

JAL JEEVAN MISSION (JJM) – SCHEMES

NEWS: Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman announced an extension of the Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM) till 2028, with an outlay of Rs 67,000 crore in the Union Budget 2025-26.

WHAT'S IN THE NEWS?

Launched in 2019, the **Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM)** aims to provide **Functional Household Tap Connections (FHTC)** to every rural household, ensuring a daily supply of **55 litres per capita of safe drinking water**. Initially, the mission set a completion target of **2024**, but due to various implementation challenges, the deadline has now been **extended to 2028**. The mission's revised approach focuses on **building quality infrastructure, ensuring sustainable operation, and strengthening community-led management**, following the principle of "**Jan Bhagidari**" (people's participation).

Key Features of the Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM)

1. Objectives & Implementation Strategy

- **Universal Piped Water Access:** The mission aims to ensure that **every rural household receives a functional tap water connection by 2028**.
- **Community Involvement:** Local governance structures like **Village Water & Sanitation Committees (VWSCs)** or **Pani Samitis** are responsible for managing water supply at the village level. At least **50% of the committee members must be women**, ensuring gender-inclusive decision-making.
- **State Participation & Commitment:** States and Union Territories (UTs) are required to **sign agreements with the central government**, ensuring their commitment to sustainability, quality service delivery, and long-term operation and maintenance of water infrastructure.

2. Administrative Framework

- **Nodal Ministry:** The **Department of Drinking Water and Sanitation (DDWS)** under the **Ministry of Jal Shakti** is responsible for implementing JJM at the national level.
- **Background:** The mission **subsumed** the earlier **National Rural Drinking Water Programme (NRDWP)**, integrating it into a more comprehensive framework for universal water access.

3. Funding Pattern

The financial distribution under JJM varies based on regional requirements:

- **90:10 Cost Sharing** between the **Central Government and the States** for **Himalayan and North-Eastern States** due to their challenging geographical terrain and lower revenue capacity.
- **100% Central Funding** for **Union Territories (UTs)**, ensuring direct financial support without state contributions.
- **50:50 Cost Sharing** between the **Central Government and other States**, encouraging state governments to take financial responsibility for the program's implementation.

Current Progress & Budgetary Allocations

Achievements Since the Launch in 2019

- As of **2024**, around **80% of rural households** now have access to piped water, a significant increase from just **15% in 2019**.
- Over **12 crore rural families** have gained access to safe drinking water under the mission.
- Several states and UTs have already **achieved 100% household tap water coverage**:
 - **States with 100% Coverage:** Arunachal Pradesh, Goa, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Gujarat, Punjab, Telangana, and Mizoram.
 - **Union Territories with 100% Coverage:** Andaman & Nicobar Islands, Dadra & Nagar Haveli & Daman & Diu, and Puducherry.

Challenges in Implementation

Despite significant progress, the **mission faces multiple challenges** that have necessitated an extension of the deadline to **2028**.

1. Infrastructure & Connectivity Issues

- **Initial "Low-Hanging Fruit" Approach:** The early phase of JJM prioritized areas **with existing infrastructure**, enabling rapid expansion. However, providing water connections in **remote villages and hilly terrains** remains a significant challenge.
- **Reservoir-to-Village Pipelines:** Many rural habitations **lack local water sources** and rely on transporting water from **distant reservoirs**, leading to **higher costs and logistical difficulties** in laying pipelines.

2. Cost Overruns Due to External Factors

- **Impact of COVID-19 Pandemic:** The mission faced **disruptions in supply chains and labor shortages**, slowing down infrastructure development.

- **Russia-Ukraine War & Rising Material Costs:** Global geopolitical events caused a surge in the cost of construction materials and equipment, leading to financial strain and project delays.

3. Implementation Bottlenecks

- **Underutilization of Allocated Funds:** Despite substantial financial allocations, approximately ₹50,000 crore remained unspent in the 2024-25 budget, highlighting inefficiencies in execution at the state level.



Road Ahead: Strengthening Implementation for 2028 Goal

To ensure the successful completion of JJM by 2028, the government has outlined key strategies:

1. Strengthening Last-Mile Connectivity

- **Infrastructure Expansion in Remote Areas:** Prioritizing water supply expansion in **hard-to-reach villages** through better pipeline networks.
- **Upgrading Reservoir Pumping Systems:** Enhancing water pumping and **groundwater recharge mechanisms** to ensure sustainable supply.

2. Improving Budget Utilization & Financial Flexibility

- **Enhancing State-Level Execution Capacity:** Strengthening state and district-level **implementation teams** to ensure timely use of funds.
- **Flexible Funding Mechanisms:** Introducing **adaptive financial models** to accommodate **fluctuations in material and equipment costs**.

3. Ensuring Transparency & Accountability

- **Independent Verification Mechanisms:** Implementing third-party audits and **real-time monitoring** to ensure that water supply infrastructure is actually functional in households.
- **Leveraging Technology:** Using **IoT-based sensors, GIS mapping, and digital tracking systems** for improved **project monitoring and maintenance**.

4. Strengthening State-Centre Coordination

- **Ensuring State Funding Commitments:** Strictly enforcing **funding responsibilities** of states to avoid unnecessary delays.
- **Robust Agreements Between Centre & States:** Strengthening contractual commitments between state governments and the **Ministry of Jal Shakti** for smooth implementation.

5. Expanding Community Engagement & Women's Leadership

- **Promoting "Jan Bhagidari" (People's Participation):** Encouraging active involvement of **local communities** in water management to ensure long-term sustainability.
- **Empowering Women in Water Governance:** Increasing **women's leadership roles in Pani Samitis and VWSCs**, recognizing their crucial role in managing household water resources.

Conclusion

The **Jal Jeevan Mission** has made significant progress in providing rural households with **piped drinking water**, transforming public health and sanitation. However, the **extension of the mission's deadline to 2028** reflects the **challenges in reaching remote villages, cost escalations, and execution inefficiencies**. Moving forward, a **stronger focus on last-mile infrastructure, technological interventions, better financial management, and**

community-driven participation will be essential to achieving **universal rural tap water access** within the revised timeline.

Source: <https://www.thehindu.com/business/budget/jal-jeevan-mission-extended-till-2028-with-enhanced-budget-outlay-sitharaman/article69167511.ece>