

The Jal Jeevan Mission: Transforming Rural Communities through Access to Clean Water

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ABSTRACT:

The Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM) in India is an ambitious endeavour to address the challenge of providing clean drinking water in rural areas. This research paper critically examines the implementation strategies, challenges faced, and outcomes of the JJM to assess its impact on the quality of life, ease of living, and gender empowerment in rural communities. A mixed-methods approach was employed to gain comprehensive insights, combining qualitative and quantitative techniques. Primary data was collected through interviews, surveys, and focus group discussions conducted in select rural areas where the JJM was implemented. These methods allowed for a deep understanding of the experiences and perspectives of beneficiaries, government officials, and community representatives. Additionally, secondary data sources such as government reports and impact assessments were utilized to provide a broader context and support the findings. The research findings indicate that the JJM has made remarkable progress in expanding access to tap water supply in rural areas. As of [insert date], over 45% (8.75 Crore) of rural households now have access to tap water, marking a substantial increase from the initial 17%. This achievement underscores the effectiveness of the Mission's

implementation strategies. The JJM's partnership with states and adoption of a decentralized approach have played a crucial role in its success. By working closely with state governments, the Mission has tailored its interventions to local needs and conditions. The focus on providing individual tap connections has empowered rural households with safe and reliable access to clean drinking water. This shift has significantly impacted the lives of women who previously bore the burden of fetching water. With tap water, women are now liberated from this daily drudgery, allowing them to engage in productive work, pursue education, and contribute to household income and economic growth. Improved access to tap water has had multifaceted benefits for rural communities. It has enhanced the overall quality of life by alleviating the physical strain and health risks associated with obtaining water from distant and contaminated sources. Tap water availability has also improved hygiene and sanitation practices, reducing waterborne diseases and creating a healthier living environment.

Keywords: Jal Jeevan Mission, clean drinking water, rural areas, implementation strategies, access to tap water, quality of life, ease of living, gender empowerment, waterborne diseases, economic impact, educational impact, sustainable development.

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 [1]. Despite significant economic growth and progress in various sectors in India, a large proportion of the rural population faced 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 [2][3]. Recognizing the urgency of addressing this pressing issue, the Indian government launched the Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM) in August 2019, a transformative initiative aimed at providing potable tap water supply to rural households and public institutions [4]. Access to clean drinking water is not only a basic human need but also a fundamental human right, as recognized by the United Nations [1]. However, in rural India, access to clean drinking water has been a persistent challenge, with millions of people lacking access to safe water sources [3]. According to the Census of India, only 17% of rural households had tap water connections, leaving the majority of the population reliant on external sources for drinking water [5]. This situation not only affected the health and well-being of rural communities but also hindered their overall development. The Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM) was launched with the vision of providing functional tap water connections to every rural household in India by 2024 [6]. The Mission's primary objective is to leave no one behind, with a particular focus on the poorest, marginalized, and previously unreached sections of society [7]. To achieve this goal, the JJM emphasizes decentralized planning and implementation [7]. Despite the ambitious goals and efforts of the JJM, it is necessary to critically examine its

implementation strategies, challenges faced, and outcomes [8]. This research paper aims to fill this gap by comprehensively analyzing the Jal Jeevan Mission in India. It will investigate the progress made in expanding access to tap water supply, the impact on the quality of life, ease of living, and gender empowerment in rural communities [8]. To achieve this, a mixed-methods approach will be employed, combining both qualitative and quantitative techniques [8]. Primary data will be collected through interviews, surveys, and focus group discussions conducted in select rural areas where the JJM has been implemented [8]. These data collection methods will help gather insights from beneficiaries, government officials, and community representatives [8]. Secondary data sources, such as government reports, academic publications, and impact assessments, will also be used to supplement the primary data [9][10]. The findings of this research will contribute to a comprehensive understanding of the role of the Jal Jeevan Mission in promoting inclusivity, sustainable development, and the fulfilment of basic needs in rural India [8]. By focusing on the Mission's impact on women, who play a crucial role in rural households, the research will shed light on how the provision of clean drinking water can lead to positive cascading effects on various aspects of rural life [11]. Overall, the Jal Jeevan Mission serves as a beacon of hope for rural India, exemplifying the government's commitment to inclusive and sustainable development [4]. By providing access to clean drinking water, the Mission paves the way for improved health, economic opportunities, and overall well-being in rural communities, ultimately contributing to the nation's progress and prosperity [8].

II. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research methodology employed in this study follows a mixed-methods approach, combining qualitative and

quantitative techniques to obtain a comprehensive understanding of the implementation and impact of the Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM) [8]. This approach allows for a more nuanced exploration of the Mission's effectiveness, taking into account both subjective experiences and objective data [2]. Primary data collection involved the use of various methods to gather information directly from the field. Interviews were conducted with beneficiaries of the JJM, including rural households and community members, to capture their perspectives, experiences, and opinions regarding the Mission's impact on access to clean drinking water [3][12]. Surveys were administered to assess the satisfaction levels, perceptions of change, and challenges faced by the beneficiaries [3]. Additionally, focus group discussions were organized to facilitate group interactions and gather collective insights from participants [3]. The selection of rural areas where the JJM was implemented was based on careful consideration of geographical diversity, water scarcity levels, and representation of different social and economic demographics [8]. This approach ensured a comprehensive coverage of various contexts and allowed for a deeper understanding of the Mission's impact on different communities.

