

- c) **Prevention:** Inspect pipelines weekly and repair small leaks immediately.

v. **Dirty or bad-smelling water**

- a) **Possible reasons:** Tank not cleaned, chlorine missing, or contamination at source.
- b) **Simple checks:**
- Clean the tank immediately.
 - Add chlorine as per dosage or use a chlorinator.

- Protect the source from animals, waste, and drainage water.

- c) **Prevention:** Test water regularly with a Field Test Kit (FTK).

vi. **Unusual electricity bill**

- a) **Possible reasons:** Over-pumping, motor fault, or leaking pipes causing water loss.
- b) **Simple checks:**
- Match the hours of pump operation with the logbook.

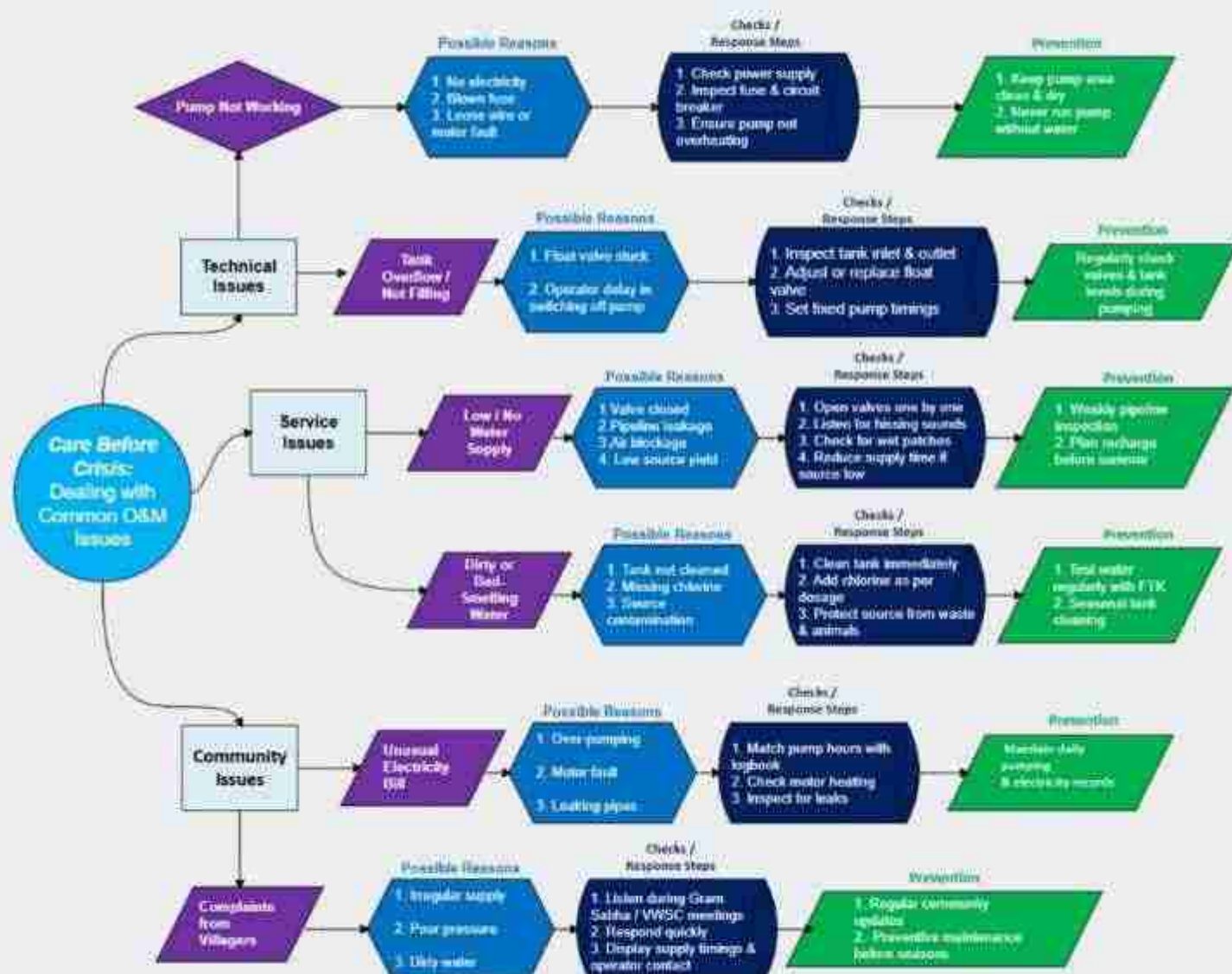


Figure 9: Dealing with common O&M issues

Note: The above figure is illustrative. Each VWSC may encounter different issues based on its local context. It is advised that if any issue does not get resolved at the village level, the VWSC should contact the District Technical Unit (DTU) or raise a support ticket through the Panchayat Dashboard for necessary assistance.

- Check if the motor is running smoothly or heating up.
 - Look for continuous leakage even when valves are closed.
- c) **Prevention:** Maintain a daily record of pumping hours and electricity use.

vii. Complaints from villagers

- a) **Possible reasons:** Irregular supply, dirty water, or poor pressure.
- b) **Simple checks:**
- Listen to and take actions on feedback during Gram Sabha or VWSC meetings.
 - Respond quickly and explain any temporary issue (e.g., repairs or power cut).
 - Display supply timings and contact number of operators at the Panchayat Bhavan.
- c) **Prevention:** Regular community updates and preventive maintenance before each season.

Remember

Small issues, when ignored, become big problems. But small repairs, done in time, keep the system healthy. When everyone stays alert - operator, VWSC, and community, the water supply will be sustained without any interruption.

3.7 Preventive Maintenance and Seasonal Care

Good management means not waiting for something to break, it means checking and fixing things in advance. This is called *preventive maintenance*. Just as a farmer prepares the field before the rains, a village must prepare its water system before every season. These small, regular steps protect the system from damage and keep water flowing all year.

i. Before the Monsoon

- a) Clean and cover the area around the source - wells, borewells, or springs, to stop mud or dirty water from entering.
- b) Clear the drainage around the pump house and tank so rainwater doesn't collect.

- c) Inspect electrical fittings and ensure they are protected from moisture.
- d) Check tank lids and platforms to prevent rainwater from mixing with stored water.
- e) Test water quality before and after the rains to ensure it remains safe.

ii. Before the Summer

- a) Check water sources - wells, borewells, and reservoirs for falling water levels.
- b) Desilt and clean ponds or recharge pits to help groundwater refill during rains.
- c) Inspect and repair all valves, pumps, and leakages to prevent wastage.
- d) Plan supply timings wisely so that everyone gets enough water.
- e) Encourage water saving through awareness meetings or wall messages.

iii. Before the Winter

- a) Clean tanks and pipelines after the monsoon to remove dirt and algae.



Figure 10: Seasonal Lens - Preventive D & M

- b) Lubricate pump parts and tighten nuts and bolts before the season starts.
- c) Check the chlorine dosage system and refill supplies if needed.
- d) Review electricity load and repair any loose wiring to avoid short circuits.
- e) Hold a WSC meeting to discuss the maintenance work done and plan for the next season.

iv. Simple Tips for All Seasons

- a) Keep the pump house clean and dry every day.
- b) Paint metal parts, tank legs, and pipelines once a year to prevent rusting.
- c) Maintain a maintenance register to record all cleaning, repair, and test.
- d) Organize a “Jal Seva Week” or cleaning drive once a season to involve the whole community.
- e) Appreciate and reward villagers who actively help in maintenance. It builds team spirit and ownership.

Preventive maintenance means care before crisis. When the system is cared for regularly, there are fewer breakdowns, lower costs, and a longer life for every pump, pipe, and tank. This is how a village ensures Har Ghar Jal – *Aaj aur Kal*.

3.8 Roles and Responsibilities in O&M

Water system works best when everyone plays their part. Just like a family shares duties at home, a village must share responsibilities to keep its water supply clean, regular, and strong. The Gram Panchayat, Village Water and Sanitation Committee (VWSC), operator, and villagers along with District Technical Unit (DTU) and District Water & Sanitation Mission (DWSM), all have important roles in Operation and Maintenance (O&M).

