

Jal Jeevan Mission - Moving Towards 100% Coverage

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Executive Summary

1. The Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM), launched in 2019, aims to provide universal access to safe drinking water through household tap connections in rural India. At inception, **only 17% of rural households had tap water**; as of 2025, coverage has expanded to 15 crore households (80%), with the target extended to 2028. **The 2025-26 Union Budget allocated ₹67,000 crore**, emphasizing quality infrastructure, operations, and maintenance.
2. JJM has significantly improved health, sanitation, education, and economic productivity, particularly benefiting women by reducing water-fetching burdens. **The community-driven approach, with Pani Samitis** ensuring local participation and ownership, has promoted social inclusion.
3. To accelerate progress, strengthening local governance through training for Pani Samitis, ensuring timely state funding, and promoting knowledge-sharing between states are essential. Additionally, deploying water purification technologies, **enhancing water resource management via rainwater harvesting, and restoring traditional water bodies** will ensure sustainability.
4. With community participation, technological solutions, and financial accountability, **JJM can achieve 100% coverage and ensure long-term rural water security by 2028.**

I. Introduction

Access to clean drinking water is a fundamental human right and a critical factor in ensuring the well-being and development of communities. Despite significant economic growth and progress in various sectors in India, a large proportion of the rural population faces a daunting challenge in accessing safe drinking water. Historically, rural communities, particularly women, had to endure the burden of fetching water from distant and often contaminated sources, which posed health risks and hindered socio-economic progress. The Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM) was launched in 2019 by Prime Minister Narendra Modi to ensure access to drinking water to every rural household by 2024 through tap connections. The Department of Drinking Water and Sanitation (DDWS), which comes under the Jal Shakti Ministry, is responsible for the programme. At the time of the launch of the scheme, the government said only 3.23 crore (or 17%) of rural households had tap water connections. The mission aims to bridge this gap by providing nearly 16 crore additional households with tap water.

The Jal Jeevan Mission aims to assist, empower, and facilitate States and Union Territories (UTs) in the planning of participatory rural water supply strategies, ensuring long-term potable drinking water security for every rural household and public institution, such as Gram Panchayat buildings, schools, Anganwadi centers, health centers, and wellness centres.

While presenting the Union Budget 2025-26 in the Parliament today, Union Minister for Finance and Corporate Affairs Smt. Nirmala Sitharaman said that the total budget outlay for Jal Jeevan Mission has been enhanced to Rs 67,000 Crore. She said that the Mission stands extended until 2028. Smt. Nirmala Sitharaman stated that 15 crore households, representing 80 per cent of India's rural population, have benefitted by the Jal Jeevan Mission since 2019. She added that access to potable tap water connections is provided under this Mission and in the next three years, the target is to achieve 100 percent coverage. Jal Jeevan Mission's focus will be on the quality of infrastructure and O&M of rural piped water supply schemes through "Jan Bhagidhari". Separate MoUs will be signed with states/UTs, to ensure¹ sustainability and citizen-centric water service delivery, informed Smt. Sitharaman.

II. Analysis

Since its launch, the Jal Jeevan Mission(JJM) has made significant progress in expanding access to tap water supply in rural areas.²

¹ [Jal Jeevan Mission](#)

² [Press Release](#)

