



Government of India  
Ministry of Panchayati Raj  
Krishi Bhawan, New Delhi

Government of India  
Ministry of Jal Shakti  
Department of Drinking Water & Sanitation  
Pt. Deendayal Antyodaya Bhawan, New Delhi

Government of India  
Ministry of Rural Development  
Krishi Bhawan, New Delhi

F. No. W-11012/4/2022-JJM-III Dated, the 31<sup>st</sup> July, 2023

**Subject:** Role of Gram Panchayats under Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM) – regarding

**Dear Colleague,**

As you are aware that JJM is a flagship scheme of the Government which seeks to not only provide functional household tap connections for all, but also to promote the holistic management of local water resources. This water supply programme addresses the need to sustain water sources with conservation and reuse measures made mandatory to the scheme designs. Gram Panchayats are envisaged to play an important role in the Operational Guidelines of the Mission.

2. Accordingly, the Operational Guidelines of JJM have the following important provisions related to the role of Gram Panchayats and its Standing Committees:

- (i) **Gram Panchayats and local community will play the pivotal role in planning, implementation, management, operation and maintenance of in-village water supply systems including drinking water sources.** Public Health Engineering Departments (PHED)/ Rural Development & Panchayati Raj/ Rural Water Supply (RWS) Departments in-charge of rural drinking water in States will facilitate Gram Panchayats to perform their duties as envisaged in the Constitution. *(Page 8 Introduction of operational guidelines of JJM)*
- (ii) State Government to issue a suitable notification under Panchayati Raj (PR) Act, if not already done, to empower Gram Panchayat and/ or its sub-committee, i.e. Village Water Sanitation Committee (VWSC)/ Paani Samiti/ User Group, etc. to plan, implement, manage, operate and maintain in-village water supply system which, *inter alia*, includes powers, responsibilities, internal processes, composition of VWSC/ Paani Samiti/ User Group, etc., power to decide, levy, collect water service charges, etc. *{Para 3.5 (xx) of operational guidelines of JJM}*
- (iii) Village Action Plan (VAP) will be the main document of the village for all water supply and related work, **and on its approval by Gram Sabha**, all funds from different sources will be dovetailed to implement various components of VAP from different sources of funds including JJM. No work outside VAP will be taken up in the village just because separate source of funding is available. *{Para 3.5 (xxiv) of operational guidelines of JJM}*
- (iv) A VAP will be prepared by Gram Panchayat or its sub-committee, i.e. VWSC/ Paani Samiti/ User Group, etc. with support from ISA, PHED/ RWS Department, District Water and Sanitation Mission (DWSM) based on baseline survey, resource mapping and felt needs of the village community. Paani Samiti/ User Group, etc. to ensure participation of village

community including all its habitations, Implementation Support Agency (ISA), DWSM, PHED/ RWS Department., etc. in *Gram Sabha*. The VAP will be approved in the *Gram Sabha*, when 80% of the village community present in the meeting agree to the prepared plan. VAP will then be submitted to DWSM for further action. Technical approval will be accorded by the PHED/ RWS Department/ Board. **(Para 3.6.1 of operational guidelines of JJM).**

- (v) JJM focuses on service delivery rather than mere infrastructure creation for water supply. Operational guidelines provide for engagement of Implementation Support Agencies for strengthening capacities of Panchayats and its committees for service delivery on a sustainable basis, and for providing handholding support to the panchayat/ village level institutions. With the help of Implementation Support Agency (ISA) working at village level, suitable arrangements can be devised so that water supply services at village level can be provided by young entrepreneurs/ Self Help Groups on either standalone or cluster-based models. The same can also be used for greywater management. This will help in bringing in newer technology, robust management practices and recovery of user charges, thus bringing in long-term sustainability. **(Para 3.6.2 of operational guidelines of JJM)**
- (vi) Further, the Guidelines also envisage HGJ certification of villages with 100% coverage through Gram Sabha.

3. The preceding paras of Operational Guidelines of JJM have clearly elaborated the role of GPs in planning, implementation, monitoring etc. and mandated the role of Gram Sabha for the approval of VAP. Therefore, when the Gram Sabha is approving VAP, the minutes of such meeting should be uploaded in *meetingonline.gov.in* and VAP should also be reflected in Gram Panchayat Development Plan (GPDP). However, it is observed that only the activities being taken up from the tied funds of 15<sup>th</sup> Finance Commission are being incorporated in GPDP, which is a partial reflection of the efforts being made.

4. We, therefore, would like to request you to issue suitable notification as mentioned in para 2(ii) above (if required) and necessary instructions to the concerned authority for the implementation of JJM through Gram Panchayat and/ or its sub-committee, i.e., VWSC/ Paani Samiti/ User Group, etc., as mentioned in Operation Guidelines. Self Help Groups should be assigned the task of O&M to the extent feasible. Further, we also request you to issue suitable instructions to include all the activities being undertaken in a GP, irrespective of its source of funding, in GPDP of next Financial Year.

With best regards,

(Sunil Kumar)  
Secretary

Ministry of Panchayati Raj

(Vini Mahajan)  
Secretary

Ministry of Jal Shakti  
Department of Drinking Water & Sanitation

(Shailesh Kumar Singh)  
Secretary

Ministry of Rural Development

To

Chief Secretary/ Advisor to Administrator  
All States/ UTs