

Executive Summary

Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM) is the flagship programme of the GoI which was launched on 15 August 2019 to provide Functional Household Tap Connections to every rural household. The Ministry of Jal Shakti is the nodal Ministry for the overall policy, planning, funding and coordination of the JJM at National level. It has been launched in partnership with the State Governments.

In Maharashtra there were 138.54 lakh households at the start (August 2019) of the JJM, of which 48.44 lakh households were having tap connections. The expenditure was to be shared equally between the Government of India and the Government of Maharashtra in a 50:50 ratio.

As per the JJM Guidelines, a tap connection is considered functional if it supplies at least 55 litres of water *per capita per day*, the water meets BIS:10500 quality standards and ensures continuous supply in long-term.

The performance audit has taken up during July 2024 to October 2024 covering the period from 2019-20 to 2023-24 to assess:

- Whether Programme objectives have been achieved successfully,
- Efficient institutional framework was in place for planning, implementation and post operational management of the scheme,
- Financial resources have been employed in an economic and efficient manner; and
- Assets created through the programme are sustainable for the next two to three decades and do not compromise water security for future generations.

Framework of JJM planning

Audit observed systemic deficiencies in planning and implementation of the Jal Jeevan Mission at village, district and state levels. In none of the test checked districts, Baseline survey was conducted. Though, all the 24 selected villages had prepared VAPs, however, in case of 13 villages, VWSCs prepared VAPs without getting resolution passed by the GPs. There were deficiencies in preparation of District Action Plan (DAP) as per the JJM guidelines as the essential parameters such as quarterly and annual action plan for providing FHTC, financial action plan, water security, requirement of land and human resources and water sources *etc.*, were not included in DAP. This affected the assessment of resource requirements and quantum of work to be undertaken. At the State level, absence of a comprehensive State Action Plan led to defects in execution, weak resource planning and inadequate focus on sustainability.

Audit observed that 13 WSS were sanctioned for augmenting the water supply however, the water source was not ensured which delayed the completion of

WSS. Two WSS were sanctioned without the provision of water treatment plant resulting in supply of non-potable water.

At the State level, 27.74 lakh private tap connections were shown covered under JJM. In the selected six districts, JJM dashboard showed 37.89 lakh tap connections which included 9.64 lakh tap connection from private/own source which were yet to be covered under the JJM. Tap connections from private/ own source do not ensure functionality and hence cannot be counted as achievement of providing FHTC under JJM.

Recommendations:

- **Government may provide a clear implementation roadmap and balanced execution of works through effective and efficient Village Action Plans, District Action Plans and State Action Plan as stipulated in JJM guidelines.**
- **Government may ensure that WSS are sanctioned only after ensuring assured water sources.**
- **Government may ensure that conversion of all households having tap connections from private/own source to regular FHTC under JJM.**

Financial Management

There were delay in release of funds (Centre/State). Across all five years, Maharashtra was admissible for ₹ 59,740.99 crore, but the total releases (Centre and State, all tranches) were only ₹ 27,657.56 crore (46.30 per cent). The total expenditure during 2019-24 on the implementation of JJM in the state was ₹ 26,410.51 crore. The releases of funds vis-à-vis admissible allocations were affected by delays in submission of Utilization Certificates and audited accounts.

The initial estimated (September 2020) expenditure for implementation of JJM in the State was ₹ 13,668.50 crore. At State level 27 per cent (13,835 out of 51,560) WSS and at selected districts level 38 per cent of WSS (2,976 WSS of 7,730) were under the process of cost revision due to increase in the scope of work for additional habitants, change of water source/ land, execution of additional works, award of work above tender rate resulting in increase in cost by ₹ 9,608.87 crore.

There was delay in remittance of ₹ 220 crore of interest earned on Central and State Share to the Consolidated Fund during the years 2020-21 to 2023-24. Instances of inadmissible expenditure viz. purchase of unrelated software not covering any objective of JJM, construction of residential staff quarters, payment of electricity bills were also noticed.

This indicated weak financial controls and non-compliance with JJM guidelines.

Recommendations:

- **Government may strengthen fund flow planning to enable timely release and optimal utilization of Central and State shares.**
- **Government may ensure the timelines of remittance of interest earned on unspent balances to the consolidated fund and submission of UCs and audited accounts.**
- **Government may devise mechanism to prevent inadmissible expenditure through improved internal controls and regular monitoring.**

Implementation of Jal Jeevan Mission

The JJM is implemented in 34 districts of the State by taking up water supply schemes to provide water through FHTC. In Maharashtra there were 138.54 lakh households at the start (August 2019) of the JJM, of which 48.44 lakh households were having tap connections. The achievement of providing FHTC by March 2024 was 85.15 *per cent* which included households having tap connection (27.74 lakh) from private/own source which remained to be covered under JJM. Thus, considering the tap connections under JJM, the achievement was 101.31 lakh *i.e.* 69 *per cent* by December 2024. In the selected six districts, the achievement of providing FHTC by March 2024 was 22.45 lakh (82.72 *per cent*). Out of 22.45 lakh tap connection, 10.43 lakh tap connection were from private/own source. Considering the number of tap connections provided through JJM *i.e.* 12.02 lakh household tap connection, the achievement was 44.29 *per cent*. Further, Audit observed that in the State, 108000 households were left out from the District Action Plan for providing FHTC under JJM.