When everyone works together, the system runs smoothly and effectively.

3.9 Record-Keeping and Transparency in O&M

Good record-keeping is the backbone of a well-managed water supply system. When information is written down clearly and shared openly, everyone understands how the system is working: what is collected, what is spent, and what needs attention. Transparency builds trust, and trust builds ownership. A transparent and accountable system helps the village plan better, solve problems faster, and use funds wisely.

3.9.1 Why Record-Keeping is Important

- i. It helps track daily operations: how long the pump runs, how much water is supplied, and how electricity is used.
- ii. It ensures that user charges and expenses are properly recorded and audited.
- iii. It helps VWSC and Gram Panchayat plan repairs or improvements with real information.
- iv. It provides proof of good work done by the village, useful for government reviews or future funding.
- v. It keeps everyone informed and confident about how the system is being managed.

3.9.2 Key Records to be Maintained

Keeping records ensures **transparency and accountability**.

- i. VWSC or Pani Samiti should keep a few simple registers and records safely in the Gram Panchayat office or pump house:
 - a) **Daily Operation Register** - Hours of pumping, electricity used, and water supply timings.
 - b) **Maintenance Register** - Details of repairs, parts replaced, and service performed.
 - c) **Water Quality Register** - Results of Field Test Kits (FTK) and lab reports.
 - d) **User Charge Register** - List of households, amount collected, and pending payments.
 - e) **Expenditure Register** - Record of all expenses on electricity, chlorine, tools, and repairs.

- f) **Stock Register** – A list of materials, spare parts, and chlorine tablets available.
- g) **Asset Register** – List of all assets related to piped water scheme.
- h) **As-Built Diagram/Drawing** – A technical and visual record of all water supply components; from source to household tap as they were actually constructed, to be maintained at Panchayat level
- i) **Complaint and Action Register** – Details of issues reported, and action taken.
- j) **Branding of JJM** – All major assets such as Overhead Tank, Water Treatment Plant/Disinfection Plant, Pump House etc, should have JJM logo adhering to branding guidelines of JJM.

All records should be dated, signed, and updated regularly.

3.10 Promoting Transparency in the Village

Transparency means keeping everyone informed in simple ways.

The best managed rural piped water supply schemes are those where every family is aware, how their water system functions.

- i. Display important information on the Village Notice Board or Water Display Board, such as:
 - a) Water supply timings
 - b) Name and contact number of the Jal Mitra/operator
 - c) Details of recent water quality test results
 - d) Income and expenditure summary of the VWSC
 - e) Upcoming maintenance schedule
- ii. Share key updates during Gram Sabha and Jal Chaupal meetings.
- iii. Encourage villagers to ask questions and give suggestions. It creates shared responsibility.
- iv. Display slogans like “*Hamare Gaon Ka Pani – Hamari Jimmedari*” (Our Village water, our responsibility) to remind everyone of their role.

When records are open and visible, trust grows, participation increases, and problems reduce. A transparent system not only ensures smooth operation, but also inspires pride in the community because when people know how their water is managed, they care for it even more.

3.11 Safety and Hygiene

A clean and safe water system is the key to healthy living in every village. Water may travel through pipes, tanks, and pumps, but it touches every home and every life. That is why keeping the system clean and safe is everyone’s responsibility. Simple habits of care can prevent accidents, protect health, and ensure that the water remains pure from the source to the tap. The various measures to be undertaken are as under:

i. Keep the Pump House Clean and Locked

- a) The pump house is the “heart” of the water system.
- b) Keep it clean, dry, and free from dust, waste, or insects.
- c) Do not allow animals or outsiders to enter the area.
- d) Always keep the pump house locked when not in use to avoid damage or misuse.
- e) Display important instructions inside like pump timings, emergency contacts, and safety steps.

ii. Handle Chlorine Safely

- a) Chlorine is important to keep drinking water safe, but it must be handled carefully.
- b) Always wear gloves and a face mask while preparing or adding chlorine.
- c) Do not breathe directly over chlorine containers.
- d) Store chlorine tablets or powder in a cool, dry, and locked place, away from children.
- e) Measure the correct amount – more chlorine can make water smell strong, and less chlorine will not disinfect properly.
- f) Wash hands properly after handling chlorine.

iii. Keep Water Sources and Surroundings Clean

- a) Never allow waste-dumping or washing near wells, borewells, tanks, or streams.
- b) Keep animals, waste bins, and drains away from the source area.
- c) Plant trees or grass near the source to prevent soil erosion.
- d) Clean around the tank and source regularly to stop mosquitoes or algae from growing.
- e) If any dirty water or garbage is seen near the source, remove it immediately.

iv. Keep Electrical Systems Safe

- a) Always keep the electrical panel, switches, and wires dry.
- b) Do not touch switches with wet hands.
- c) Ensure proper earthing and use insulated gloves if needed.
- d) Get the wiring checked by a qualified electrician every few months.
- e) Keep a fire extinguisher or a sand bucket near the pump house in case of emergency.
- f) In case of electric shock, switch off the power immediately and call for help.

Remember

Safety and cleanliness are not one-time tasks - they are daily habits. When the pump-house shines clean, the water source stays protected, and the system runs safely, the whole village stays healthy.

3.12 Tools and Annexures

To manage a water supply system properly, a few simple tools and reference materials are very useful. They help the village team plan, monitor, and maintain the system without confusion. These tools also make sure that information is written down, shared, and remembered so that new members can easily understand the system and continue the work smoothly.

Below are some helpful tools that can be kept in the Gram Panchayat office or pump house:

i. O&M Checklist (Daily-Weekly-Monthly)

- a) A ready-to-use checklist helps the operator and VWSC follow regular tasks without missing anything.
- b) It includes all key activities like pump operation, valve checking, tank cleaning, water testing, and record-keeping.
- c) The checklist can be ticked or signed after each task. It becomes proof that the system is being maintained properly.
- d) Keeping this checklist visible in the pump house reminds every one of their daily duties.

ii. Water supply Scheme map of the Village (As-Built Drawing)

- a) The As Built Drawing shows all major parts of the water supply; source, pipelines, valves, tanks, and household connections.
- b) It helps the operator quickly locate valves and repair points during breakdowns or maintenance.
- c) The map should be updated whenever new connections or extensions are added.
- d) A copy of the system map should be displayed in the Gram Panchayat office and the pump house for easy reference.

iii. Glossary of Simple Terms

- a) A glossary helps everyone understand technical words used in this handbook or during discussions.
- b) It gives short, easy meanings of terms like “chlorination,” “pressure,” “distribution line,” “valve,” or “FTK.”
- c) This makes communication easier between engineers, Panchayat members, and villagers.
- d) The glossary also helps new VWSC members or Jal Mitras learn quickly and take part confidently.

These small tools make big differences. They bring order, clarity, and confidence in managing the system. When records are written, maps are displayed, and duties are clear, the whole village works together as one strong team.

Chapter 4

Roles of Stakeholders for O&M



04

Roles of Stakeholders for O&M

“Working Together at Every Level”

4.1 Institutional Roles in Strengthening Rural Water Supply Systems

No village water system runs in isolation. Behind every tap that flows, there is a chain of people and institutions who work together, from the village to the state level. Each level has its own duty: some plan and manage every day, others guide, train, and support. When all levels coordinate, the system becomes strong, reliable, and sustainable. The Operation and Maintenance (O&M) of a rural water supply scheme depends on teamwork between these levels. Let us understand the role of these key institutions that work together:

- i. The Gram Panchayat provides oversight and leadership for the VWSC.
- ii. Approves the village's annual O&M plan and budget.
- iii. Reviews progress, audits records, and ensures transparency.
- iv. Levies user charges, appoints or renews contracts for operators or Jal Mitras and SHGs or any CBOs for any component of O&M.
- v. Ensures Nal Jal Mitra has all tool and equipment to perform the assigned work.
- vi. Mobilizes community support and conducts Gram Sabha or Jal Chaupal meetings to share updates.
- vii. Sends reports and proposals to the Block or District level for technical or financial help.

