

CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION

Water is vital for life. Assured availability of drinking water in the households is critical for health outcomes and for promoting overall well-being. The Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM), launched on 15 August 2019, aimed to provide safe and adequate drinking water to every rural household in the country through individual functional household tap connections (FHTC) by 2024.

The JJM aimed to provide 55 litres of safe and reliable drinking water per person per day through piped supply, focusing on equitable access, especially for marginalised communities. The broad objectives of JJM were to prioritise the installation of FHTCs in areas affected by water quality issues, to monitor the functionality of tap connections, to empower and develop human resources in the sector to meet the demands of construction, water quality management, water treatment and Operation and Maintenance.

Components such as development of in-village piped water supply infrastructure and reliable drinking water sources, augmentation of existing water sources, bulk water transfer, treatment plants, distribution network, technological interventions for removal of contaminants affecting water quality, retrofitting of completed and ongoing schemes, greywater management and support activities were to be initiated under JJM.

The timeline for completion of the programme was set for five years, from 2019-20 to 2023-24, which was subsequently extended to March 2025.

1.1. Organisational structure of JJM in the State

The institutional framework for the implementation of JJM in the State is given in **Chart 1.1:**

Chart 1.1: Organisational structure of JJM in Kerala



(Source: Details furnished by Kerala Water Authority)

1.2. Audit Objectives

The Performance Audit (PA) was taken up with the objective to ascertain whether:

- i. efficient planning and institutional framework was in place and ensured effective implementation of JJM;
- ii. financial resources have been employed in an economic and efficient manner;
- iii. adequate and effective mechanisms existed for monitoring and evaluation of the programme.

1.3. Audit Criteria

The Audit observations included in the Report were benchmarked against the criteria derived from the following:

- i. Operational Guidelines for implementation of JJM
- ii. Margadarshika for Grama Panchayat and Village Water and Sanitation Committees to provide safe drinking water in rural households
- iii. Drinking Water Quality Monitoring and Surveillance Framework of Ministry of Jal Shakti, Department of Drinking Water and Sanitation, National Jal Jeevan Mission
- iv. SDG obligations and Standard Operating Procedure for Water Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH)
- v. General Financial Rules, 2017
- vi. KPWD Manual 2012 and Stores Purchase Manual 2013
- vii. Pipe policy of KWA

1.4. Scope, sampling and methodology of audit

The PA focused on the implementation of JJM programme from 2019-20 to 2023-24 and was conducted from July 2024 to February 2025. Three districts were selected using stratified random sampling through IDEA¹. Two Block Panchayats (BP) from each selected district and two to four Grama Panchayats (GP) from each selected BP were selected randomly as detailed in **Appendix 1.1**.

The methodology adopted involved review of relevant records in the Water Resources Department (WRD), Government of Kerala (GoK) and three key implementing agencies². Additionally, records from the State Referral Institute, Quality Control Divisions of KWA at Kochi and Kozhikode, District Quality Control Laboratories and District Water and Sanitation Missions (DWSM) were examined. The audit methodology included joint physical inspections of assets

¹ Interactive Data Extraction and Analysis

² Kerala Water Authority (KWA), Kerala Rural Water Supply and Sanitation Agency (KRWSA) and Ground Water Department (GWD)

created, beneficiary interactions, Focus Group Meetings³ in 21 test-checked GPs and survey of 342 beneficiaries⁴. Audit also conducted a comprehensive review of data obtained from the Integrated Management Information System (IMIS) of JJM to substantiate its findings.

The entry conference was held on 23 July 2024 with the Special Secretaries of Water Resources Department and Local Self Government Department (LSGD), GoK and Joint Managing Director, KWA wherein the scope, methodology, sampling and audit objectives were discussed. The exit conference was held with the Additional Chief Secretary⁵ (ACS), Water Resources Department and the Special Secretaries of Water Resources Department and LSGD, on 23 May 2025, wherein the audit findings were discussed in detail. Government reply was received and response of Government has been suitably incorporated in the Report.

1.5. Acknowledgement

Audit acknowledges the cooperation and assistance extended by the Departments of Water Resources and Ground Water, GoK, KWA, KRWSA and the 21 test-checked GPs in the conduct of the PA.

³ involving the GP Secretary, elected representatives, representatives from KWA, Health Inspectors, etc.

⁴ Audit conducted beneficiary survey covering 342 households across 15 test-checked GPs where FHTCs were provided.

⁵ Through Video conferencing