

# JAL JEEVAN MISSION: HIMACHAL PRADESH PRESENTS ANNUAL ACTION PLAN

Relevant for: Developmental Issues | Topic: Government policies & interventions for development in various Sectors and issues arising out of their design & implementation incl. Housing

The State of Himachal Pradesh presented their Jal Jeevan Mission Annual Action Plan for financial year 2021-22 before the national committee chaired by Secretary, Ministry of Jal Shakti through video conference. While presenting their plan, 'Jal Shakti Vibhag', Government of Himachal Pradesh reiterated its commitment to achieve 'Har Ghar Jal' target by July, 2022.

The State has 17.04 lakh rural households, out of which 13.02 lakh (76.41%) have assured tap water supply. Since the announcement of Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM) in August, 2019, over 5 lakh tap water connections has been provided and so far 8,458 villages (46.78%) in the State have been declared 'Har Ghar Jal', which means every rural household in these villages has tap water supply. In 2021-22, Himachal Pradesh plans to provide 2.08 lakh tap water connections across the State.

Based on the plan, the State was requested to make more districts 100% saturated. Three districts of the State i.e. Kinnaur, Una and Lahul & Spiti are 'Har Ghar Jal' districts. All the schools and anganwadi centres have already been covered under the 100-day campaign and all these institutions in the State have piped water supply.

JJM is a flagship programme of the Union Government being implemented in partnership with the States with the objective to provide tap water connection in every rural household by 2024. In 2020-21, Himachal Pradesh was allocated Central grant of Rs. 326 Crore to provide assured tap water supply in rural areas, and State had drawn Central fund of Rs. 548 Crore, which includes incentive grant of Rs. 221 Crore owing to better performance. In the 2021-22, the State is likely to get about Rs. 700 Crore as Central grant to take up various works. Under JJM, efforts are made to dovetail all available resources by convergence of different programmes viz. MGNREGS, SBM, 15<sup>th</sup> Finance Commission Grants to PRIs, CAMPA funds, Local Area Development Funds, etc. The committee suggested that the State should utilize various resources through convergence for water supply, water recycling, grey water management, source strengthening including spring shed development, etc.

Under Jal Jeevan Mission, in 2021-22, in addition to Rs 50,011 Crore budgetary allocation, there is also Rs 26,940 Crore assured fund available under the 15th Finance Commission tied-grant to RLB/ PRIs for water & sanitation, matching State share and externally aided as well as State funded projects. Thus, in 2021-22, more than Rs. 1 lakh Crore is planned to be invested in the country on ensuring tap water supply to rural homes.

JJM focuses on development of Village Action Plan (VAP) and formation of Village Water and Sanitation Committee (VWSC) for every village so that the local village community plays a key role in planning, implementation as well as operation and maintenance of the in-village water supply infrastructure created for them. This ensures bottom-up approach with the participation of the local community. Through community engagement, the resources created in the villages/habitations are handed over to the Panchayats or VWSC for monitoring, surveillance and upkeep. Because of small village sizes, VWSCs are being constituted at Gram Panchayat level in Himachal Pradesh. State has so far constituted 3,213 VWSCs and planned for remaining 402 in 2021-22. So far, 16,645 Village Action Plans have been prepared.

The State is planning to engage various experts/ support staff at State and District level. In addition to it, State also intend to conduct training/ capacity building for 36,131 people from SWSM/ DWSM, Engineering cadre, Management cadre, ISAs, block level officials, VWSCs/ Pani samitis members, GP/ village level key stakeholders, etc. Further, as per plan 4,000 local persons will be skilled as plumber, fitter and electrician in 2021-22. This trained work force shall in turn be used to build the water supply infrastructure. It will be instrumental in boosting the rural economy and providing employment to youth within the region.

Under JJM, water quality testing laboratories at district & State levels are given priority and community is being encouraged for surveillance of water quality. 'Jal Shakti Vibhag' is facilitating to empower and engage with the community. For this, an action plan has been taken up to ensure timely procurement and supply of Field Test Kits to the community, identification and training of at least five women from local community, use of Field Test Kits and reporting the test result findings. In 2021-22, State plans to set up 11 new laboratories and NABL accreditation of 34 laboratories.

The State officials were advised for testing of drinking water sources for chemical and bacteriological contamination as per the standard protocol. In the times of COVID-19 pandemic as well as ensuing summer season, it has become important to deal with the issue of water scarcity & contamination. Clean water will promote better hygiene and a functional tap in household premises will ensure social distancing by avoiding crowding at public stand posts. NJJM team emphasized on revisiting difficult areas including sub-Zero terrain to take a stock of water supply infrastructure created under JJM so that those remain functional throughout the year.

Annual action planning exercise with States/ UTs is carried out by the national committee chaired by the Secretary, Ministry of Jal Shakti, AS&MD (NJJM) and other members from different Central Ministries/ Departments and NITI Aayog. A rigorous scrutiny of the proposed Annual Action Plan (AAP) is undertaken before finalizing it. Funds are released throughout the year coupled with regular field visits, third party inspection and regular review meetings to ensure timely implementation of the programme to ensure 'Har Ghar Jal'.

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## **BY/AS**

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