

How a drought-prone State has been able to successfully managed the water resources to meet the needs of different sectors

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Union Minister of Jal Shakti Shri Gajendra Singh Shekhawat and Chief Minister of Gujarat Shri Vijay Rupani jointly reviewed the planning and implementation of Jal Jeevan Mission in Gujarat through video conferencing today. Drinking water supply is a service delivery, wherein the quantity, quality of water supplied and periodicity of water supply has to be ensured for which the flagship programme, Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM) is under implementation since last year in partnership with States. The objective of the mission is universal coverage i.e. every home in the villages gets tap water connection.

Gujaratis planning 100% coverage by 2022 to provide tap connection to every rural household of the State, instead of by 2024, as envisaged under the Mission.

Govt. of Gujarat implemented decentralized, demand-driven and community managed drinking water supply programme, which kick-started in 2002 through Water and Sanitation Management Organization (WASMO). These efforts led to provision safe drinking water through tap connections to more than 70% households in the State. By promoting the Gram Panchayat and Paani Samiti to take the lead to plan, manage, implement, operate and maintain water supply schemes in villages, WASMO became a successful decentralized model of service delivery.

Out of 93.03 lakh rural households in the State of Gujarat, 68.63 lakh are provided with tap connections. Gujarat plans to provide tap connections in 11.15 lakh households during 2020-21. In 2020-21, ₹883.08 Crore have been allocated and including State share there is assured availability of ₹1,777.56 Crore. Gujarat has been allocated ₹ 3,195 Crore under 15th Finance Commission Grants to PRIs and 50% of it is to be used mandatorily for water supply and sanitation

Out of 18,191 villages in the State, 17,899 villages have existing piped water supply systems. CM, Gujarat mentioned that another 6,000 villages will be 100 % compliant with tap connections by December, 2020. Further, 5 districts of the State will be fully compliant with household tap connections by this year-end. In

fact, the State is planning to cover 12 districts with 100% household tap connections in this financial year. It was also mentioned that surface-based water systems have been taken up to provide safe drinking water to remaining villages of the State, which will be completed in next two years. He assured the Union Minister that Finance Commission grants will be dovetailed for works to be taken up for water supply and sanitation in villages.

Chief Minister stated that Gujarat is planning to implement IoT based sensor monitoring system, for which the pilot is already underway in 1,000 villages of two districts of the State so as to monitor the functionality of water supply i.e. potable water in adequate quantity and of prescribed quality being provided to every rural household on regular and long-term basis. Once the pilot project is successful, it will be adopted for the whole State for online monitoring of status of water supply in villages.

Union Minister Shri Shekhawat praised the initiatives of the Govt. of Gujarat for overall water management, as Gujarat has set an example for the whole country how a drought-prone State has been able to successfully managed the water resources to meet the needs of different sectors. Commending the decentralized, demand-driven and community-managed drinking water programme started through WASMO, Union Minister mentioned the pioneering role of Gujarat in decentralized model, which is the precursor of the pan-India flagship programme, Jal Jeevan Mission. Explaining the role of Gram Panchayat/ Paani Samiti in planning, designing, implementing and operating & maintaining of in-village water supply infrastructure under Jal Jeevan Mission, Shri Shekhawat emphasized the GPs or Paani Samitis could be developed as 'utilities'. He was all praise that in the State Paani Samitis/ Gram Panchayats recover around 70% of annual O&M expenditure from the community in the form of water service charges.

Jal Jeevan Mission aims at ensuring potable water supply in adequate quantity (@ the rate of 55 liters per person per day) and of prescribed quality to every rural household on regular and long-term basis. The provision of household tap connection in rural areas will help in removing 'drudgery' of women, especially the girls. It will also improve the 'ease of living' for people living in rural areas.

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