

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF DRINKING WATER & SANITATION

LOK SABHA
STARRED QUESTION NO. 181
TO BE ANSWERED ON 08.03.2018

Swajal Project

***181. Shri Dhananjay Mahadik:**

Shri Mohite Patil Vijaysinh Shankar Rao:

Will the Minister of DRINKING WATER AND SANITATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government proposes to launch six pilot projects for clean drinking water supply in villages under Swajal Project and if so, the details thereof including the number of districts likely to be covered under the Project and the time by which it is likely to be launched, Statewise;

(b) whether the Project will involve locals in civil work and maintenance of the system and if so, the details thereof;

(c) the funding pattern under the Project including the ratio of funds to be borne by the Ministry and the Panchayats;

(d) whether local residents will be required to pay a certain amount of water charge for maintenance of the system and if so, the details thereof; and

(e) whether there is any proposal to cover all the districts of the country which are facing acute drinking water shortage and if so, the future plan chalked out by the Government in this regard?

ANSWER

**MINISTER FOR DRINKING WATER AND SANITATION
(SUSHREE UMA BHARATI)**

(a) to (e): A Statement is laid on the table of the house.

Statement referred to in the reply to Lok Sabha Starred Question No. 181 due for reply on 08.03.2018.

(a) Yes Madam. Ministry has initiated a pilot project in the name of "Swajal" that is designed as a demand driven and community centred program to provide sustainable access to drinking water to people in rural areas. The Swajal Project aims to provide rural people with adequate safe water for drinking, cooking and other domestic basic needs on a sustainable basis.

Swajal Project which was started in 1996 in erstwhile Uttar Pradesh demonstrated that people are willing to pay for water supply and can assume responsibility for planning, implementation and management of their water supply schemes. The demonstrated success of Swajal in rural water supply and sanitation sector based on demand driven approaches has contributed a lot to the replication of such models in other states, leading to the formulation of a central government level program for mainstreaming Swajal principles countrywide.

The current pilot project is to be implemented at the Gram Panchayat level initially in six States viz. Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand. So far two pilot projects have been launched in Baghori village of Uttarakashi district in Uttarakhand State and Bhikampura village of Karauli district in Rajasthan State. In other four districts, it will be launched shortly.

(b) Yes Madam. It is envisaged that under the Swajal Project the rural local government in partnership with rural communities; shall plan, design, construct, operate and maintain their water supply and sanitation schemes; so that they get potable water and attain health and hygiene benefits. The State Government and its sector institutions shall act as supporter, facilitator and co-financier and as per need shall provide technical assistance, training and cater for bigger construction works and sectoral contingencies.

Decentralized operation and maintenance is the hallmark of Swajal Project. People will take full responsibility and pay for operation and maintenance of the schemes.

(c) Under the Swajal Pilot Project, people, local government would be co-financers and own the scheme. They would contribute partially towards capital cost and fully towards the operation and costs. 90% of funds under Swajal project would be provided through NRDWP (both Central and State share), 5 % mobilized from Gram Panchayats and remaining 5 % would be collected from the beneficiary community. The funds allocated will be transferred to a dedicated account for the project to Gram Panchayats/Village Water and Sanitation Committee. They would be responsible for managing and utilizing the funds.

(d) Yes Madam. The people benefitting from the scheme will pay for the operation and maintenance costs as per the requirement of the scheme. The past experience and evidence in the sector demonstrate that even a small contribution by people towards operation and maintenance increases people's ownership of the scheme and improves its sustainability. Swajal project envisages to make the people the owners of their water supply scheme and hence would mobilise people to pay for the operation and maintenance costs. The details of water charge, periodicity of payment etc. will be decided by people themselves depending on the local needs and requirements.

(e) Depending on the results of the pilot project being implemented in six States, this will be considered for scale up in the States that agree to follow the Swajal Principles. These principles include participation of people in planning, implementation and operation and maintenance of the scheme, community contribution towards capital cost and operation and maintenance costs, decentralized operation and maintenance arrangements etc.