4.2 Gram Panchayat and Village Level

4.2.1 Gram Panchayat

Gram Panchayat as per 73rd Amendment Act, enacted in 1992, is the elected body at the village level of the three-tier Panchayati Raj system, constituted to enable local self-governance and decision-making in rural areas. They play the following roles in water supply management:

4.2.2 Village Water & Sanitation Committee (VWSC)

The VWSC is a sub-committee of Gram Panchayat entrusted to plan and implement all works related to drinking water under the guidance of Gram Panchayat. It is also known as Pani Samiti in some areas.

JJM envisions VWSC to work as – Micro-Utility (Service Provider) for that Village. VWSC plays following key roles¹:

¹ Department of Drinking Water and Sanitation, Ministry of Jal Shakti. (2020). Margdarshika for Gram Panchayat & VWSC to provide safe drinking water in rural households. Government of India. https://jntjeevanmission.gov.in/sites/default/files/guideline/Margdarshika_for_Gram_Panchayat_and_Pani_Samiti.pdf

- i.) Ensuring daily operation of pumps and supply as per schedule.
- ii.) Supervising water quality, chlorination, and cleanliness of the system.
- iii.) Collecting user charges from households and maintaining proper records.
- iv.) Managing small repairs and seeking technical help for major ones.
- v.) Keeping stock of chlorine, tools, and spare parts.
- vi.) Conducting weekly or monthly review meetings to monitor progress.
- vii.) Maintaining O&M registers and submitting reports to the Gram Panchayat.
- viii.) Creating awareness in the village about saving water and paying user charges.
- ix.) Acts as the first responder to any breakdown or complaint.

Primarily VWSC is responsible for operation and maintenance of water supply scheme in their village and for addressing all the issues related to it. However, where VWSC is unable to resolve issues locally they should immediately flag them to DTU through GP Dashboard.

4.2.3 Self-Help Groups (SHGs) / Women's Groups

Women's groups are strong partners in ensuring sustainable water services. They bring dedication, regularity, and honesty to community management. A number of SHGs have been formed and federated at different

levels under State Rural Livelihood Mission (SRLM).

Their key roles include:

- i. Supporting VWSC in collecting user charges and maintaining records.
- ii. Helping to test water quality and monitoring supply points.
- iii. Leading awareness campaigns on water saving and cleanliness.
- iv. Supporting preventive maintenance drives such as tank cleaning.
- v. Promoting women's participation and leadership in O&M.

4.2.4 Villagers, Volunteers and Households

Every household in the village also has an important role to play. When everyone takes responsibility, the system becomes stronger and more reliable.

Villagers should:

- i. Use water carefully and avoid wastage.
- ii. Pay user charges on time to support maintenance costs.
- iii. Report leakages, damages, or irregularities supply immediately.
- iv. Keep household taps and connections in good condition.
- v. Participate in Jal Chaupal or VWSC meetings to share ideas and feedback.



Figure 11: Roles in Water System Management

Partnerships for Operation, Maintenance and Sustainability

• Strengthening Local Collaboration for Sustainable Water Supply.

To ensure effective and sustainable management of rural drinking-water systems, Gram Panchayats (GPs) and Village Water & Sanitation Committees (VWSCs/Pani Samitis) are encouraged to work in collaboration with a range of community and institutional partners.

They may:

- Engage Self-Help Groups (SHGs), User Groups, or other Community-Based Organisations (CBOs) for daily operation, maintenance, user charge collection, and minor repair works.
- Involve local volunteers, skilled persons, and youth groups (such as Jal Doots or trained plumbers/pump operators) for technical and community outreach activities.
- Collaborate with schools, Anganwadis, and health institutions to promote water safety, hygiene awareness, and behaviour change communication.
- Outsource specialized agencies or service providers where required, for tasks such as source sustainability planning, capacity building, or water quality testing.

Such partnerships reinforce the Jan Bhagidari approach, ensuring that the management of rural water systems remains participatory, efficient, and locally owned.

- vi. Encourage others to protect water sources and support cleanliness drives.

When all these groups; GP, VWSC, Jal Mitra, SHGs, and villagers work together, the result is a self-reliant village with safe, regular, and sustainable water supply.

This is the true spirit of Jan Bhagidari and the vision of the Jal Jeevan Mission - “Har Ghar Jal.”

- v. Organizes district-level training and review meetings for VWSCs and Panchayat officials.
- vi. Resolves inter-village technical issues and ensures smooth coordination with the State department.
- vii. Supports awareness campaigns like Jal Utsav and Jal Arpan Diwas to encourage community ownership.

4.3 District Level

4.3.1 District Water & Sanitation Mission (DWSM)

- i. The DWSM coordinates and monitors all water schemes in the district.
- ii. Guides and monitors DTU, how to coordinate with Gram Panchayat/VWSC or any micro-utility working in the village for operation & maintenance.
- iii. Ensures proper use of funds and timely repairs in all Gram Panchayats.
- iv. Monitors functionality and quality indicators through field visits and reports.

4.3.2 District Technical Unit (DTU)

- i. The District Technical Unit (DTU) as part of DWSM, provides technical support and supervision to Gram Panchayat/VWSC/any micro-utility working in the village for operation & maintenance.
- ii. Helps solve engineering problems like motor failures, pipeline breakages, or water-pressure issues.
- iii. Provides guidance on preventive maintenance and quality standards.

- iv. Trains VWSC members, Jal Mitras, and local technicians on basic repair skills.
- v. Reviews Gram Panchayat reports and assists in preparing block-level O&M plans.
- vi. Maintains the inventory and handles major repairs and replacements.

- Approve major repair and rehabilitation works that need higher-level funding.
- Promote innovation, new technology, and partnerships for sustainable O&M.
- Plan and procure of spares and resource management

4.4 State Level

The State Governments provide necessary powers to the SWSM for successful implementation of JJM.

4.4.1 State Water and Sanitation Mission (SWSM)

SWSM, a state level institution headed by Chief Secretary with Principal Secretary/ Secretary in-charge of PHED/ RWS Department as Mission Director is the organisation responsible for implementation of JJM in the state. The major responsibilities of SWSM are

- Overall monitoring of performance/ functionality of the water supply projects through dedicated dashboard at State level.
- Promoting and supporting innovation, new technology wherever feasible.
- Provide policy guidance and support for O&M policy implementation.
- Coordinate with various Departments of the State Government and other partners in relevant activities and effective operations.
- Integrating communication and capacity development programmes for O&M of water supply schemes.
- Conducting technical and financial audits of the water schemes.
- Maintains coordination with national agencies for planning and evaluation.

4.4.2 Rural Water Supply Department

The State Department PHED provides overall technical guidance and capacity-building support.

- Support DTU in handling technical issues.

4.5 Nal Jal Mitra: The Helping Hands That Keep the Water Flowing

Under the Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM), there is a provision to appoint Nal Jal Mitras. The "Nal Jal Mitra" refers to a trained individual or local resource person who supports the implementation, operation, and maintenance of rural water supply systems at the village level. They are trained to create opportunities for sustainable employment at village level, for the local people, especially and preferably for women (wherever possible). They are envisaged to be skilled to perform functions of varied nature as per requirements of Rural Piped Water Supply Schemes.

Because they live in the same village or locality, they can act quickly whenever a problem occurs and ensure that water continues to reach every home safely and regularly. Their presence helps the village manage its own system with confidence and keep it working well for many years.

4.5.1 How to Select a Nal Jal Mitra for the Village

To manage the village water supply system effectively, every Gram Panchayat should have at least one trained and skilled person for daily operation and maintenance. As a general rule, villages with up to 500 households should engage one Nal Jal Mitra (operator) to look after the system.

While choosing this person, preference should be given to local residents who know the village layout and understand how the water supply system works. The Gram Panchayat may also consider appointing a woman operator, especially from a Self-Help Group (SHG), as this helps promote women's participation, community ownership, and self-reliance.

