sources identified through laboratory analysis have been systematically addressed through appropriate mitigation measures.

To strengthen community-based surveillance, Field Test Kit (FTK) campaigns are conducted periodically in villages, schools and Anganwadi centres in accordance with State guidelines. Water quality testing is also promoted through Village Water and Sanitation Committee meetings, creating greater awareness and participation among community members.

Under the Nal-Jal Mitra initiative, women from Self Help Groups are being engaged to support grassroots water quality monitoring and awareness generation. A total of 456 women have been identified under the programme, and training of selected participants has commenced, reinforcing the role of women as key stakeholders in ensuring safe drinking water services.

Conclusion

The experience of Uttara Kannada demonstrates that sustainable rural water service delivery requires a balanced focus on infrastructure creation, community participation, institutional strengthening, water quality surveillance and effective operation and maintenance systems. Through continuous capacity building, data-driven monitoring and active community engagement, the district is working towards ensuring that every rural household receives safe, reliable and sustainable drinking water services in line with the objectives of the Jal Jeevan Mission.

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From Data to Decisions: Strengthening Source Sustainability through the Decision Support System (DSS)

- **Sumit Priyadarshi,** Deputy Adviser (PHE), NJJM



Sumit Priyadarshi

Moving from Infrastructure to Sustainable Services

The Jal Jeevan Mission has brought a paradigm shift to the way rural drinking water is planned and delivered in the country. With the expansion of household tap connections, the focus is increasingly moving beyond the creation of infrastructure towards ensuring that every rural household receives safe, adequate and reliable drinking water on a sustained basis.

This transition brings a new set of questions to the forefront. Is the source supplying water today likely to remain dependable in the future? Is groundwater availability changing with climatic factors? Is the quality of the source quality and/or quantity deteriorating? Are rainfall patterns affecting source sustainability? What happens to a scheme when the source becomes vulnerable?

Finding answers to these questions requires more than individual datasets or periodic field observations. It requires different pieces of information to come together and provide a clear picture of the situation on the ground. This is where the Decision Support System (DSS) under Jal Jeevan Mission assumes importance.

The DSS is envisaged as a data-led platform that brings together information from different departments and agencies and converts it into actionable intelligence for States, districts and field functionaries. The objective is not merely to display data, but to help decision-makers understand emerging risks, identify priority villages and plan appropriate interventions.

Bringing Different Sources of Information Together

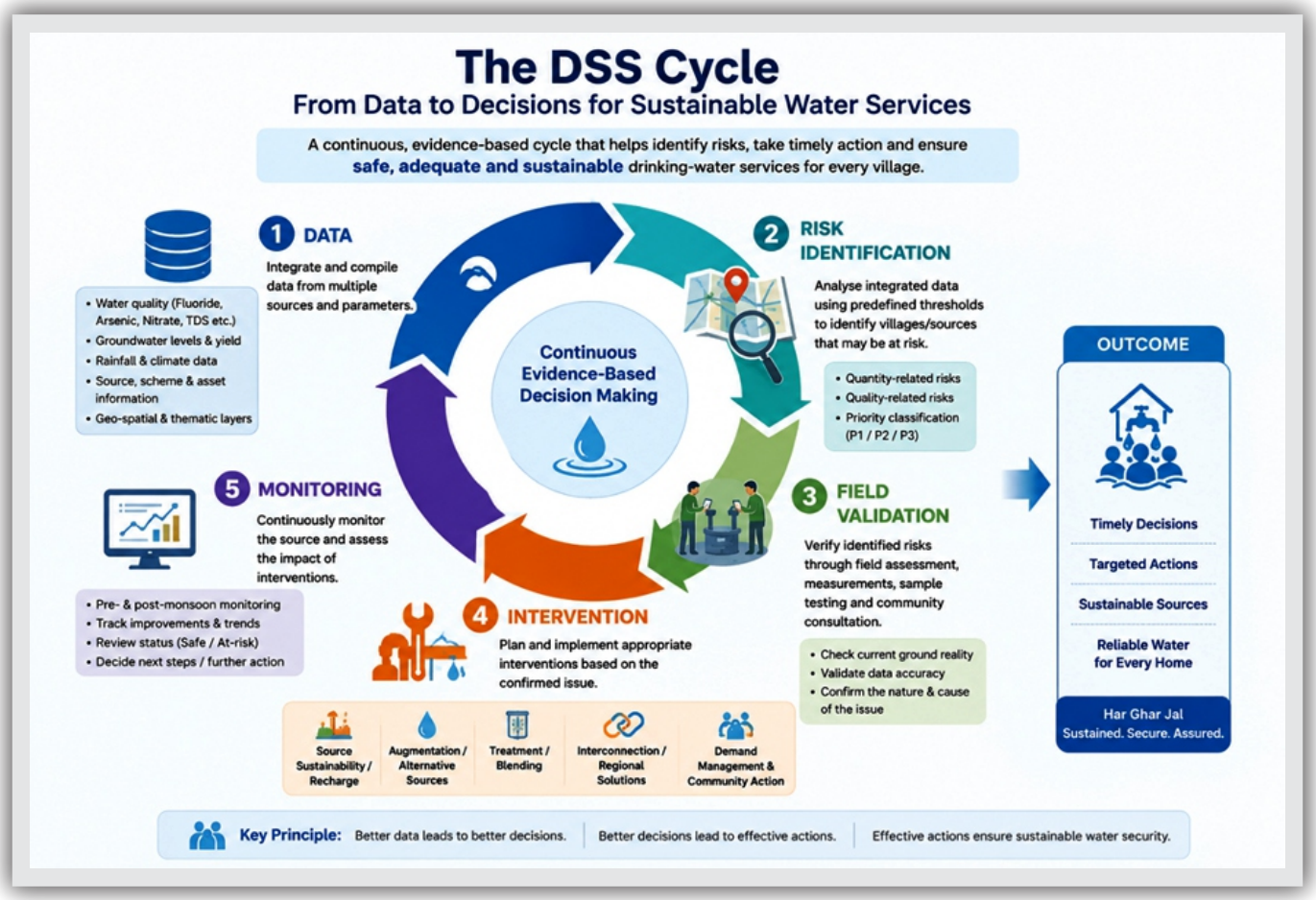
Water does not follow administrative boundaries, and source sustainability cannot be understood through a single dataset. Information relating to groundwater levels and aquifers may be available with the Central Ground Water Board. Rainfall data comes from the India Meteorological Department, while spatial and hydro-geomorphological information can be obtained from remote sensing platforms. Surface-water networks, catchments and water resources are mapped through agencies such as the Central Water Commission and National Water Informatics Centre.