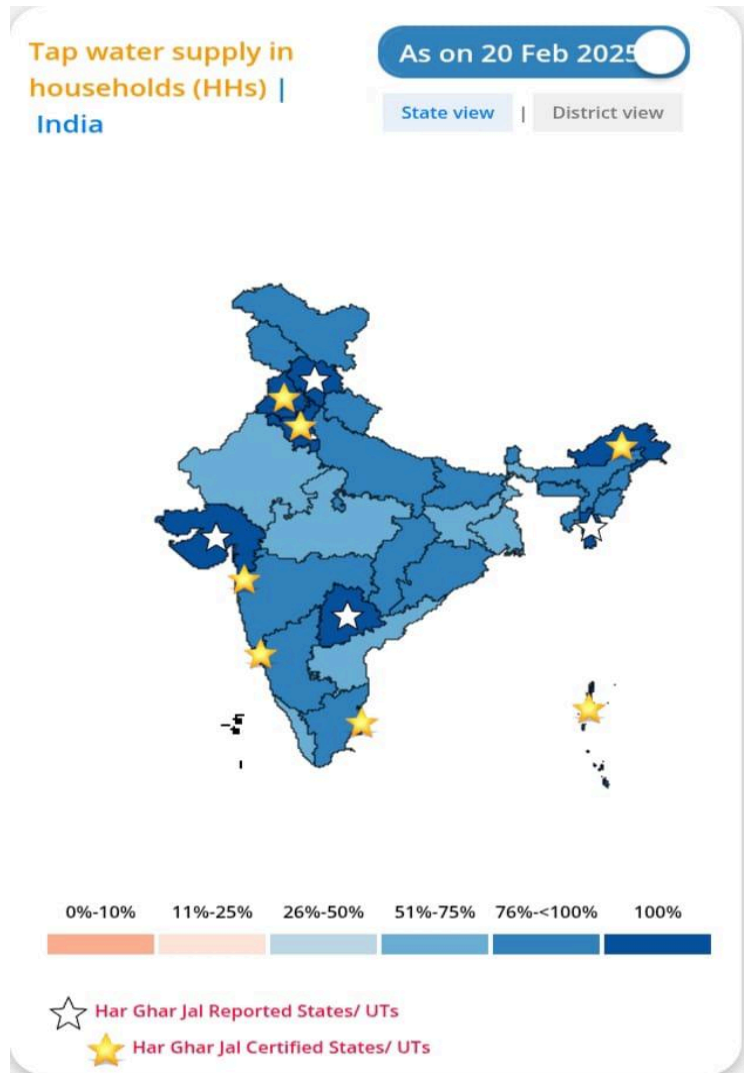


Image 1. Tap Water Supply In Households

The outcomes of the JJM go beyond providing access to clean drinking water. Improved access to tap water has significantly enhanced the overall quality of life for rural households by alleviating the physical strain and health risks associated with obtaining water from distant and often contaminated sources. Additionally, the availability of tap water has improved hygiene and sanitation practices in households, leading to a reduction in waterborne diseases and creating a healthier living environment. Access to tap water has also had positive economic and educational impacts. The time and energy saved from not having to fetch water can be utilized for income-generating activities or pursuing education. Women, in particular, have been able to engage in productive work, contributing to household income and economic growth in rural areas. Furthermore, the provision of tap water in schools and public institutions has improved the learning environment and encouraged higher attendance rates among students³The mission follows a decentralized, community-driven approach, involving the formation of

³ [Rural Communities](#)

Pani Samitis or Village Water and Sanitation Committees (VWSC) in each village. These committees, accountable for managing water supply, include a minimum of 50% women members, empowering women by saving them time and enabling them to engage in productive work. The mission also promotes social inclusion by ensuring equitable access to water, especially for marginalized communities, addressing caste-based discrimination in water access. The community is encouraged to contribute a portion of the infrastructure cost, fostering a sense of ownership. Additionally, after the successful implementation of water schemes, communities are rewarded with a revolving fund for long-term sustainability.⁴

While the mission has had transformative impacts, especially in empowering women and promoting social equality, challenges in its execution remain, reflecting similar issues faced by previous water supply schemes. The initial target of 2024 has not been achieved and extended till 2028.

A few of the major challenges being faced by the States in the implementation of the Jal Jeevan Mission are listed as under:

- A. Lack of dependable drinking water sources in water-stressed areas.
- B. Presence of geo-genic contaminants in ground water.
- C. Uneven geographical terrain, scattered rural habitations.
- D. Lack of capacity of the local village communities to manage and operate in-village water supply infrastructure.
- E. Further, delay in release of matching State shares in few States has also challenged the progress of the Mission.⁵

III. Recommendation

Given the current analysis of the Jal Jeevan Mission's progress and challenges, the following recommendations could help accelerate the mission's objectives, address existing hurdles, and ensure sustainable water supply for every rural household by 2028-

- A. To ensure that the objective of Jal Jeevan Mission is achieved, it is necessary to work at the local level. Strengthening local capacity for managing and operating rural water supply systems is crucial. Providing training and technical assistance to local communities, particularly Pani Samitis (Village Water and Sanitation Committees), on the operation and maintenance of water systems will help in ensuring regular water supply. Implementing mentorship programs by experts or successful local water management groups to build self-sufficiency in rural communities is necessary.

⁴ [Water Security](#)

⁵ [Sansad](#)

- B. Ensure timely release of state matching funds to facilitate uninterrupted progress of the mission. Develop a transparent and predictable funding mechanism with clear timelines for fund releases from both central and state governments. Engage with state governments to prioritize timely budget allocations, ensuring the smooth flow of funds for water infrastructure projects. Introduce accountability measures to monitor fund utilization and ensure the efficient allocation of resources at the local level.
- C. Organize inter-state workshops, webinars, and conferences where successful states or communities can showcase their water supply innovations and solutions. Set up a national-level knowledge repository that states can access to learn from each other's experiences, particularly in overcoming geographic or resource-related challenges.
- D. Prioritize water purification technologies that can handle geo-genic contaminants, such as reverse osmosis (RO) and defluoridation plants in affected regions. Train local communities on water quality testing and health risks, and ensure frequent checks to detect contaminants early.
- E. Implement comprehensive water source mapping and management strategies to identify and enhance reliable sources of water in water-stressed regions. Promote the development of rainwater harvesting, rejuvenation of traditional water bodies, and groundwater recharge initiatives. Encourage the construction of small-scale decentralized water systems (e.g., ponds, check dams) to ensure a more resilient and sustainable water supply, particularly in areas with unreliable sources.
- F. Expanding water quality testing laboratories will facilitate regular and detailed assessments of water sources, enabling the timely identification of contaminants. Implementing affordable treatment technologies, like RO systems and UV filters, can effectively remove common contaminants, including arsenic and pathogens, ensuring safe drinking water. Notably, innovations such as the UV Waterworks system have demonstrated the potential of UV-based purification in delivering safe drinking water at minimal costs. Integrating water quality data into the JJM dashboard will promote transparency, allowing stakeholders to monitor water safety and swiftly address any issues.
- G. Conducting regular functionality audits ensures that FHTCs meet established standards, promoting accountability. Tying fund releases to these performance metrics encourages adherence to quality benchmarks. Training Pani Samitis enhances their technical and managerial capabilities, enabling effective local management of water infrastructure. Allocating specific budgets and establishing a revolving fund for operations and maintenance ensures that resources are available for routine maintenance and urgent repairs, leading to the sustained functionality of the water supply system.

IV. References

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