4.5.2 Training and Support

Before taking charge, the selected person should be given proper training to understand their role and responsibilities.

The Gram Panchayat can use Finance Commission funds to sponsor this training under the National Jal Jeevan Mission's Nal Jal Mitra Programme (NJMP) either through:

- A Short-Term Training (STT) course for new candidates.
- A Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) course for those who already have experience.

Training programs organized by the Public Health Engineering Department (PHED), Rural Water Supply (RWS) departments, Rural Self Employment Training Institutes (RSETIs) or other similar skill building initiatives under various programs and schemes may also be used for this purpose. For arranging such training, the Gram Panchayat should send a request to the District Water and Sanitation Mission (DWSM).

4.5.3 Approval by the Gram Sabha

To keep the process transparent and participatory, the name of the selected Nal Jal Mitra should be presented in the General Gram Sabha meeting for approval. This helps ensure that all villagers are aware of who is managing their water system, can share feedback or complaints, and can contribute user charges confidently for its maintenance.

In this way, choosing and training the right person especially from within the village helps build trust, create local employment, and ensure that the water system remains reliable and well-managed by the community itself.

"Nal Jal Mitra ke saath – Gaon ka Jal, Gaon ke Haath."

(With the Nal Jal Mitra, the village water supply management stays in the village's hands.)

4.5.4 Roles and Responsibilities

The **Nal Jal Mitra (NJM)** plays a very important role in keeping the village water system running safely and smoothly. They

not only look after the pumps and pipelines but also help villagers get regular water and keep it clean. Their work connects both **technical care** and **community service**. The various roles can be bucketed as under:

i. Operation and Maintenance

- a. Run the pump, valves, and chlorination unit every day as per the water supply schedule.
- b. Check that water flow and pressure are proper and reach all parts of the village.
- c. Inspect pipelines regularly to find and fix small leaks early.
- d. Inform the Panchayat or VWSC immediately in case of any major breakdown.
- e. Help with preventive maintenance to avoid long disruptions in supply.

ii. Water Quality and Safety

- a. Get overhead tanks and sumps cleaned regularly to keep water safe.
- b. Handle disinfecting chemicals such as bleaching powder etc. carefully, using the correct amount for disinfection.
- c. Help in testing water samples using Field Test Kits or as guided by the Panchayat.

iii. Record-Keeping

- a. Keep a daily logbook with details like pump running hours, chlorine used, and supply timings.
- b. Maintain a record of repairs and maintenance carried out in the system.
- c. Update the list of household connections, including new and disconnected ones.

iv. Community Support and Communication

- a. Listen to and respond quickly to complaints about low pressure, leakage, or irregular supply.
- b. Inform villagers in advance about any maintenance or power shutdowns.
- c. Support awareness drives on water conservation, hygiene, and safe storage of drinking water.

v. Safety and Care of Equipment

- a. Use gloves, masks, and safety gear while handling chlorine or electrical panels.
- b. Keep tools, spare parts, and equipment safe and in good condition.
- c. Maintain a clean, dry, and safe pump house and working area.

vi. Coordination and Learning

- a. Give regular updates to the Gram Panchayat or VWSC on system performance and issues.
- b. Attend training and refresher sessions to keep improving your technical skills.
- c. Help with data collection and reports for higher-level monitoring when needed.

In simple words, the Nal Jal Mitra is the fulcrum of the village water system, the person who ensures that every drop reaches every home, every day, safely and reliably.

Their skill, care, and dedication make the dream of "Har Ghar Jal" a living reality.

4.6 Working Together for Sustainability

Each level, village, Panchayat, District, and State is like a link in one chain.

If one link is weak, the whole system suffers. But when all work together, from Jal Mitra to engineer, from VWSC to PHED/State Rural Water Supply Department/SWSM, the result is a strong, responsive, and people-led water system that lasts for generations.

"Har Star Par Saath – Har Ghar Mein Jal"

Teamwork at every level ensures water in every home.

Chapter 5

Preparedness for Operation and Maintenance



05

Preparedness for Operation and Maintenance

“Commissioning to Handing Over”

When the construction of a village water supply system is complete, a new and important journey begins, getting the village ready to operate and maintain it. Before celebrating Jal Arpan Diwas, the day of formal handing over, it is essential that every part of the system is tested, documented, and ready for smooth and reliable operation.

This stage of preparedness ensures that the piped water supply system is functional in the village, and every household knows its role in keeping it running.

Preparedness is not just about completing a checklist, it is about building confidence, awareness, and ownership among the stakeholders and beneficiaries. Because, when the system is finally handed over, it should not only work well, but also be understood, cared for, and celebrated by the community as its own.

This chapter explains what must be done between commissioning (trial run) and formal handing over, so that the system works well from day one and continues for years to come.

5.1 What is Commissioning

Commissioning means testing the system before handing it over. This ensures that all parts from the source to the tap, are working properly, and that villagers receive safe and adequate water as per planned designed system. A system that has been tested, trained, and documented before handover builds confidence among both the Gram Panchayat and the community.

5.2 Why This Stage Matters – Preparedness for Handover

This stage - between construction and handover - is the foundation of sustainability.

If the system is handed over too quickly, without training or testing, small faults can turn into big problems later. Proper preparation ensures that the village team is confident, informed, and ready to manage its own system. It is important to ensure readiness on the following parameters².

² Department of Drinking Water and Sanitation, Ministry of Jal Shakti. (2025). Commissioning Protocol for Rural Piped Water Schemes (JIM)

5.2.1 Technical Readiness

- CPHEEO manual prescribes a trial run for 1-2 weeks, however, considering the rural population and relatively newer service standards, the trial run should preferably be carried out for at least 15 days and up to 30 days as per need, to test all components of the system.
- During this period, water should flow regularly to every household, and all issues like leakage, pressure drops, or pump faults should be fixed.
- The Gram Panchayat and VWSC should carry out a “transect walk” through the village to inspect pipelines, valves, tanks, and source structures, ensuring everything is functional.
- The as-built drawings, asset register, and technical test reports must be handed over to the Gram Panchayat or VWSC before Jal Arpan Day.

5.2.2 Institutional Readiness

- A functional VWSC (Village Water and Sanitation Committee) must be in place.
 - ✓ If not, it should be formed or reconstituted as per operational guidelines, before handover.
- The VWSC should have a bank account opened in its name for collection and management of user charges.
- It should be ensured that VWSC members and the Nal Jal Mitra/operator are fully aware of and trained in daily operation, maintenance, water quality testing, and record-keeping.
- The plan for source protection and sustainability must also be prepared and approved.

5.2.3 Documentation and Handover Records

Before Jal Arpan Diwas, all documents related to the scheme must be ready and shared with the Panchayat, including:

- **As-built drawing** showing pipelines, tanks, and connections.

- **Asset register** with a list of equipment, pumps, and structures.
- **Trial run and testing reports** of all components.
- **Water quality test results** using Field Test Kits (FTKs) and lab reports.
- **O&M plan and contact list** of technical support persons.

5.2.4 Community Engagement Before Handover

- The community should be made aware of the system and their role through village meetings, PRA exercises, and Jal Chaupal.
- During this stage, demonstration of water testing using FTKs can be done to show how to check water quality.
- Children, SHG members, Anganwadi and ASHA workers should be involved to spread awareness and responsibility.
- Villagers living outside the village but belonging to it by roots can also be invited to reconnect and contribute.
- People’s representatives such as the Member of Parliament (MP), Member of the Legislative Assembly (MLA), and the concerned local Minister should be formally invited to participate in the Jal Arpan Diwas. Their presence adds significance to the ceremony and reinforces collective ownership of the village water system. It must be ensured that invitations to such dignitaries are sent well in advance in coordination with DWSSM, to enable their participation.
- Local influencers, social leaders, and traditional elders may be invited to encourage community pride.
- All activities related to Branding of JJM must be ensured.

5.2.5 Cultural and Social Preparedness

- On the final day of handover, a symbolic event called Jal Bandhan (tying a sacred thread on the water tank or tap) can be held to mark protection and purity.