At the same time, Jal Jeevan Mission has a large and continuously expanding database of rural drinking-water schemes and geo-tagged sources and its **Water Quality Management Information System (**WQMIS). Information relating to water conservation and recharge structures is also available through programmes implemented by other departments such as Yuktdhara, VBG RAMG, PMKVY etc. The DSS seeks to bring these different layers together.

Such convergence can provide a more complete understanding of a village and its drinking-water source. A village with a declining groundwater level, low rainfall and a low-yield source may require a very different intervention from a village where the source is adequate in quantity but affected by a water-quality parameter. The strength of the DSS therefore lies in connecting the dots.

Identifying Risk Before a Source Becomes a Crisis

One of the important applications of DSS is the identification of villages and sources requiring closer attention. Indicative parameters can be used to screen sources for quantity and/ or quality-related vulnerabilities. For example, low rainfall, deeper groundwater levels and low source yield may indicate a potential quantity-related concern. Similarly, parameters such as fluoride, arsenic, nitrate and TDS can indicate water-quality risks when they cross prescribed limits.



These indicators provide a common basis for prioritisation. However, a digital flag should not be treated as the final diagnosis. The real strength of the system comes when the information is followed by field verification, measurement and professional assessment.

A source may be flagged because of an old dataset, seasonal variation or a change in local conditions. Conversely, a source may appear satisfactory in a database while the field situation may have changed.

The DSS establishes a continuous cycle of **Data → Risk Identification → Field Validation → Intervention → Monitoring**, enabling a shift from reactive to proactive management of rural drinking-water sources. It begins with the integration of relevant data on water quality, groundwater, rainfall, source yield and other contextual parameters to identify villages and sources that may require attention. The identified risks are then validated through field-level assessment and verification so that decisions are based on current ground realities. Based on the nature and severity of the issue, appropriate interventions-such as source sustainability measures, recharge, source augmentation, treatment, blending or alternate source arrangements—can then be planned and implemented. The impact of these interventions is subsequently monitored through regular assessments, allowing the status of the source to be reviewed and further action to be taken wherever necessary. In this way, DSS converts data into actionable decisions and creates a **continuous, evidence-based approach to ensuring safe, adequate and sustainable drinking-water services.**

This approach can help shift water-supply management from a reactive model to a more proactive one.

From District-Level Prioritisation to Village-Level Action

The identification of the districts is significant because it provides an opportunity for focused review. Rather than attempting to address every issue simultaneously, States and districts can begin with locations where the concentration of vulnerable villages is relatively high. The district-level picture, however, is only the beginning.

The next step is to drill down to the Block, Gram Panchayat and village level. Field teams need to understand which particular source has been flagged, which parameter has triggered the priority, whether the

information is current, and what local conditions may be influencing the source.

This is where the role of District Technical Units and district administrations becomes particularly important. The purpose of DSS is not to replace field knowledge. Rather, it is to strengthen field knowledge by placing relevant evidence before the decision-maker.

Choosing the Right Intervention

Not every vulnerable source requires the same solution. In some locations, the most appropriate intervention may be rainwater harvesting or artificial recharge. In others, source protection, conjunctive use of groundwater and surface water, source augmentation or demand management may be required.

Where a source is affected by quality concerns, the response may involve treatment, blending, source substitution or an alternative safe source. In certain locations, regional or multi-village schemes may offer a more sustainable solution than continuing to depend on a vulnerable local source.

The important principle is that the intervention should be based on the nature and cause of the problem. A low-yield source in a water-stressed area cannot be addressed in the same manner as a source affected by fluoride contamination. Similarly, a groundwater-based scheme in a rapidly declining aquifer may require a long-term sustainability plan rather than a temporary augmentation measure.

DSS can help bring these considerations into the planning process.

Sustainability Requires Seasonal Monitoring

Groundwater and surface-water conditions are dynamic. A source that appears adequate immediately after the monsoon may behave very differently during the summer months. For this reason, quantity-related source assessment needs to consider seasonal variation, including pre-monsoon and post-monsoon conditions. The DSS workflow provides for repeated monitoring rather than a one-time assessment. A source identified as vulnerable should be followed through the intervention cycle, and its status should be reassessed after implementation.

This is particularly important for recharge and source-sustainability interventions. The objective is not merely to construct a recharge structure or undertake a conservation activity. The real question is whether the intervention is contributing to improved and sustained source availability. In this sense, monitoring becomes as important as implementation.

Technology with Human Judgement

A Decision Support System can process large volumes of information quickly. It can identify patterns, compare indicators, display spatial relationships and bring priority locations to the attention of administrators. But technology alone cannot solve a water-supply problem. The final decision must continue to rest on a combination of data, local knowledge, engineering assessment and community experience.

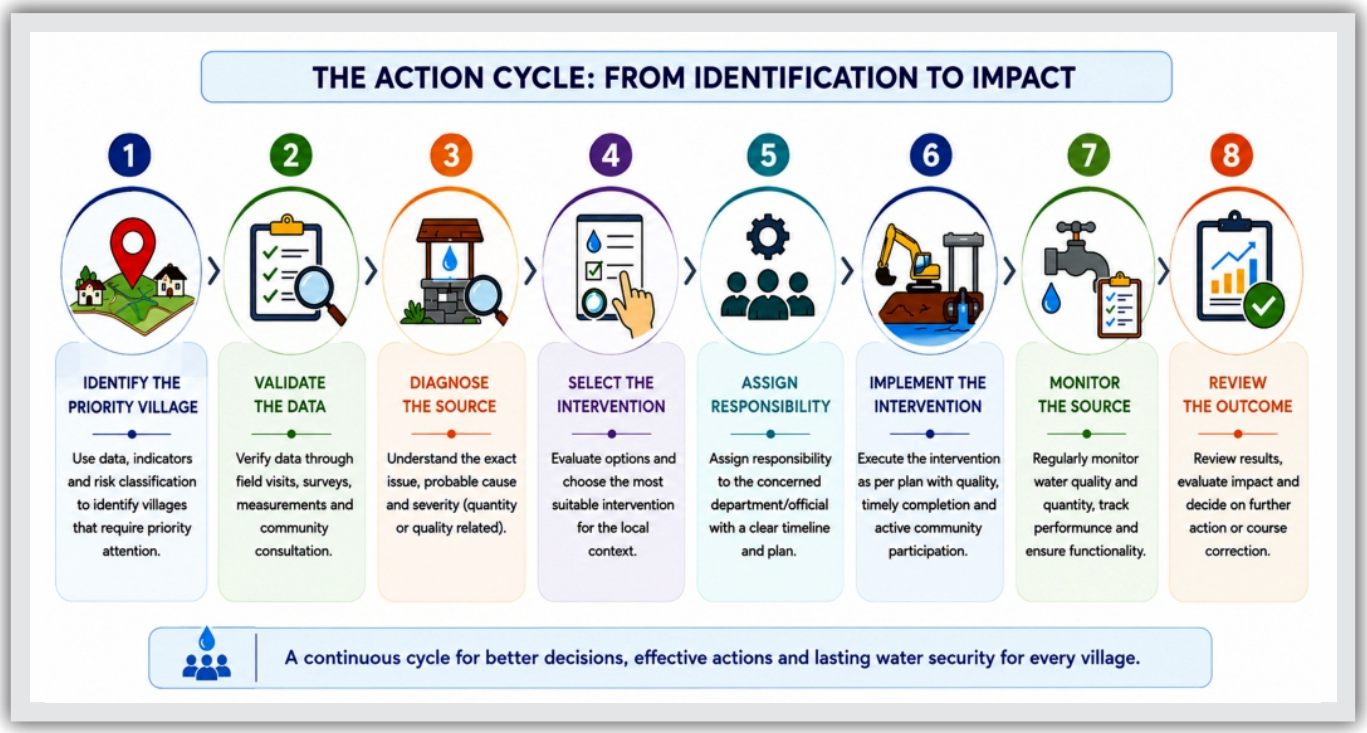
A village community may know that a source behaves differently after a particular rainfall event. A field engineer may understand the limitations of an existing distribution system. A groundwater expert may interpret aquifer behaviour that is not immediately visible from a single data point. DSS brings these different perspectives closer together. The objective is therefore not to create a system where decisions are made only by a dashboard. It is to create a system where the dashboard helps people make better-informed decisions.