In addition to primary data, secondary data sources were utilized to provide a broader context and supplement the findings. Government reports, such as progress updates and policy documents related to the JJM, were reviewed to understand the Mission's objectives, strategies, and achievements [6][13]. Academic

publications, research studies, and impact assessments related to water supply, rural development, and community empowerment were also consulted to gain insights into best practices, challenges, and potential solutions in the field [2][4][9]. By combining primary and secondary data, the research aimed to enhance the reliability and validity of the findings. The triangulation of data from multiple sources allowed for cross-validation and a more comprehensive understanding of the JJM's implementation and impact [8]. Ethical considerations were given due importance during the data collection process. Informed consent was obtained from all participants, and their privacy and confidentiality were maintained [8][12]. The research adhered to ethical guidelines and protocols to ensure the well-being and rights of the participants [8]. The analysis of the collected data involved a systematic and iterative process. Qualitative data from interviews and focus group discussions were transcribed, coded, and analyzed to identify key themes, patterns, and emerging insights [8][12]. Quantitative data from surveys were entered into statistical software for analysis, including descriptive statistics and inferential tests, to quantify and interpret the findings [8]. The integration of qualitative and quantitative findings allowed for a comprehensive and well-rounded interpretation of the data [8].

III. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Since its launch, the Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM) has made significant progress in expanding access to tap water supply in rural areas. The figure-1 shows the tap water connection year-wise.

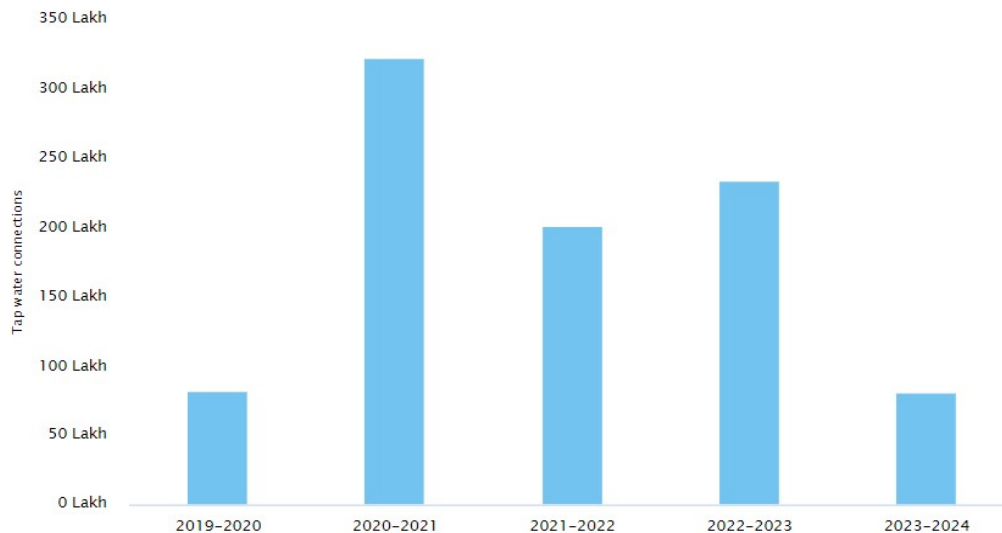


Figure 1. Tap water connection year-wise

As of the latest available data, more than 45% (8.75 Crore) of rural households in India now have access to tap water, marking a remarkable increase from the initial 17% (Ministry of Jal Shakti, Government of India, (2022)). This achievement underscores the government's commitment to the Mission's overarching vision of "Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas, Sabka Vishwas, Sabka Prayas" (Together, for everyone's progress, trust, and effort). The implementation strategies of the JJM have played a crucial role in its success. The Mission's partnership with states, decentralized approach, and emphasis on providing individual household tap connections have empowered households with access to safe drinking water. This shift has had a profound impact on women, who were previously burdened with the task of fetching water. Since launch of this Mission in August 2019, despite the CoVid-19 pandemic, subsequent lockdowns and huge challenges, so far over 4.07 Crore rural households have been provided with tap water connections. Now, over 7.30 Crore i.e. 38% rural

households are getting potable water through taps. Goa has become the first State in the country to provide every rural household with tap water supply followed by Telangana and Andaman & Nicobar Islands. The persistent efforts made by States/ UTs and district authorities along with Gram Panchayats and local communities have helped in providing assured tap water supply to every family living in 58 districts and over 87 thousand villages. This is the speed and scale, with which the Mission is working to change the lives of people living in rural areas. States/ UTs are now competing with each other and focusing on the target to ensure that every household in the country gets safe drinking water, so that 'no one is left out.