- The village should plan an annual Jal Utsav calendar: "Lok Jal Utsav" that align drinking water with local traditions, rituals and social cults.

Example: Tree plantation during monsoon, cleaning of ponds before harvest festivals, or songs on *Jal Suraksha* in cultural events. This helps make water management part of daily village life, not just a government activity.

5.3 Preparedness Checklist Before Handing Over

Readiness Area	What Must Be Done	Responsible
VWSC Formation	Active and trained VWSC	GP
Trial Run	System tested for 15–30 days	Department + GP + VWSC
Bank Account and Financial Plan	VWSC account opened, and a financial plan be prepared	GP + VWSC
Documents Ready	As-built drawing, asset list, reports	Department
Technical Check including leakage detection, pressure maintenance, flow consistency, pumping failure, if any etc.	All components working	Department + VWSC
Sharing of Technical Assessment Report	A Report on findings of Technical Assessment having a comprehensive technical audit of the water supply infrastructure of the village/ GP with evaluation of the condition of assets such as pumps, storage tanks, distribution networks etc. to be shared with VWSC/ GP	Department
Water Quality	FTK and lab testing done	VWSC + Department
Orientation & Sensitization Workshop	An Orientation Workshop to be organized to sensitize all stakeholders	Department + VWSC + GP
Inventory details	A detailed inventory of all assets, including their technical specifications, existing number of FHTCs, maintenance records, water quality records, warranty details etc. is to be shared	Department
Self-Assessment by VWSC/GP	A self-Assessment is conducted to assess the preparedness	VWSC + GP
Messaging and Branding	Proper messages with approved logo and design	Department + GP + VWSC
Community Awareness	Jal Chaupal, PRA, water testing demo	VWSC + SHGs

Readiness Area	What Must Be Done	Responsible
Invitees for Event	Public representatives, social leaders, community	GP + VWSC
Joint Walk-Through / Transect Walk	Village walk to see if all components of RPWSS are functional	Department + VWSC + GP
Gram Sabha Approval & MoU Signing	A Gram Sabha to be organized and approval taken.	GP + Department
Plan for Source Protection and Sustenance	Source protection plan prepared	VWSC + GP

A hypothetical story has been **annexed (No. 4)** that conveys a few preparatory activities which should be undertaken as part of the village's readiness for the handing over of the water supply scheme.



Figure 12: Jal Arpan Diwas - Handing Over with Pride

These steps ensure that the transfer is clear, transparent, and participatory, strengthening the confidence of the local team. This reorganized content ensures that by the time Jal Arpan Diwas is celebrated, the village is technically ready,

institutionally prepared, and emotionally connected to its new system, the true spirit of “Gaan ka Jal, Gaan ke Haath.”

Step by step guided handing over protocol is annexed at **Annexure-5**

Chapter 6

Celebrating Handing over Day as Jal Arpan Diwas



06

Celebrating Handing over Day as Jal Arpan Diwas

“Celebrating Ownership”

6.1 What is Jal Arpan Diwas

Jal Arpan Diwas is a day of pride and gratitude for every village. It marks the moment when the village's piped water system built under the *Jal Jeevan Mission* is officially handed over from the Department to the Gram Panchayat and community.

**This is not just a formal event,
it is a festival of ownership.**

From this day onwards, the people of the village take full responsibility to operate, protect, and maintain their own water system.

6.2 Why Jal Arpan Matters

Handing over of the water supply scheme properly ensures that everyone in the village knows:

- What assets and systems have been created.
- Who will operate and maintain them.
- How funds will be managed.
- How water quality will be monitored.
- How the system will be looked after for years to come.

Without this understanding, small problems can become big ones. Jal Arpan Diwas helps every

villager realize, *this is our water, our system, our responsibility*. It is the start of true *Jan Bhagidari* – when people take charge of what they helped to create.

6.3 Where and How to Celebrate

The celebration can take place near the water system infrastructure, the overhead tank, pump house, or even at the Panchayat Bhawan. Choose a place where a large number of beneficiaries, elders, women, youth, and children can see and participate. The event should look festive, full of colour, song, and pride.

6.3.1 Guests and Participants

The ceremony may be attended by public representatives, district and departmental officers, and most importantly, village people, VWSC members, SHGs, development partners working in the area, schools, and youth.

Gram Panchayat in coordination with District Administration should ensure that the Member of Parliament (MP), Member of the Legislative Assembly (MLA), and the con-

cerned Local Minister are duly received and facilitated to grace the occasion with their presence.

6.3.2 Suggested Activities on Jal Arpan Diwas

- **Jal Walk (Prabhat Pheri)**

Start the day with a morning rally through the village led by VWSC and SHG members, children and youth carry banners and sing songs about responsible use of water as a precious resource, importance of water conservation and cleanliness. It spreads awareness and excitement across the village.

- **Jal Bandhan – Sacred Thread for Water**

At the main site, tie a sacred thread (raksha sutra) on the tank, tap, or pump house.

This act, done by villagers and guests together, symbolizes a shared promise to protect and care for every drop of water.

- **Jal Vandana – Singing for Water**

Women's groups and youth can perform folk songs, bhajans, or short plays (nukkad natak) on the importance of safe water and hygiene.

This adds emotion and culture to the event, reminding everyone that *water is life and faith*.

- **Jal Sankalp – The Water Pledge**

All villagers together take a simple pledge (Suggested):

"We promise to care for our village water system as our own property — to use water wisely, to keep it clean, to operate and manage it efficiently and most importantly to ensure that every home receives safe and secure water every day."

The pledge may be taken in their regional or local language so that everyone understands and feels connected.

This collective oath turns the water system into a shared promise and responsibility.

- **Jal Shringar – Art and Awareness**

Women and youth decorate the area with *rangoli*, *alpana*, or *jhoti* showing the journey of water, *from source to tap*.

Volunteers/Youth can demonstrate Field Test Kits (FTKs) to show how water quality is checked. These activities make learning fun and meaningful.

- **Har Ghar Jal Declaration**

If every home in the village has a functional tap, the day becomes even more special.

The Sarpanch or Chief Guest can declare the village (as per JJM protocol) a *"Har Ghar Jal Gaon."*

A display board can be installed proudly announcing this achievement for everyone to see.

- **Recognition and Felicitation**

Recognize and thank those who made this success possible, VWSC members, SHGs, pump operators, masons, and youth volunteers. Their efforts show how teamwork helps water reach every home.

6.4 After the Handover

From this day forward, the VWSC and Gram Panchayat take charge of running and maintaining the water system. The Department and district teams will continue to provide technical help and guidance.

The VWSC should:

- Follow and update the O&M plan regularly.
- Assign the operator (*Nal Jal Mitra*) and helpers.
- Collect user charges on time.
- Maintain all records, registers, and accounts.
- Keep checking water quality and system performance.

This keeps the system functional, clean, and reliable for years to come.

6.5 Making It a People's Celebration

After the formal event, turn the day into a village festival of water, a *Lok Jal Utsav* with music, games, cultural performances, and community stories.

Invite local elders, frontline workers, and even villagers living outside but connected to their ancestral home. Children can make drawings and songs about water; women can share their experiences. The celebration should make everyone feel, *this is our water, our pride, our future.*

6.6 Handover – A New Beginning

Handing over is not the end of the project. It is the start of community ownership, the moment when responsibility and pride move from the department's hands to the people's hearts. When villagers celebrate Jal Arpan Diwas, they are not just receiving a water system; they are accepting a shared duty to protect and sustain it.

"Jal Arpan Diwas – Gaon ka Abhiman, Jal ki Suraksha ka Pramaan."

(Jal Arpan Diwas – the pride of the village, and the promise to protect its water.)