Strengthening Convergence Across Departments

Source sustainability is inherently a convergence issue. A drinking-water scheme may depend on groundwater



Figure 47: A pond near Govindpura village which is now connected by clean drinking water, Mehsana District, Gujarat | Source: NJJM Stock



recharge, watershed treatment, rainwater harvesting, protection of catchments, restoration of traditional water bodies and appropriate land-use practices.

No single department can address all these dimensions independently. DSS provides an opportunity to bring the relevant information together and strengthen convergence between drinking water, groundwater management, rural development, water conservation, surface-water management and other related programmes.

The District Water and Sanitation Mission can play an important role in bringing these stakeholders together. Once a village is identified as vulnerable, the question should move beyond "which department owns the problem?" to "which combination of interventions can make the source sustainable?" This approach can also help improve the utilisation of existing public investments by identifying where already-created assets and conservation structures can contribute to source sustainability.

From Dashboard to Action

The true measure of DSS will not be the number of data layers integrated into the platform. Its success will be measured by what happens after a village is identified as a priority. A useful district-level action cycle could include:

The process begins by identifying the priority village based on available data and risk indicators. The identified data is then validated through field verification to establish the actual ground situation, followed by diagnosis of the source to understand the nature and probable cause of the issue. Based on the diagnosis, the most appropriate intervention is selected considering the local context and sustainability requirements, and clear responsibility is assigned to the concerned department, official or institution. The intervention is then implemented in a time-bound manner, followed by regular monitoring of the source to assess its performance and functionality. Finally, the outcome is reviewed to evaluate the impact of the intervention and determine whether any further action or course correction is required.

Such a process can also create greater accountability

District administrations can periodically review whether priority sources have been validated, whether interventions have been initiated, whether expected improvements are visible and whether the source continues to remain sustainable. In this manner, DSS can evolve from being a technology platform into an institutional mechanism for evidence-based water governance.

Building a More Resilient Future

The journey towards **Har Ghar Jal** does not end when a tap connection is provided. The real achievement lies in ensuring that water continues to flow from that tap—safely, adequately and reliably—year after year. A household tap connection is the visible outcome of a much larger

system of sources, infrastructure, institutions, communities and service providers working together. For the benefits of the Mission to be sustained, the source supplying the scheme must remain dependable, water quality must continue to meet the required standards, and the distribution system must remain functional and responsive to the needs of the community.

This makes source sustainability and service reliability central to the next phase of rural drinking-water management. Groundwater levels, rainfall variability, source yield and water quality can change with time, and infrastructure may also require timely maintenance, augmentation or course correction. Therefore, the focus needs to move from creating assets to **sustaining services**, with regular monitoring, early identification of risks and timely interventions. Communities and local institutions also have an important role in protecting water sources, promoting responsible water use and reporting emerging issues.

In this context, the success of Har Ghar Jal will increasingly depend on the ability of States, districts, Gram Panchayats, technical agencies and communities to work together beyond the point of connection. A tap is not the destination; it is the beginning of a sustained service commitment. The ultimate measure of success is when every rural household can depend on its tap not only today, but in the years to come with water that is safe to drink, sufficient for household needs and available with reliability and dignity.

Climate variability, changing rainfall patterns, groundwater stress and emerging water-quality concerns make source sustainability an increasingly important part of rural water governance.

The Decision Support System offers an opportunity to respond to these challenges with greater foresight. Its approach is simple but powerful: bring together available information, identify risk, validate it on the ground, choose the right intervention and continue monitoring the outcome. The ultimate goal is not a sophisticated dashboard. It is a sustainable source, a functional scheme and a reliable tap at every household.

As Jal Jeevan Mission moves into its next phase, data-led planning combined with field knowledge and community participation can help ensure that the gains made under the Mission are protected and sustained. The journey is therefore no longer only from source to tap. It is from data to decision, decision to action, and action to sustainable water security.



Baori Stepwells in Jaipur City

National Workshop
Multi-Stakeholder Consultation
on
Capacity Building under JJM 2.0
Shaping the Learning Content for Grassroots Capacity Building



- Chanchal Kumar Modi, Team Leader, NPMU, JJM

The story of Jal Jeevan Mission has been one of scale, speed and transformation. Across rural India, drinking water infrastructure has reached millions of households, bringing the convenience and dignity of tap water closer to people's homes. But as the Mission moves into its next phase, an equally important question comes to the forefront, who will ensure that these systems continue to deliver water, regularly, reliably and safely, year after year on continued basis?

The answer lies not only in infrastructure, but in people and institutions. Under Jal Jeevan Mission 2.0, the focus is therefore moving beyond creation of assets towards sustainable service delivery. This transition places Gram Panchayats, Village Water & Sanitation Committees (VWSCs)/Pani Samiti, Sujalam Shakti Groups and communities at the centre of managing rural drinking water services. For these institutions to take greater responsibility, however, they need more than guidelines. They need the knowledge, skills, confidence and practical tools to translate their roles into action.

