EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Why did we take up this audit?

Water is one of the essential requirements of life. Assured availability of potable water is vital for human development. The focus of water supply schemes shifted from providing water to general areas or clusters within villages (habitations) to supply water directly to individual homes (households) to enhance ease of living.

In the series of drinking water supply schemes and programmes for rural areas, the Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM), as a flagship programme, was announced by the Government of India in August 2019 which aims at providing Functional Household Tap Connection (FHTC) to every rural household by 2024. At the time of commencement of JJM, 3.20 lakh (6 *per cent*) rural Households (HHs) in the State had FHTC at their houses. As of March 2024, the State had reported FHTC in 38.97 lakh (78 *per cent*) rural HHs including 1.48 lakh private connections, ranked 23rd in terms of FHTC progress in India by incurring an expenditure of ₹ 11,034.26 crore.

The Performance Audit on JJM in Chhattisgarh was conducted to assess if the necessary planning and institutional mechanisms existed for effective implementation of the programme; financial resources were utilised in an economic and efficient manner; implementation of the programme was effective and efficient, and the programme objectives were achieved successfully.

What we found?

We noticed that bottom-up planning process for water supply schemes from Village Action Plan to District Action Plan to State Action Plan, wasn't followed to ensure long-term drinking water security in the state. State Action Plan was not prepared, and District Action Plans were prepared without preparing corresponding Village Action Plans. The required handholding of Gram Panchayat and community involvement at planning stage by Implementing Support Agencies during preparation of Village Action Plans was not ensured as Implementing Support Agencies were engaged after preparation of Village Action Plans. There was no water security plan at the State level, so long-term strategy and monitoring for source sustainability and maintenance during the mission period could not be ensured.

Audit observed that 40.10 lakh FHTCs were installed against the target of covering 50 lakh HHs for providing tap connections up to March 2025. Out of 40.10 lakh FHTCs installed, 13.31 lakh FHTCs (33 *per cent*) were non-functional as of January 2025, due to dry source, incomplete overhead tanks, lack of electric connection, non-installation of solar pump etc.

As per JJM guidelines all 19,656 villages in Chhattisgarh were to be certified as '*Har Ghar Jal (HGJ)*' by March 2024. Against the target of 100 *per cent* certification of 19,656 villages as HGJ, only 716 villages (3.64 *per cent*) were certified as '*Har Ghar Jal*' as of March 2024 in Chhattisgarh. Instances of certification of villages as *'Har Ghar Jal'* with incomplete work/schemes were also noticed.

As of March 2024, none of the 33 districts and 146 blocks of Chhattisgarh have achieved 100 *per cent* saturation in providing FHTC to all HHs. The FHTC coverage in 18 districts ranged from 76 to 98 *per cent* with Dhamtari district leading with 98 *per cent* coverage and Balodabazar with 76 *per cent*. Further, the remaining 15 districts had FHTC coverage in the range of 56 to 74 *per cent*.

In Chhattisgarh, out of total 29,153 Single Village Schemes and 70 Multi Village Schemes sanctioned under JJM, only 172 Single Village Schemes had been completed of which, 32 schemes had been handed over to the community/Gram Panchayat as of March 2024.

Delays in initiation of Multi Village Scheme hindered the objective to cover 9.85 lakh FHTCs through surface water sources, as none of the Multi Village Scheme were completed as of March 2025. Audit also noticed deficiencies in execution of schemes

such as elimination of mandatory components like Supervisory Control and Data Access (SCADA) to keep the project cost within the sanctioned cost and insufficient allotment of water from the source against the demand due to less availability of water in the source itself which compromised the monitoring efficiency under Multi Village Schemes and sustainability of water source for long-term supply of drinking water to HHs.

The Solar Photo Voltaic (Solar) based water schemes executed failed to meet the prescribed minimum service level for drinking water for 28,984 households due to overloading of FHTCs connections beyond the capacity of installed solar system.

Due to slow initialisation of Mission in first two years, the State Mission could not mobilise funds of ₹ 6,480.04 crore from Centre (₹ 3,285.38 crore) and State contribution (₹ 3,194.66 crore). Audit observed that due to non-preparation of State Annual Plan (SAP), the convergence of the water conservation activities to ensure long term water security could not be planned. For convergence of funds, District Water Sanitation Mission (DWSM) was to prepare financial plan by pooling all the available resources for rural drinking water supply under 15th Finance Commission grant and Central/State fund from the other programmes i.e. MGNREGS, SBM (G), MPLADS, DMF, CSR Fund etc. but no such planning was done in test-checked districts. The mission could not raise ₹ 2,220.18 crore in the form of community contribution and 15th Finance Commission tied grant of ₹ 1,358 crore to augment its financial resource. Expenditure on Water Quality Monitoring and surveillance (₹ 40.88 crore) was less than the provisioned amount (₹ 199.79 crore) of two *per cent*.

There was a significant shortfall in the expansion of water quality testing infrastructure during the JJM period. Out of 75 laboratories in the State, only four laboratories (viz. State level laboratory, Raipur, District laboratories-Rajnandgaon, Kabirdham and Durg) were equipped for testing of all prescribed 13 parameters for water testing. Thirty-seven *per cent* of existing water testing laboratories lacked accreditation from National Accreditation Board for Testing and Calibration. Water testing was not being done in schools and *Anganwadi* centers as per prescribed frequency.

The implementation of water supply schemes under JJM faced sustainability challenges due to inadequate planning, poor designing of Solar based systems, execution of schemes without ensuring availability of sustainable water sources, lack of water quality testing facilities, inadequate testing, gaps in financial resources and community engagement, and weak institutional monitoring. Higher reporting of FHTC without completion of scheme and ascertaining its functionality and

incorrect '*Har Ghar Jal'* certification further marred the scheme. Therefore, the risk of failure in delivering long-term sustainable drinking water supply to the rural population remains high.

What we recommend?

The State Government should:

- ***Assess the actual status of funds and incomplete works and ensure the timely completion of water supply schemes especially in priority areas.***
- ***Adopt streamlined procedures for inter-departmental co-ordination for convergence of funds at the apex level.***
- ***Review the process of reporting and certification of 'Har Ghar Jal' to address the issues of false certification highlighted by the Audit.***
- ***Ensure functional water testing laboratories with NABL accreditation, along with adequate manpower and equipment.***
- ***Review the sustainability of the schemes with special focus on community ownership, water source identification to ensure water security for future generations.***