Chapter 7

Engaging Community, Institutions and Empowering People



07

Engaging Community, Institutions and Empowering People

“Involving All, Empowering All - The Path to Sujal Gram”

7.1 The Power of community participation

Every successful water system stands strong because of its community and the level of their participation. No matter how advanced the technology or strong the infrastructure, it will only last if the community owns it, and care for it. When villagers, women's groups, youth, and local workers take part in managing water, the system becomes reliable, respected, and long-lasting. The true strength of Har Ghar Jal lies in the hands of the people who use, protect, and sustain it.

7.2 Convergence with other programmes

7.2.1 *Convergence with State Rural Livelihood Mission (SRLM)*

The SHGs and their different federation structures formed at different levels, under SRLM provides a great opportunity to build partnerships between JJM and SHGs. Through this convergence:

- SHG members can be trained in skills like plumbing, pump operation, or minor repair as

well as Micro-Entrepreneur to work as a Micro-Utility.

- They can assist in tariff collection, record keeping, and financial management.
- They can take up regular water testing, and share reports with the community and on WQMIS dashboard as well.
- They can also work as an Implementing Support Agency (ISA) for JJM.

This approach builds local livelihood opportunities, strengthens women's leadership, and reduces dependence on external contractors. A well-trained SHG member becomes not just a worker — but a Jal Mitra/Saheli, helping her village stay water secure.

Self-Help Groups (SHGs) and other community-based organizations (CBOs) are the heart of rural life and development. They are trusted, organized, and well-connected at the village level — making them ideal partners in managing village water systems.

7.2.2 *Convergence with Primary Agricultural Credit Societies (PACS) and other CBOs*

Apart from SHGs, the convergence with Primary Agricultural Credit Societies (PACS), Farmer Producer

Organizations (FPOs), and other Community-Based Organizations (CBOs) formed under different schemes and programmes can play a transformative role in the operation and maintenance (O&M) of village water supply systems. These institutions have strong financial and organizational capabilities, which can be leveraged to ensure sustainability and efficiency. By partnering with VWSCs and Panchayats, they can provide technical support, manage resources, and promote community participation, making water systems more reliable and resilient.

Building strong partnerships between JJM, SHGs, PACS, FPOs, and other community institutions ensures that water systems are not just installed but sustained. By combining technical skills, financial management, and community ownership, villages can achieve long-term water security and empower local livelihoods, making *Har Ghar Jal* a reality for generations.

7.3 Engaging Frontline Workers – Integrating Water with Nutrition, Health, and Education through DWSM

Frontline workers are the eyes and ears of the village. Every day, Anganwadi workers (ICDS), ASHA workers (NHM), school teachers (Samagra Shiksha Scheme), and youth volunteers (NYKS/NSS) work closely with families, children, and community groups.

Because they are trusted and always present in the field, they can play a key role in keeping the village's water safe and systems functional.

When these workers integrate messages about safe water, hygiene, and water conservation into their regular work, the entire community benefits.

They help bridge the gap between health, education, and water management.

7.3.1 How Frontline Workers Can Help

- **Anganwadi Workers (ICDS, WCD):**

- i.) Teach mothers and children the importance of using clean water for drinking, cooking, and handwashing.

- ii.) Ensure that water used for nutrition and mid-day meals is tested and safe.
- iii.) Organize "Jal Suraksha Sessions" with mothers' groups during health and nutrition days.

- **ASHA Workers (NHM):**

- i.) Spread awareness about the link between safe drinking water and health, explaining how unsafe water can cause diarrhoea, anaemia, and other diseases.
- ii.) Report leakages, contamination, or water supply issues to the VWSC promptly.
- iii.) Encourage families to store drinking water safely and clean vessels regularly.

- **Teachers and Schools (Education Department):**

- i.) Include short lessons and activities on water conservation, handwashing, and cleanliness during school assemblies.
- ii.) Include water quality testing in science practicals to monitor the quality of water consumed by villagers.
- iii.) Form "Jal Doot" or "Water Monitor" clubs where children check taps, tanks, and report issues to the Panchayat.
- iv.) Organize painting, debate, or storytelling competitions during Jal Utsav to make water everyone's concern.

- **Youth Volunteers (NYKS/NSS):**

- i.) Create simple maps of pipelines and tanks and participate in PRA exercises to engage and mobilize community.
- ii.) Help in organizing Jal Chaupal, Jal Utsav and school awareness events.
- iii.) Spread water messages through social media, posters, or village WhatsApp groups.
- iv.) Their participation ensures that the next generation continues the culture of ownership and responsibility for village water.

7.3.2 Why Their Role Matters

- i.) Frontline workers connect with every household, from newborn care to school education.

- ii.) By talking about safe water and hygiene during their regular activities, they help the community link clean water to better health, nutrition, and learning.
- iii.) Their daily presence ensures that small issues are noticed early, messages reach everyone, and people feel responsible for their own water safety.

7.4 Women's Leadership – Strengthening Water, Strengthening Community

Women are the first managers of water. They understand its value better than anyone else. For generations, they have fetched, stored, and cared for water in their homes. They know every source, the well, the handpump, the pond and every season when water becomes scarce. That experience makes them natural leaders in water management.

When women lead Village Water and Sanitation Committees (VWSCs), or work as operators, water testers, or record keepers, the system becomes more regular, cleaner, and better maintained.

They bring discipline, care, and collective spirit ensuring that taps never run dry and water stays safe.

Women can take up many important roles in the management of village water systems:

- **Awareness and Mobilization:** Conducting meetings, household visits, or small group discussions on water conservation, hygiene, and timely payment of user charges.
- **Leadership and Decision-Making:** Acting as VWSC President or members, guiding planning and daily functioning.
- **Operation and Maintenance:** Managing pumps, valves, and pipelines, and overseeing the work of Nal Jal Mitras.
- **Water Quality Monitoring:** Testing water quality using Field Test Kits (FTKs) and ensuring safe drinking water for every home.
- **Financial Management:** Helping maintain VWSC accounts, recording income and expenditure, and ensuring transparency.

Initiatives like *Jal Saheli* in Madhya Pradesh, *Jal Mitra* in Assam, and *Jal Sahiya* in Jharkhand are meant to recognize and support these local champions.

They are not just volunteers, they are leaders of change, showing how local wisdom and women's participation make systems more reliable.

7.5 Empowerment through Panchayat Dashboard

Panchayat Dashboard for Water and Sanitation, which is accessible through the e-Gram Swaraj portal, plays a key role to strengthen transparency, accountability, and data-driven governance at the grassroots level.

Through this comprehensive and interactive dashboard, Panchayats can access real-time data on the status of ongoing works, the sources of water supply, the functionality of water supply schemes, and the quality of water being provided to rural households. The system also reflects details on household tap connections, maintenance activities including engagement of Nal Jal Mitras, and sanitation progress at the village level.

In addition to Panchayat-level monitoring, the dashboard promotes citizen engagement and transparency. Users can now easily identify their village functionaries and water supply operators, view the timing of daily water supply, receive updates on service disruptions, and track the status of grievances. They can also submit feedback directly through the portal, ensuring that the voices of rural citizens are heard and acted upon.

By making critical data accessible at the local level, and by empowering citizens to participate actively in governance, the Panchayat Dashboard reinforces the Government's commitment to transparency, efficiency, and sustainability in rural water supply and sanitation services.

7.6 When Community Lead, Systems Works Best

When community, women, youth, SHGs, and frontline workers come together, water systems thrive. The more people participate, the more lasting the change becomes.

Community participation is not an additional activity it is the heart of sustainability under the Jal Jeevan Mission.

Chapter 8

Lok Jal Utsav



08

Lok Jal Utsav

“A People’s Festival of Water, Culture and Collective Responsibility”

8.1 Conceptualization of Jal Utsav

Community ownership is the cornerstone of sustainability. Ensuring long-term sustainability requires not only the creation of infrastructure but also its proper operation, maintenance, and the protection of the water sources that sustain it. The focus has therefore shifted from mere infrastructure creation to Jan Bhagidari – people’s participation and ownership. To reinforce this shift, Jal Utsav has been conceived as a three-tier Jan Bhagidari campaign – a structured yet flexible people’s movement that fosters awareness, pride, and collective action for the enduring sustainability of water assets.