It is against this backdrop that the Department of Drinking Water and Sanitation (DDWS), Ministry of Jal Shakti, organised the National Multi-Stakeholder Consultation on Capacity Building under Jal Jeevan Mission 2.0 on 20 August 2026 at New Delhi. The consultation brought together States and Union Territories, RWPF members, training institutions and other sector stakeholders to collectively review and strengthen the capacity-building framework being developed for Gram Panchayats, VWSCs and Sujalam Shakti Groups.



Figure 48: On Dias AS&MD, JS and Director, NJJM | Source: NJJM

From building systems to building capabilities

The next phase of JJM recognises a simple but important reality, a rural water supply system becomes sustainable only when the people and institutions responsible for it have the capability to manage it.

A pump may be installed, a reservoir constructed and pipelines laid, but reliable water service requires much more. Someone must understand how the system works. Someone must notice a leakage before it becomes a major breakdown. Water quality must be regularly monitored. Sources must be protected. Preventive maintenance must happen on time. Finances have to be planned, records maintained, responsibilities understood and communities kept engaged.

This is where capacity building becomes central to the sustainability of the Mission. During the consultation, **Shri Kamal Kishore Soan, Additional Secretary & Mission Director, National Jal Jeevan Mission**, highlighted this enhanced emphasis on capacity building under JJM 2.0. With significant rural water supply infrastructure already created, sustaining these gains would require empowered Gram Panchayats, informed community institutions and a strong ecosystem of technical support. Sustainable service delivery, therefore, depends not only on physical assets but also on the ability of local institutions to operate and maintain them effectively.

The discussions reinforced the importance of Jan Bhagidari and clearly understood responsibilities at the village level. Gram Panchayats, VWSCs, women's groups as Sujalam Shakti Groups and community volunteers need practical capabilities related to source sustainability, operation and maintenance, water quality and financial sustainability. The emphasis was consequently on making learning simple, practical and action-oriented, so that what is learnt in a training room can be translated into everyday improvements in village water services.



Figure 49: Address by AS&MD, NJJM during the workshop | Source: NJJM

Eight modules, one larger purpose

To translate this vision into a structured learning programme, the National Jal Jeevan Mission developed eight capacity-building modules for Gram Panchayat representatives, VWSC members and Sujalam Shakti Groups. Together, they cover the entire journey of rural water service delivery, from understanding water resources and village water supply systems to source sustainability and water quality; from institutional roles and responsibilities to operation and maintenance; and from technology-enabled governance to community ownership and climate resilience.

But these are not conventional training manuals. At the heart of the eight modules is the story of Panipur, a fictional village that could, in many ways, be any village in India. Its people encounter situations that are familiar across rural communities, a household at the tail end not receiving adequate water, a leaking pipeline, questions over who should repair a pump, concerns about water quality, a source coming under stress, the challenge of collecting service charges, or the need for the Gram Panchayat and community to come together to take a decision.

As the story of Panipur unfolds across the modules, technical concepts are introduced through people, conversations, situations and choices. Participants do not encounter operation and maintenance merely as a chapter to be learnt; they see what happens when maintenance is delayed. Source sustainability is not presented only as a technical concept; they see how decisions made by a village can affect its water security. Community participation is not explained only through institutional roles; they see how different people come together or sometimes fail to come together to solve a shared problem. And at different points, Panipur becomes a mirror. The story invites participants to pause and ask, Does something

similar happen in our village? Who takes responsibility when it does? Are all households receiving the same level of service? Do we know whether our water source will last for long? Who checks the quality of our water? Are we maintaining the system before it breaks down? And what can we, as a community, do differently? That reflection is central to the learning approach. The purpose is not simply to tell the story of Panipur, but to help every participant begin thinking about the story of their own village.

In this way, storytelling becomes much more than a device for making training material interesting. It becomes a participatory communication tool, one that can make technical subjects easier to understand, create space for discussion, bring different perspectives into the conversation and encourage communities to identify their own problems and solutions.

Panipur may be fictional, but the questions it raises are real. And when participants begin recognising their own water system, their own responsibilities and their own choices in its story, learning can move from information to reflection, and from reflection to collective action. This is particularly important for JJM 2.0, where Jan Bhagidari and local ownership are central to sustainability. Capacity building must therefore go beyond transferring knowledge and help people recognise their role in sustaining water services. For learning to translate into action, it must reflect real village situations, from tail-end water supply and pump failures to source sustainability, water quality and community participation.

The national consultation provided a platform to collectively review and strengthen the eight modules, drawing on field experiences from States and other stakeholders to improve their relevance, practicality and scalability. This collaborative approach also acknowledged India's diversity. Rural water-supply challenges in a Himalayan village may be very different from those in a drought-prone region, a flood-affected area or a groundwater-dependent habitation. Capacity building therefore needs a common foundation while leaving sufficient space for State-specific and local contextualisation.

Making learning practical

One message emerged particularly strongly from the consultation; capacity building cannot remain confined to a classroom. Training must enable people to perform real tasks. Participants therefore emphasised learning approaches that are participatory, application-oriented and field-focused. Contextualised learning material, refresher programmes, continuous handholding and stronger connections between training institutions and frontline practitioners were identified as important elements of the emerging capacity-building ecosystem.

This changes the way capacity building itself is viewed. A training programme is no longer complete when a participant receives a certificate or finishes a module. Its real test is what happens afterwards, whether a VWSC is able to review its water supply system, whether a Gram Panchayat can take informed decisions, whether women participating in water-quality surveillance can identify and report risks, and whether communities are able to collectively protect and sustain their



Figure 50: Presentation by participants on module | Source: NJJM

drinking water sources. Capacity building, in this sense, becomes a continuous process of learning, applying, reviewing and improving.

Technology as an enabler of continuous learning

The consultation also looked beyond conventional training methods and towards how capacity building under JJM 2.0 can gradually evolve into a continuous learning ecosystem.

Smt. Swati Meena Naik, Joint Secretary, DDWS, highlighted the importance of building a robust capacity-building ecosystem, recognising that infrastructure alone cannot guarantee reliable service delivery unless institutions and communities have the knowledge, skills and confidence to manage it. Capacity building must therefore strengthen institutions while also encouraging the behavioural changes necessary for community ownership.

The eight modules provide a common foundational learning package for Gram Panchayat representatives, VWSC members and Sujalam Shakti Groups. As an immediate step, their digitisation can extend learning beyond the classroom and enable participants to revisit key concepts and resources. Looking ahead, NJJM envisages a Learning Management System (LMS) that can support more personalised, competency-based learning, recognising that even within the same stakeholder group, participants bring different levels of experience, competencies and local contexts.

An envisaged LMS could eventually help understand where a learner stands, what competencies are required for the role, and where the learning gaps lie. Based on such an assessment, the system could recommend appropriate courses, refresher content, practical resources or additional learning support. Progress could subsequently be assessed, allowing the learning pathway to evolve as competencies and responsibilities grow.