During the year 2019-24, a total of 51,560 WSS were initiated in the State, out of which 24.64 *per cent* (12703) WSS were completed and 75.30 *per cent* (38,857) WSS were ongoing. In the six selected districts the progress of WSS was 16.57 *per cent*. The low completion of water supply schemes by both Zilla Parishad (ZP) and Maharashtra Jeevan Pradhikaran (MJP) across all test-checked districts indicates execution constraints and points to a disconnect between planning and implementable capacity, affecting the timely achievement of Mission objectives. The delay in completion of the WSS was mainly attributed to delay in commencement of work, non-availability of land required for developing infrastructure of WSS, non-clearance of forest land from the forest department, delay in getting NOC from various authorities *etc.* No mechanism was in place to measure the quantity of water supplied and hence audit could not ascertain the adequacy of water *i.e.* minimum 55 litres per capita per day (lpcd).

At the State level, 26.50 *per cent* (10,677 out of 40,297) villages were certified Har Ghar Jal (HGJ) whereas at the selected district level 27.30 *per cent* (2,185 out of 8,005) villages were HGJ certified. The reliability of reporting

compromised due to mismatching of FHTC data between SWSM and district implementing agencies, incorrect certification of Har Ghar Jal villages, and duplication in geo-tagging of assets. Villages were declared HGJ village even though water was not supplied to every household. Violation of contract conditions such as issue of work orders without prior approval of SLSSC, incorrect assessment of bid capacity of the contractors, irregularities in taking insurance of the WSS, short receipt of additional performance security were also noticed.

Recommendations:

- ***Government may speed up the process to provide FHTC to every household along with completion of pending WSS to make FHTC fully functional and ensure availability of land and mandatory clearances before sanctioning and awarding WSS.***
- ***Government may strengthen monitoring systems and reconcile FHTC data to ensure accuracy and transparency and adhere strictly to JJM guidelines, particularly in certification of HGJ villages, metering of household connections and asset protection.***

Water Quality Monitoring and Surveillance

The Government did not ensure conducting water testing from all the sources regularly. In five of the selected six districts, there was a significant shortfall in testing water sources. In four selected villages, Audit noticed that number of tests done was shown more than the number of samples received for testing in Water Quality Management Information System (WQMIS) data. In Ahilyanagar, audit observed that 301 water samples received from blocks were not tested in district laboratories. Similarly, in Jalgaon district, 577 water samples were not tested even after receipt in laboratory.

The infrastructure for water quality testing was found wanting as the State laboratory was not established. Further, audit observed that accreditation from NABL was done for six regional and 28 district laboratories whereas the 143 sub-division laboratories in the State were yet to be accredited.

Recommendations:

- ***Government may strengthen the process for water quality testing and reporting along with strengthening the water testing facility by early establishment of the State laboratory.***
- ***Government may consider NABL recognition and accreditation of all sub-division laboratories in the State to make the process of testing of water samples more reliable.***

Post Operational Management and Monitoring

No Operation and Maintenance policy was prepared or was in place in the State which would adversely impact the upkeep of created infrastructure and operation of schemes. Further, against the total due community contribution of

₹ 2,043.79 crore, an amount of ₹ 21.72 crore *i.e.*, only one *per cent* was collected. Further, in the six selected districts, against the due community contribution of ₹ 919.80 crore, only ₹ 3.72 crore *i.e.*, 0.4 *per cent* was collected. The negligible level of mobilisation across all districts indicates deficiencies in community engagement mechanisms and undermines the sustainability and ownership objectives envisaged under JJM.

Further, nomination to identify Nal Jal Mitra from each district were called for in October 2024 only and the further process of identification and training of skilled human resources for effective maintenance of the WSS was yet to start in the State.

In the selected districts, there were 1,730 solar power based WSS undertaken. Audit observed that in only 25 *per cent* of these WSS, installation was completed. Further, borewell recharge structure was not proposed in any of the selected villages having ground water based WSS ensuring source sustainability.

JJM-IMIS data was not reliable and accurate. Further, in five out of six selected districts, there was shortfall in DWSM meetings ranging from 62 *per cent* to 78 *per cent*. In the six selected districts, IT tools such as sensors, the Internet of Things (IoT), customized dashboards, SCADA systems, and District Metering Areas (DMA) for monitoring of water infrastructure were either not adopted or partly implemented. Tripartite agreement for water supply schemes involving GP, implementing agency and contractor was not done thereby GPs/VWSCs were not involved in the process of execution of WSS.

Recommendations:

- ***Government may ensure formulation and implementation of O&M policy at the earliest and formulate effective mechanism to collect the community contribution for efficient operation and maintenance of WSS.***
- ***Government may devise mechanism for development of skilled human resources for effective maintenance.***
- ***Government may ensure water security for ultimate stage and artificial recharge system for all the groundwater-based schemes. Government may ensure the integrity of information on JJM-IMIS.***
- ***To ensure effective monitoring of WSS, Government may consider taking regular meetings of District Water and Sanitation Mission, tripartite agreement involving GP, mechanism like IT tools such as sensors, the Internet of Things (IoT), customized dashboards, SCADA systems, and District Metering Areas (DMA) may be adopted.***