- **Jal Mahotsav (National level):** A fortnight theme-based campaign aligning with water conservation, women’s leadership, O&M, and source sustainability.
- **Jal Rajyotsav / Nadi Utsav (State/UT level):** River- and culture-based state celebrations linking ecology, heritage, and water supply systems.
- **Lok Jal Utsav (GP / Village level):** People’s festival for year-round engagement in O&M, source protection, and cultural celebration of water.

Jal Utsav is the most vibrant and participatory expression of this campaign, where the spirit of Jal Jeevan Mission comes alive through people’s own celebration. Rooted in local culture, it turns villages into hubs of awareness, pride, and commitment, celebrating water as life, livelihood, and legacy.

8.2 Lok Jal Utsav – People’s Platform for O&M and Source Sustainability

Lok Jal Utsav is the people’s festival of water deeply rooted in local customs, traditions, and seasonal rhythm – a celebration of every village’s deep bond with *jal* (water), *zamin* (land), and *jan* (people). The Lok Jal Utsav shall be celebrated by Gram Panchayats, VWSCs/Pani Samitis, SHGs, youth clubs, and community throughout the year.

This Utsav will blend local rituals, folklore, and social gatherings with practical activities of maintenance and protection.

8.3 Why Celebrate Lok Jal Utsav

Organized throughout the year in accordance with each village's cultural calendar, it blends devotion with duty, turning age-old water rituals into living expressions of care and community ownership. Through songs, rituals, village gatherings, and collective reflection, Lok Jal Utsav reminds every Gram Panchayat that water is not only a resource to be managed but a shared heritage to be celebrated, protected, and passed on to future generations. *"Rituals show our reverence, and maintenance shows our responsibility - Lok Jal Utsav joins both" thus promotes jan-bhagidari.*

Following are specific objectives:

- To celebrate the connection between village culture and water, reviving traditional customs, rituals, and local wisdom.
- To create an enabling environment for the Jal Jeevan Mission by promoting the sustainability

of water assets and ensuring security of water sources through community ownership and participation.

- To build local ownership with the community as co-manager of water sources and water supply assets in order to reflect and strengthen the feeling of **Jan Bhagidari**.
- Reinforce routine O&M through cultural pride and continuity.

8.4 Local Rituals and Practices – Every Village, Its Own Way

Each state and region has traditions that celebrate water in their own unique way. During Lok Jal Utsav, Panchayats are encouraged to integrate such customs into their celebrations - making it meaningful and rooted in the village's own identity. Gram Panchayats are expected to find out their local festival where Lok Jal Utsav can be integrated as per below few examples.

Some of the prevailing customs in different parts of India associated with water are as follows:

Local Practice	Region	How It Can Be Part of Lok Jal Utsav
Kuan Puja / Jal Puja	Rajasthan, Haryana, UP	Villagers perform rituals near wells or tanks, followed by cleaning and repair drives.
Boita Bandana (not exactly water conservation ritual)	Odisha	Community offers lamps and flowers to water bodies, pledging to keep them clean. Boita Bandana is traditionally a maritime and naval festival celebrated annually throughout Odisha. The name could be translated as "to float ritual boats and worshipping with lighted lamp" and comes from the tradition of making decorated boats, which are then floated on a river as a symbolic gesture of their ancestors' voyage.
Chhath Puja	Bihar, Jharkhand, Eastern UP	Village groups ensure the ghats and water sources are clean and safe before the festival.
Aadi Perukku	Tamil Nadu	Celebration near tanks and canals combined with awareness on irrigation and safe drinking water.

Local Practice	Region	How It Can Be Part of Lok Jal Utsav
Sangken	Arunachal Pradesh, Assam	Youth-led cleaning of streams and traditional sprinkling of clean water as a blessing.
Sarovar Seva	Rajasthan	Tank desilting, fencing, and tree planting near catchment areas, followed by folk songs and bhajans.
Narmada Jayanti / Nadi Utsav	Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat	River walks tracing the source-to-tap journey and highlighting O&M points.

Each Panchayat and village can identify **its own local “Jal Parampara” (water tradition)** and celebrate it under the banner of Lok Jal Utsav.

8.5 How to Organize Lok Jal Utsav

When

Lok Jal Utsav can be celebrated throughout the year, in harmony with the local customs, festivals, and rituals of each village and Panchayat. It should connect naturally with occasions that already hold meaning for the community, making water an integral part of their traditional celebrations.

Who Organizes

The celebration is led by the Gram Panchayat and the Village Water & Sanitation Committee (VWSC/Pani Samiti), with active participation from Self-Help Groups (SHGs), schools, youth clubs, Anganwadi centres, and respected community elders. Everyone has a role because the festival belongs to the whole village.

8.5.1 Organizing Lok Jal Utsav – Step-by-Step Checklist

i.) Before the Utsav: Preparation

- **Decide the Date:** Choose a day that aligns with local traditions, village festivals, or community events.
- **Plan Together:** Hold a meeting with the Gram Panchayat, VWSC, SHGs, schools, and youth clubs to finalize activities.

- **Clean and Check:** Ensure tanks, pipelines, and sources are cleaned and working properly.
- **Inform Everyone:** Announce the event in the Gram Sabha, and invite all households, elders, and frontline workers.
- **Prepare Materials:** Keep the water system map, FTK kits, cultural items, banners, and pledge cards ready.

ii.) During the Utsav: Celebration and Awareness

Lok Jal Utsav is a time for both festivity and reflection where songs, rituals, and community actions unite everyone in protecting and celebrating their village's water heritage. Some of the suggested activities are as follows:

- **Jal Bandhan:** Tie a sacred thread on tanks or taps, symbolizing protection and unity.
- **Organize Cultural Activities:** Folk songs, Bhajans, plays, or local rituals celebrating water.
- **Water Walk:** Conduct a short “Know Your System” walk around the village.
- **Community Oath:** Take a collective pledge to use water wisely and maintain the system.

- **Exhibitions:** Display maps, photos, and water-quality results.
- **Children's Participation:** Painting, essay writing, or quizzes on water protection.
- **Recognize Efforts:** Honour women, youth, or groups who have helped in water management.

iii.) After the Utsav: Follow-up and Continuity

- **Record Outcomes:** Document the celebration, attendance, and key decisions in the Gram Sabha register.
- **Plan Next Steps:** Identify small repairs, cleaning drives, or awareness activities to continue the effort.
- **Share Stories:** Display photos or short write-ups in the Panchayat office or school walls.

- **Keep It Alive:** Plan the next village-level event or Lok Jal Utsav in the annual calendar.

8.6 Expected Outcomes

- Villagers develop emotional and cultural ownership of their water systems.
- Women and youth take leadership in local O&M and awareness.
- Local traditions and festivals strengthen environmental values.
- Gram Panchayats emerge as true caretakers of water assets.
- Pride, unity, and responsibility towards water continue throughout the year.
- Weave the Jal Jeevan Campaign into folk songs, local storytelling, and folklore to help transmit its messages across generations

Some of suggested key activities and responsibilities are as follows:

Phase	1	2	3
Key Activities	Before the Utsav (Preparation Phase) • Form a Village Jal Utsav Committee under VWSC/Pani Samiti. • Finalize date, theme, and venue through Gram Sabha. • Assign clear roles for logistics, IEC, cultural events, and documentation. • Prepare and send invitations to community institutions and officials. • Clean and decorate public spaces, especially near water points.	During the Utsav (Celebration Phase) • Begin with the Jal Arpan Ceremony and community pledge. • Conduct awareness sessions on O&M, hygiene, and water conservation. • Showcase success stories and felicitate "Water Champions." • Organize cultural or folk performances with water-related themes. • Display O&M charts, source maps, and water quality test results.	After the Utsav (Follow-Up Phase) • Record key discussions, commitments, and attendance. • Update the Jal Arpan Register and upload event photos on the portal. • Review and update the village O&M plan. • Discuss learnings in the next VWSC meeting. • Plan for the next year's Utsav to make it an annual tradition.
Owner	VWSC / Pani Samiti, Gram Panchayat, SHGs, Youth Groups	VWSC, CLF/VO, Anganwadi Workers, School Teachers, SHG Members	VWSC, GP Secretary, District Support Team, Nodal Department

8.7 Using Community-Led Water Management Tool (CLWM) for Collective Realization:

The idea behind this tool is to engage community, to: **Identify** → **Reflect** → **Commit** → **Act & Celebrate**.