The journey can progressively move from digitising a common foundational curriculum to enabling customised learning pathways in the future. A digital learning ecosystem can make capacity building continuous, allowing participants to revisit learning, address emerging needs and strengthen competencies over time, transforming one-time training into a continuous and responsive learning journey.



Figure 51: Address by JS, NJJM during the workshop | Source: NJJM

Learning from the field, strengthening the framework

Perhaps one of the most valuable features of the consultation was how the modules were reviewed. Instead of treating States, Members of Rural WASH partners forum and training institutions merely as recipients of centrally developed learning material, the consultation brought them together as partners in shaping it. Participants were organised into mixed groups comprising representatives from States/UTs, Rural WASH partners, training institutions and other stakeholders, with each group taking up one of the eight modules for an in-depth review. This brought different perspectives around the same table policy and implementation experience from States, field insights from sector partners, and pedagogical experience from training institutions.

Each group examined its assigned module from the perspective of the people who would eventually use it, assessing whether the content was easy to understand, the stories reflected real-life village situations, roles and actions were clearly explained, and the learning could be practically applied in the field. The groups also identified areas requiring simplification, additional content or contextualisation to better reflect diverse field realities.

The exercise culminated in group-wise presentations, where each group shared its observations and recommendations with the larger gathering. These allowed ideas emerging from individual groups to be discussed collectively, creating a richer set of recommendations for strengthening all eight modules.

The recommendations emerging from this process are helping NJJM



Figure 52: Group work on modules | Source: NJJM

further refine the modules, making them simpler, more practical and better aligned with field realities, before they are taken forward for wider capacity-building efforts.

Building capacity to sustain the change

Developing relevant, engaging and practical learning material is an important beginning, but the real task lies in taking this learning to the field at scale and translating it into practice. The eight story-based modules provide a common foundation; their real value, however, will be seen in how effectively they reach Gram Panchayat representatives, VWSC members and Sujalam Shakti Groups across diverse contexts, and how confidently these stakeholders are able to apply the learning in managing their village water services. This will require a strong trainer and delivery ecosystem, contextualised learning, refresher programmes and continued handholding priorities that also emerged strongly from the consultation.

The ambition, therefore, goes beyond training a large number of people. It is about building capable local institutions and confident communities Gram Panchayats that take ownership of their water services, VWSCs that can support their day-to-day management, Sujalam Shakti Groups that strengthen water-quality surveillance and community engagement, and citizens who see themselves as partners in sustaining what has been created. The story of Panipur makes this learning relatable; the collective consultation brings field experience into strengthening it; digitisation can extend its reach; and, over time, the envisaged learning ecosystem can make capacity building more continuous and responsive to individual learning needs.

Ultimately, the success of this capacity-building effort will not be measured merely by how many people are trained, but by what changes after the training, in the way village water systems are understood, managed, monitored and sustained. As JJM 2.0 moves from infrastructure creation towards sustainable service delivery, this is the larger promise of capacity building; turning knowledge into confidence, confidence into participation, and participation into sustainable water services.



Figure 53: Group work on modules | Source: NJJM

Monthly Review Meeting with States/UTs

- Lopamudra Panda, NPMU-NJJM

Shri Ashok K.K. Meena, Secretary, Department of Drinking Water & Sanitation (DDWS), chaired a comprehensive virtual review meeting with State Secretaries, Mission Directors, Engineers-in-Chief and senior officials of States/UTs on **5 August 2026** to assess progress under Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM) 2.0 and review key reform initiatives aimed at strengthening sustainable rural drinking water service delivery across the country. The meeting was attended by Shri Kamal Kishore Soan, AS&MD, NJJM, along with senior officials from DDWS, NJJM and State Water & Sanitation Missions.

In his opening remarks, the Secretary appreciated the efforts of States and Union Territories in sustaining the momentum achieved under Jal Jeevan Mission and emphasized that JJM 2.0 marks a strategic transition from infrastructure creation to long-term service delivery, source sustainability, community ownership and effective operation and maintenance of rural water supply systems. He stressed that the focus must now be on ensuring that every rural household continues to receive safe, adequate and reliable drinking water on a sustained basis. The ongoing monsoon season, he noted, presents a critical opportunity for States to intensify source sustainability interventions, groundwater recharge and water conservation initiatives to secure drinking water sources for the future.

Highlighting the importance of public representatives in strengthening programme implementation, the Secretary directed States and districts to organize dedicated meetings of DISHA Committees on Jal Jeevan Mission and actively engage Hon'ble Members of Parliament. He emphasized that MPs should be regularly briefed on constituency-level progress relating to scheme completion, functionality, source sustainability, water quality, grievance redressal and restoration of roads affected during implementation. Such engagement, he observed, would help strengthen local oversight and enable elected representatives to further support the Mission at the grassroots level. The review also noted the ongoing series of interactions between the Hon'ble Minister of Jal Shakti and Members of Parliament from various States to discuss constituency-specific implementation issues and identify solutions for improved service delivery.

A major area of discussion during the meeting was source sustainability. Referring to the renewed emphasis under JJM 2.0, the Secretary urged States to utilize the Decision



Figure 54: Secretary, DDWS chairing the review meeting | Source: NJJM



Figure 55: Districts attending the review meeting | Source: NJJM

Support System (DSS) for scientific planning of groundwater recharge, source sustainability and convergence-based interventions. States were advised to integrate source sustainability measures into Gram Panchayat, Block and District-level plans and ensure regular monitoring through District Water and Sanitation Mission meetings. He emphasized that data-driven planning using DSS will enable districts to identify vulnerable drinking water sources, prioritize interventions and strengthen resilience against climate variability and groundwater stress.

The Secretary also reviewed progress on digital governance reforms under JJM 2.0 and directed States to accelerate creation of Sujal Gaon IDs, Sujalam Bharat IDs and geo-tagging of drinking water assets. Accurate digital records and geo-referenced asset databases, he noted, are essential for strengthening asset management, transparency and real-time monitoring of rural water supply infrastructure. States were advised to ensure timely completion of pending geo-tagging activities and improve data quality to support evidence-based decision-making at all levels.

Reviewing financial management reforms, the Secretary emphasized that under JJM 2.0 every expenditure must be linked to an identified water supply scheme from source to household. States were directed to expedite migration to the SNA-SPARSH digital payment architecture and move beyond pilot transactions to regular scheme-wise financial operations. He underlined that enhanced financial transparency and scheme-level tracking of expenditure would strengthen accountability and improve monitoring of outcomes under the Mission. Progress related to reimbursement mechanisms, State Linked Schemes, scheme-wise expenditure reporting and digital payment systems was reviewed in detail during the meeting.