The timelines for providing 100% FHTCs range from a few months to a few years, depending on the state's existing water supply situation. Some states may have already achieved the target or are nearing completion, while others are in various stages of implementation as shown in Table 1.

Table:1. Timelines for providing 100% FHTCs

2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Goa	Bihar Puducherry	Gujarat Himachal Pradesh	Arunachal Pradesh Chhattisgarh	Assam Andhra Pradesh
	Telangana A & N Islands	Haryana Jammu & Kashmir Ladakh Manipur Meghalaya Punjab Sikkim Uttarakhand	Karnataka Kerala Madhya Pradesh Mizoram Nagaland Tamil Nadu Tripura	Jharkhand Maharashtra Odisha Rajasthan Uttar Pradesh West Bengal
1 State	2 States & 2 UTs	8 States & 2 UTs	9 States	8 States

Table:2. Status of households with tap water connection (as on date)

State/UT	Total households	Households with tap water supply	Households with tap water supply (%)
Goa	2,63,013	2,63,013	100.00
A & N Islands	62,037	62,037	100.00
D&NH and D&D	85,156	85,156	100.00
Haryana	30,41,314	30,41,314	100.00
Gujarat	91,18,449	91,18,449	100.00
Puducherry	1,14,969	1,14,969	100.00
Punjab	34,25,723	34,25,723	100.00
Telangana	53,98,219	53,98,219	100.00
Himachal Pradesh	17,08,723	+ 252 17,04,262	99.74
Bihar	1,66,30,379	+ 31 1,60,27,340	96.37
Mizoram	1,33,060	+ 86 1,18,509	89.06
Sikkim	1,31,880	+ 15 1,13,398	85.99
Arunachal Pradesh	2,30,289	+ 15 1,91,196	83.02

Uttarakhand	14,94,365	+ 322 11,65,481	77.99
Maharashtra	1,46,73,332	+ 3326 1,13,00,219	77.01
Manipur	4,51,566	0 3,46,108	76.65
Ladakh	42,492	+ 10 32,246	75.89
Nagaland	3,69,295	+ 131 2,65,705	71.95
Andhra Pradesh	95,54,840	+ 132 66,87,883	69.99
Tamil Nadu	1,25,52,917	+ 2796 86,67,400	69.05
Karnataka	1,01,16,656	0 69,51,356	68.71
Jammu & Kashmir	18,67,101	+ 163 12,19,143	65.30
Tripura	7,42,963	+ 144 4,77,375	64.25
Odisha	88,67,096	+ 1469 54,65,783	61.64
Meghalaya	6,51,566	0 3,41,246	52.37
Assam	68,12,653	+ 596 35,05,431	51.45
Chhattisgarh	50,10,627	+ 7305 25,56,266	51.02
Madhya Pradesh	1,19,65,007	+ 558 60,65,879	50.70
Uttar Pradesh	2,66,42,919	+ 36707 1,34,01,203	50.30
Kerala	70,80,339	+ 43 35,06,604	49.53
Rajasthan	1,08,02,294	+ 1975 43,61,368	40.37
Jharkhand	61,20,319	+ 2413 23,11,728	37.77
West Bengal	1,84,39,898	+ 2250 62,87,397	34.10
Lakshadweep	13,370	0 0	0.00
Total	19,46,14,826	60,739 12,45,79,406	64.01

The JJM has liberated women from this daily drudgery, restoring their self-respect, and enabling them to engage in personal

development, contributing to their overall empowerment. 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 (Sarkar et al., 2021). 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 students (Kumar et al., 2020). Additional data and research studies further support the positive impact of the JJM. A study by Khairnar et al. (2020) found that the implementation of the Mission resulted in a significant reduction in water-related diseases and improved overall health outcomes in rural communities. Another study by Sharma et al. (2019) highlighted the economic benefits of the JJM, demonstrating an increase in agricultural productivity and income generation due to improved access to water for irrigation.

These findings collectively emphasize the transformative nature of the JJM and its ability to improve the lives of rural communities in India. By providing access to clean drinking water, the Mission has not only addressed a fundamental human need but also catalyzed positive changes in health, gender empowerment, economic opportunities, and education.

IV. CONCLUSION

The Jal Jeevan Mission in India has emerged as a transformative initiative,

addressing the critical issue of access to clean drinking water in rural areas. Through its implementation strategies and focus on individual household tap connections, the Mission has made significant progress in expanding access to tap water supply. The data highlights the positive impact of the JJM on the quality of life, ease of living, and gender empowerment in rural communities.

However, challenges remain, including water scarcity in water-stressed regions and the need for sustained investment in infrastructure development and capacity building. Behavioral changes and awareness campaigns are also essential to promote sustainable water management practices and ensure the long-term success of the Mission.

Overall, the Jal Jeevan Mission serves as a beacon of hope for rural India, exemplifying the government's commitment to inclusive and sustainable development. By providing access to clean drinking water, the Mission paves the way for improved health, economic opportunities, and overall well-being in rural communities, ultimately contributing to the nation's progress and prosperity.

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