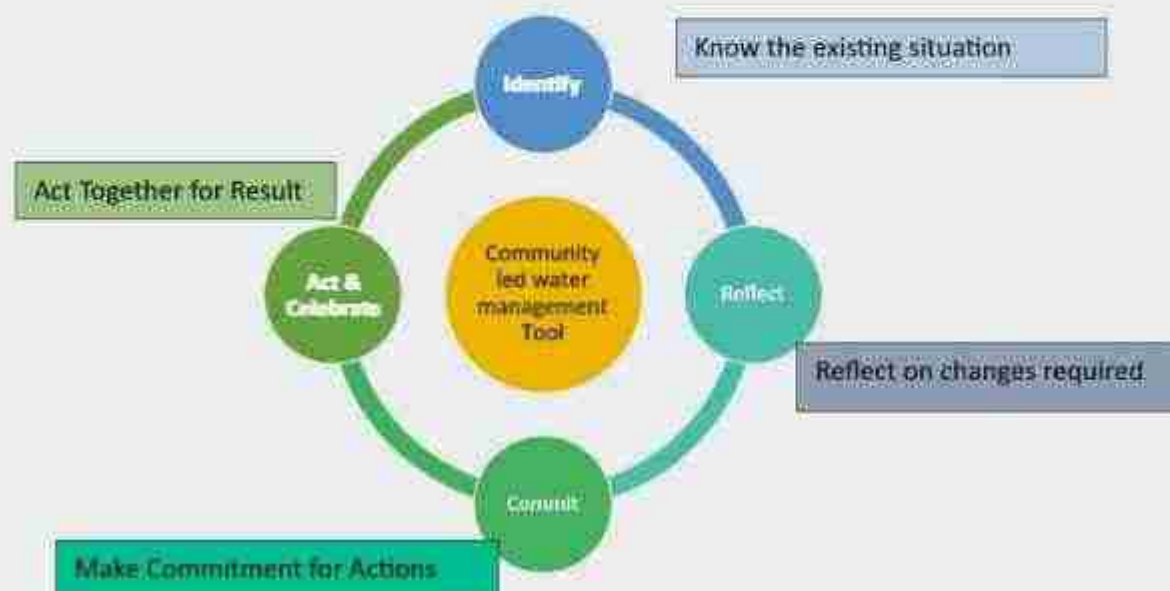


Figure 13: Principles for Community-led Water Management Tool (CLWM)

Using this participatory tool, the community will gather at a designated location, led by the VWSC. Through a facilitated discussion and probing Q&A session, the community will collaboratively draw a village map, marking key features such as habitations, water sources, drinking water assets, and more, with Rangoli, following the process outlined in the table below.

Step No.	Step name	Focus	Sample Questions / Outputs
1	Identify	Knowing our water	- What are the water sources in our village? - Where does our drinking water come from? - Who ensures its cleanliness and availability? - Are our water sources (well, pond, borewell, river) protected from contamination? - What are our traditional water rituals or practices?

Step No.	Step name	Focus	Sample Questions / Outputs
2.	Reflect	Understanding change	• What changes have we seen in water availability and quality in recent years? • Is there any change in rain pattern? • Is this affecting our lives? How? • Are there any changes in water availability at our sources? • What causes water shortage or contamination here? • Whose responsibility is to protect water sources and water supply infrastructures? • What are we doing already to conserve or clean our sources?
3.	Commit	Deciding action	• What can we do as a community to protect our water sources? • Can we form teams for tank cleaning, leak repair, or water testing? • What local events can integrate Jal Vandana rituals? • Can we protect our water sources before it reaches us through tap and for our future generations? • How can we prepare our GPDP plan to protect water resource? • How can we take care of our villages water assets, the day-to-day O&M?
4.	Act & celebrate	Doing together	• Preparation of our Jal Vandana in our language • Preparation of Village Water Celebration Calendar (Jal Samridh Calendar) • Preparation of GPDP including water

Chapter 9

Financial Management and Sustainability for effective and sustained O&M



09

Financial Management and Sustainability for effective and sustained O&M

*“Together We invest & manage,
Together We secure & sustain”*

9.1 Before Managing Money – Some Basic Rules

Every Village Water and Sanitation Committee (VWSC) / Pani Samiti must be officially recognized under the Gram Panchayat. This gives it the legal right to manage funds and take decisions for the operation and maintenance (O&M) of the village water system.

As mentioned in Operational guidelines⁷ of Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM) GP and/ or its sub-committee, i.e. VWSC/ Paani Samiti/ User Group, etc. will function as a legal entity as envisaged in the 73rd Constitutional Amendment Act and every State should issue suitable notification under the Panchayati Raj Act to authorize VWSCs/Pani Samitis to function lawfully as part of the Panchayat.

Once formed, the VWSC should:

- Keep complete and clear records of all income and expenses.
- Maintain the accounting records, as elaborated in the later part of this chapter.

- Submit regular financial reports to the Gram Panchayat and other authorities.
- Conduct all financial transactions only through the VWSC's official bank account.
- Promote collection of User charges using digital payment options.
- Ensure that the transactions are authorized through joint signatories to maintain transparency.
- Ensure concurrent audit of the records.

By following above, the VWSC ensures that every rupee is spent wisely, and all transactions remain transparent.

9.2 Preparing an Annual Budget for O&M

To ensure the water supply scheme operates smoothly and sustainably, funds are required for its operation and maintenance expenses viz electricity charges, operator's wages, repair work, expense on

⁷ Department of Drinking Water and Sanitation, Ministry of Jal Shakti. (2019). Operational guidelines for the implementation of Jal Jeevan Mission. Government of India. https://jaljeevanmission.gov.in/sites/default/files/guideline/JJM_Operational_Guidelines.pdf



Figure 14: Major Components for Financial Management

tank cleaning, bulk water charges (as applicable) etc. If the budget for these expenses is not planned in advance, it may impact the running of the scheme.

Hence, each Village Water and Sanitation Committee (VWSC) / Pani Samiti must prepare an annual budget for the operation and maintenance (O&M) of the water supply scheme. This budget will help the committee to estimate total expenses, expected income and proper fund utilization.

9.2.1 Steps for Budget Preparation

- **Look Back:** See last year's expenses; how much was spent under various heads viz electricity, repairs, and wages.
- **Plan Ahead:** Estimate what may be needed this year (like new parts, increased power cost, or additional maintenance).
- **Include Every Cost:**
 - i.) Electricity bills for pumps.
 - ii.) Repairs and maintenance (pipes, motors, valves).
 - iii.) Salaries of the operator and helpers.
 - iv.) Chemicals and chlorine for water treatment.
 - v.) Bulk water charges (as applicable).

vi.) Record-keeping and awareness activities.

- **Fix Priorities:** Decide what is essential every month and what can be done semi-annually or annually.
- **Approve and Record:** The draft budget should be discussed in a VWSC meeting and approved in the Gram Panchayat meeting, so everyone knows how the money will be spent.
- The VWSC/Pani Samiti should prepare a yearly O&M budget at the start of every financial year.

A sample format for Annual Budget Plan can be found in **Annexure-6**.

9.3 Maintaining Financial Records – The Village Accounting System

To ensure transparency and accountability, the Village Water and Sanitation Committee (VWSC) / Pani Samiti must maintain proper accounting records. These records help in tracking income, expenses and build trust and transparency within the community. Below are the main books that should be maintained regularly:

Book Name	What It Records / Why It's Important	How Often to Update
Cash Book / Bank Book	Records all money received and paid (like user charges, bills, etc.)	Daily
Bank Passbook	Used to check if all transactions match with the bank account	Whenever bank entry is made