The meeting also reviewed progress on the Jal Seva Aankalan undertaken earlier this year. States were directed to complete District Improvement Plans (DIPs) and State Improvement Plans (SIPs), compile findings from the exercise and use the outcomes to strengthen service delivery systems. The Secretary emphasized that the assessment should serve as a practical tool for identifying gaps in water supply services, improving performance and strengthening accountability mechanisms at the district and village levels. It was informed that a detailed Standard Operating Procedure for the next round of Jal Seva Aankalan would be shared separately.

Special emphasis was placed on Jal Arpan, which has emerged as a key reform initiative under JJM 2.0 to facilitate formal transfer of completed water supply assets to Gram Panchayats. The Secretary reiterated that Jal Arpan must be undertaken systematically after successful trial runs and Har Ghar Jal certification, strictly in accordance with the prescribed Standard Operating Procedure. He emphasized that the programme should



Figure 56: AS&MD, NJJM reviewing on various issues | Source: NJJM

include proper handover of assets with digital records and active participation of Gram Panchayats, Village Water & Sanitation Committees, MPs, MLAs and local public representatives to strengthen community ownership and accountability.

During the review, States were reminded that JJM 2.0 does not envisage creation of new schemes except for uncovered habitations under PM JANMAN and Dharti Aaba Janjatiya Gram Utkarsh Abhiyan (DA-JGUA). States were directed to either submit proposals for uncovered tribal habitations or certify that all eligible habitations have already been covered. Progress under both PM JANMAN and DA-JGUA was reviewed, with emphasis on ensuring that no eligible tribal settlement is left behind in access to safe drinking water.

Addressing the participants, Shri Kamal Kishore Soan, Additional Secretary & Mission Director, NJJM, highlighted outcomes from recent interactions with districts situated in groundwater-stressed regions and stressed the need to accelerate groundwater recharge interventions, pre- and post-monsoon water quality surveillance, and convergence-based planning for source sustainability. He emphasized that Jal Arpan and Jal Seva Aankalan are important reform initiatives under JJM 2.0 and that timely progress on these activities would play a significant role in assessing performance and facilitating future fund releases. He further encouraged States to strengthen District Water and Sanitation Missions, improve planning and monitoring systems and leverage technology for informed decision-making. A detailed presentation by DDWS reviewed State-wise progress across a range of implementation and reform indicators, including SNA-SPARSH payments, support and WQM&S reconciliation, opening of new State Linked Schemes for Multi Village Schemes and Bulk Water Supply schemes, Har Ghar Jal certification, Jal Arpan, Jal Seva Aankalan, geo-tagging through Sujalam Bharat, PM-JANMAN and DA-JGUA implementation, skilling of O&M human resources, water quality monitoring and adoption of digital governance tools. Progress relating to the issuance of advisories under the 16th Finance Commission tied grants and preparations for the forthcoming Departmental Summit on Source Sustainability and Operation & Maintenance were also reviewed.

Concluding the meeting, the Secretary reiterated that the success of Jal Jeevan Mission 2.0 will ultimately be measured by the sustainability, functionality and reliability of drinking water services delivered to rural households. He called upon States and Union Territories to closely monitor key reform initiatives, assign clear responsibilities, adhere to prescribed timelines and work collectively towards strengthening community ownership, source sustainability and long-term service delivery. The meeting reaffirmed the shared commitment of the Centre and States to ensuring that every rural household continues to receive safe, adequate and quality drinking water under the vision of Har Ghar Jal.

Special District Collectors' Samvad on Source Sustainability under JJM 2.0

- Lopamudra Panda, NPMU-NJJM

As Jal Jeevan Mission 2.0 transitions towards long-term service delivery, source sustainability has emerged as a central priority for ensuring reliable and resilient drinking water supply systems. Recognising the need for scientific planning and district-led action, the Department of Drinking Water & Sanitation (DDWS) organised a Special District Collectors'/District Magistrates' Samvad on Source Sustainability on 13 August 2026. The virtual interaction brought together District Collectors, District Magistrates and officials from 58 critical districts across the country to deliberate on strengthening drinking water sources through data-driven planning, groundwater recharge and convergence-based interventions.

The Samvad was chaired by Shri Kamal Kishore Soan, Additional Secretary & Mission Director, National Jal Jeevan Mission (NJJM), who emphasized that source sustainability must become an integral part of district planning under JJM 2.0. He highlighted that while significant progress has been made in expanding rural drinking water infrastructure, sustained service delivery requires equal attention to protecting, augmenting and rejuvenating drinking water sources. He called upon districts to leverage the ongoing monsoon season for implementing groundwater recharge, rainwater harvesting and source conservation measures that can strengthen long-term water security. Based on inputs from recent interactions with groundwater-stressed districts, he stressed the importance of prioritising vulnerable areas where drinking water sources face increasing pressure from climate variability and over-extraction.

A key focus of the deliberations was the need for evidence-based planning through systematic assessment of drinking water sources. The AS&MD urged districts to conduct both pre-monsoon and post-monsoon assessment of sources and groundwater conditions to enable validation of available datasets through field observations. Such assessments, he noted, would help districts better understand local water availability, identify emerging risks and design interventions based on actual field conditions rather than assumptions. The exercise is expected to support more informed planning for source sustainability and strengthen monitoring of the impact of conservation and recharge measures over time.

During the Samvad, Shri Sumit Priyadarshi, Deputy Adviser (PHE), NJJM provided a detailed orientation on the Decision Support System (DSS) being developed to support source sustainability planning under Jal Jeevan Mission 2.0. The platform integrates datasets relating to groundwater availability, rainfall, surface water resources, water quality, hydrogeology and water conservation interventions from multiple agencies to generate a comprehensive picture of drinking water security at the village and district levels. By bringing diverse water-related datasets onto a common platform, the DSS is expected to help districts identify vulnerable areas, prioritise interventions and improve convergence of resources available under various schemes and programmes.



Figure 57: AS&MD, NJJM chairing the special samvad | Source: NJJM

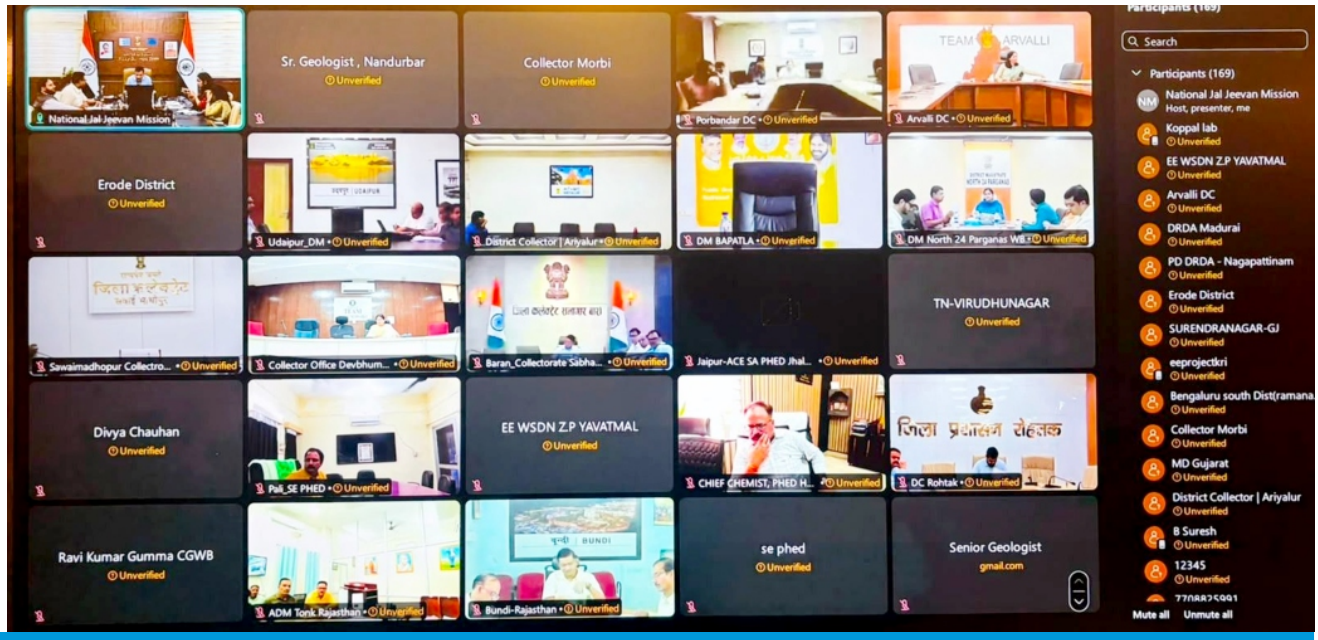


Figure 58: Virtual representation by districts in the special samvad | Source: NJJM

The discussions highlighted that the DSS is not intended merely as a monitoring tool but as a planning support system that can help administrators understand the underlying causes of water stress and determine appropriate corrective measures. Through geospatial analysis and risk assessment, the platform can support identification of recharge opportunities, vulnerable groundwater zones and suitable source sustainability interventions. It can also assist districts in converging resources from programmes such as the 16th Finance Commission tied grants, VB-GRAM-G and other water conservation initiatives for implementing targeted actions.

The Samvad also featured presentations by the District Collectors of Kasganj and Jhansi, who shared their experiences and ongoing initiatives related to source sustainability and groundwater management. The presentations highlighted local approaches being adopted to strengthen drinking water security, improve recharge of groundwater resources and integrate source sustainability considerations into district planning processes. The experience sharing provided valuable insights for other participating districts and reinforced the importance of district-level leadership in achieving sustainable drinking water outcomes.

Participants discussed the growing importance of integrating scientific data, community participation and convergence-based planning into source sustainability efforts. Emphasis was placed on ensuring that drinking water source protection becomes a continuous activity involving Gram Panchayats, local communities and line departments. The deliberations underscored that sustainable rural drinking water services can only be achieved when infrastructure development is complemented by proactive efforts to conserve and strengthen the water sources on which these systems depend.

Concluding the interaction, Shri Kamal Kishore Soan thanked all participating districts and departmental representatives for their active engagement and contributions. He reiterated that source sustainability will remain a key pillar of Jal Jeevan Mission 2.0 and called upon districts to make effective use of digital tools, scientific datasets and convergence opportunities for safeguarding drinking water sources. The Samvad reinforced the commitment of DDWS and States to adopt data-driven approaches, strengthen local planning processes and undertake timely interventions to ensure sustainable and reliable drinking water services for rural households across the country.



Figure 59: Deputy Adviser (PHE), NJJM presenting on DSS in the special samvad | Source: NJJM

Meeting for Pending Clearances for Rural Drinking Water Supply Projects for 7 States

- Lopamudra Panda, NPMU-NJJM

To facilitate timely implementation of rural drinking water supply projects under Jal Jeevan Mission 2.0 and address bottlenecks requiring approvals from various departments and ministries, the Department of Drinking Water & Sanitation (DDWS) convened a coordination meeting on **12 August 2026** under the chairmanship of Shri Kamal Kishore Soan, AS & MD, NJJM. Representatives from the Ministry of Road Transport & Highways (MoRTH), National Highways Authority of India (NHAI), Ministry of Railways, Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC) and Inland Waterways Authority of India (IWAI) participated in the meeting along with officials from Chhattisgarh, Karnataka, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal. The review focused on **25 rural drinking water supply projects** awaiting clearances under various categories.

The meeting reviewed projects requiring forest and environmental clearances, railway permissions, inland waterway approvals and permissions related to National Highways. Detailed discussions were held on project-specific issues, pending procedural requirements and measures required to expedite approvals and avoid delays in implementation.

Environment & Forest Clearances (MoEFCC): Under the environment and forest clearance category, significant progress was noted in Madhya Pradesh, where five rural water supply projects, spanning schemes at Ashta-Ranipur, Gulabsagar, Machagora, Malthon and Dindori received their Stage-II forest clearance during between mid-July and mid-August 2026, enabling advancement of key infrastructure components including reservoirs, pipelines and power connections.

Karnataka's Dharwad district proposal remains held up at the Divisional Forest Officer level and was advised to resolve land-status issues before the file moves to the Centre. Uttar Pradesh's Agra scheme is still under state-level examination, with a direction that DDWS be copied once the proposal reaches MoEFCC.

Ministry of Railways: The review of railway-related clearances highlighted progress in six cases from Kerala and Uttar Pradesh. Three cases from Uttar Pradesh were clarified as not requiring a separate Railway NOC and Kerala's Ernakulam crossing (Udayamperoor panchayat) was cleared on 18th June 2026 and now needs to update in IMIS. The more complex case is Kerala's Palakkad division, where Railway authorities have proposed shifting the pipe-carrying bridge to the opposite side of the existing rail bridge; a fresh joint inspection is awaited before the revised drawing can be approved. Uttar Pradesh's Dedicated Freight Corridor crossing (New Delhi–Kanpur stretch) is now moving after DFCCIL's cost estimate was received in late July.

Inland Waterways (IWAI): The meeting also examined a pending case relating to the Inland Waterways Authority of India concerning an intake jetty on the river Bhagirathi proposed under the surface water-based drinking water supply scheme for arsenic-affected areas in Murshidabad district, West Bengal. The State was advised to submit a revised proposal in accordance with updated IWAI norms regarding the location of the intake structure.

National Highways (NHAI / MoRTH): A substantial portion of the review focused on clearances related to National Highways. 11 cases across five States (Chhattisgarh, Karnataka, Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Uttar

Clearing Authority	Cases Reviewed	Resolved / Cleared	Still Pending
MoEFCC (Forest & Environment)	7	5	2
Ministry of Railways	6	4	2
IWAI (Inland Waterways)	1	0	1
NHAI / MoRTH	11	2	9
Total	**25**	**11**	**14**

Nearly half of all pending cases reviewed were resolved or cleared in the run-up to and during the meeting - the remainder now carry clear, time-bound next steps.

Pradesh and West Bengal) were discussed in detail. Bank Guarantee submission was the single most common hold-up, cited in Chhattisgarh's Mongra scheme and West Bengal's Ondal scheme, both expected to close within days to a week of BG receipt. In Kerala, two pipeline crossings on NH-966 have had their demand notes paid and Bank Guarantees extended to 2028, yet NHAI sanction is still awaited, while two other Kerala schemes, at Santhanpara-Senapathy-Rajakumari and Devikulam-Chinnakanal, have hit a harder wall: NHAI has stated no alternate alignment exists, and the Mission Director has directed a joint technical inspection to find a way forward. Karnataka's long-pending Dharwad-Bengaluru stretch, unresolved since February, may need a formal duct-provision exemption routed through NHAI Headquarters to MoRTH. Tamil Nadu's Ramanathapuram scheme the largest single proposal at nearly 27 km has been referred for a joint site-level assessment. On the positive side, Kerala's Kanjirapally crossing and Uttar Pradesh's Dholpur-Bharatpur crossing have both been cleared and now await IMIS updation.

The deliberations underscored the importance of close coordination among Central Ministries, State Governments and implementing agencies to resolve clearance-related issues that affect completion of drinking water supply infrastructure. The review also demonstrated the value of periodic monitoring and inter-agency consultations in accelerating implementation of projects and ensuring timely delivery of benefits to rural households.

In his concluding remarks, Shri Kamal Kishore Soan directed States to actively pursue pending cases with the concerned authorities and ensure timely completion of all procedural requirements. He emphasized the need for effective coordination, regular communication and timely updating of project status on JJM-IMIS, particularly in cases where clearances had already been obtained or were no longer required. Central Ministries and organisations were also requested to extend necessary support within their respective mandates to facilitate expeditious resolution of pending issues.

The meeting reaffirmed DDWS's commitment to working closely with States and partner Ministries to remove implementation bottlenecks and support timely completion of rural drinking water supply projects under Jal Jeevan Mission.

Visit of AS&MD, NJJM to Jharkhand and Bihar

- **Lopamudra Panda,** NPMU-NJJM

Shri Kamal Kishore Soan, AS&MD, NJJM undertook field visits to Jharkhand and Bihar on 15-16 August 2026 to review implementation progress, interact with communities and assess key reform initiatives on the ground.

Interaction with Community in Deoghar, Jharkhand: On 15 August 2026, Shri Kamal Kishore Soan, Additional Secretary & Mission Director, National Jal Jeevan Mission (NJJM), visited Deoghar district of Jharkhand and participated in a series of activities at the Kasidih Part-A Multi Village Water Supply Scheme. The visit coincided with Independence Day celebrations and included flag hoisting, plantation activities, a Sujal Gram Samvad, interaction with VWSC members, and inspection of key drinking water infrastructure including the Devipur Water Treatment Plant (WTP).

During the Sujal Gram Samvad, Shri Soan interacted with villagers, elected representatives, VWSC members and frontline functionaries on various aspects of rural drinking water service delivery under Jal Jeevan Mission. Discussions focused on community participation in operation and maintenance of water supply systems, protection of drinking water assets, water conservation, source sustainability and the role of Gram Panchayats in ensuring reliable service delivery. He emphasized that the long-term sustainability of rural water supply systems depends on active community ownership and regular participation of local institutions in managing village-level assets.



Figure 60: AS&MD planting sapling at water supply site | Source: PHED Jharkhand



Figure 61: AS&MD, NJJM addressing community during Sujal Gram Samvad | Source: PHED Jharkhand

While reviewing the progress of the Kasidih water supply scheme and inspecting the Devipur Water Treatment Plant, he stressed the importance of ensuring safe and quality drinking water to rural households on a sustained basis. He directed officials to expedite completion of trial runs of all five overhead reservoirs constructed under the project and bring them into regular operation at the earliest. He also emphasized that completed assets should be systematically handed over to local institutions in accordance with the principles of community-led management being promoted under JJM 2.0.

The visit provided an opportunity to review implementation progress at the field level and to reinforce the importance of local ownership, preventive maintenance and sustainable operation of drinking water infrastructure. Community members and local representatives expressed their commitment towards safeguarding water supply assets, promoting source sustainability and sustaining the gains achieved under *Har Ghar Jal*.

The Sujal Gram samvad programme was attended by Mohd. Reyaz Alam, Chief Engineer; Shri Sanjay Kumar, Executive Engineer; Smt. Pramila Devi, Block Pramukh; Smt. Parvati Devi, Mukhiya; Arvind Murmu, Superintending Engineer; Jal Sahiyas, VWSC members, rural community representatives and state officials.

Review Meeting in Sultanganj, Bihar: On 16 August 2026, Shri Kamal Kishore Soan visited Sultanganj and chaired a review meeting with district administration officials to assess the status of Jal Jeevan Mission implementation and progress on key reform initiatives under JJM 2.0.

The review focused on strengthening institutional mechanisms and ensuring long-term sustainability of drinking water services. During the meeting, he emphasised the importance of conducting regular meetings of the District Water and Sanitation Mission (DWSM) for effective planning, monitoring and coordination. He also reviewed progress on handover of completed schemes through Jal Arpan and stressed the need to accelerate transfer of assets to Gram Panchayats for promoting local ownership and accountability.

Highlighting the central role of communities in sustaining rural water supply systems, he encouraged district authorities to strengthen Gram Panchayat-led operation and maintenance (O&M) of drinking water infrastructure and build local capacities for managing village water supply assets. Discussions also covered community participation, service delivery standards, functionality of assets and measures required to ensure sustainable and reliable drinking water services for rural households.

The visits to Jharkhand and Bihar reflected the continued emphasis of NJJM on field-level engagement, community ownership and strengthening local institutions as key pillars for sustaining the achievements of Jal Jeevan Mission and advancing the objectives of JJM 2.0.



Figure 62: Jal Sahiyas along with AS&MD, NJJM during Sujal Gram Samvad | Source: PHED Jharkhand

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