

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
MINISTRY OF JAL SHAKTI  
DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES, RIVER DEVELOPMENT & GANGA REJUVENATION  
**LOK SABHA**

**UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 4492**

ANSWERED ON 19.03.2026

**COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION IN WATER CONSERVATION PROJECTS**

4492. SHRI YADUVEER WADIYAR:

SHRI AMAR SHARADRAO KALE:

Will the Minister of **JAL SHAKTI** be pleased to state:

- (a) the steps taken by the Government to enhance community participation in the planning, implementation and maintenance of water conservation projects under Jal Shakti Abhiyan: Catch the Rain campaign in the country;
- (b) the role of Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs), Self-Help Groups (SHGs) and local community groups in spreading awareness about water conservation and the outcomes achieved therefrom in the country;
- (c) the initiatives undertaken for capacity building and technical training of local stakeholders including the establishment of Jal Shakti Kendras and implementation of the Nal Jal Mitra programme in the country; and
- (d) the impact of such community-based initiatives on the sustainability and effectiveness of water conservation efforts across various regions, State-wise?

**ANSWER**

**THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR JAL SHAKTI**

(SHRI RAJ BHUSHAN CHOUDHARY)

**(a) to (d)** ‘Water’ being a State subject, the aspects related to water resources including its conservation are studied, planned, funded and executed by the State Governments themselves as per their own resources and priorities. The Central Government supplements the measures and efforts being taken up by the State Governments.

The Ministry of Jal Shakti launched the Jal Shakti Abhiyan (JSA) in 2019 as a time-bound, mission-mode water conservation campaign in 256 water stressed districts of the country. The Hon'ble Prime Minister launched “Jal Shakti Abhiyan: Catch the Rain” (JSA: CTR) in 2021 with the tagline “Catch the Rain – Where it Falls When it Falls”. The JSA: CTR 2025 was launched with the theme “Jal Sanchay Jan Bhagidari: Jan Jagrukta Ki Or” emphasizing community participation and water conservation awareness. The Abhiyan emphasizes Jan Bhagidari by involving local communities in identification, execution and maintenance of water conservation works.

Under JSA: CTR, Jal Shakti Kendras(JSKs) are set up with the objective to serve as dynamic resource and knowledge hubs, driving transformative change in water conservation, management and accessibility. In addition, JSKs assist District Magistrates /Collectors in coordinating all water-related activities within the district. They function as facilitation centers for planning, preparation and addressing water-related issues. As knowledge centers, JSKs disseminate information on critical topics such as water conservation methods, water use efficiency, groundwater policies, efficient irrigation techniques, water quality and greywater management. They also serve as technical guidance centers, offering advice and support to local communities on these matters.

To further enhance outreach, the National Water Mission (NWM) collaborated with the Department of Youth Affairs, leveraging the extensive network of Nehru Yuva Kendra Sangathan (NYKS) and its youth clubs to mobilize grassroots participation in water conservation efforts under the JSA: CTR campaign.

The Ministry of Jal Shakti, through the Swachh Sujal Shakti Samman initiative, celebrates and acknowledges the exemplary contributions of women in promoting water conservation, sustainable sanitation, and hygiene practices. This recognition highlights the crucial role women play in leading community-driven efforts toward water conservation and its sustainable use. A monthly “Water Talk” series has been in place since March 2019, wherein Water Talkers including women, grassroots practitioners, experts, representatives from NGOs, and individuals from diverse walks of life are invited to share their best water conservation practices.

Moreover, under the ongoing JSA: CTR campaign, several innovative models of groundwater recharge and water conservation are observed across various regions which showcasing the diversity of locally adapted and community-driven solutions. A separate outreach initiative, “Dialogue with DMs”, has also been organized since August 2020, where District Magistrates/ Collectors/ Deputy Commissioners share their field-level innovations and experiences in water conservation, fostering cross-learning and inspiring replication of successful practices.

“Jal Sanchay Jan Bhagidari” (JSJB) initiative was launched in Surat, Gujarat on 6 September 2024 to further strengthen the JSA: CTR campaign. The JSJB initiative focuses on intensifying community action and mobilization to build low-cost rainwater harvesting structures in low cost and saturation mode. The initiative leverages community funds, individual donations, Corporate Social Responsibility Funds and others for construction of low-cost structures like borewells, recharge shafts, recharge pits, using locally available material, to harvest rainwater, to boost ground water level and provide local tailor-made solution to water issues. The objective is to ensure that every drop of water is conserved through collective efforts, following a whole-of-society and whole-of-government approach. By fostering community ownership, the initiative seeks to develop cost-effective, local solutions at the micro level for water conservation and ground water recharge. The JSJB initiative is guided by the 3Cs principle—

Community, CSR and Cost, ensuring effective convergence and maximized outcomes. The Government promotes the JSJB initiative in partnership with State Governments and local authorities to ensure its widespread reach and awareness. The initiative aims at forging partnership with stakeholders such as NGOs, Trusts, Civil Societies and educational institutions to engage the broader community effectively.

Under the JSJB initiative, several innovative models of groundwater recharge and water conservation are observed across various regions which showcases the diversity of locally adapted and community-driven solutions. Few of them are given below.

- i. The “Karmbhoomi se Matribhoomi” Model reflects contributions made by individuals working in Gujarat towards recharge projects in their native states such as Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, and Bihar. This voluntary and emotional investment has enabled cross-state support for sustainable groundwater recharge.
- ii. The Gir Ganga Trust model in Gujarat showcases a philanthropic and community-led approach to water conservation. Local communities have actively contributed through both in-kind labour and resources for the creation, operation and maintenance of recharge structures, thereby fostering a strong sense of ownership and long-term sustainability. This model demonstrates how civil society partnerships can play a transformative role in scaling groundwater recharge efforts.
- iii. In Maharashtra, the Jal Tara Model involves farmers systematically constructing standardized recharge pits measuring 4 ft × 4 ft × 6 ft across agricultural land. This low-tech but impactful intervention significantly enhances infiltration and supports the recharge of shallow aquifers, thereby benefiting both crop productivity and groundwater sustainability.
- iv. The 5% Model from Korea district in Chhattisgarh illustrates how terraced recharge pits constructed on 5% of cultivable land can significantly improve local aquifer recharge. This model integrates water conservation directly into land-use planning and agricultural practices, resulting in improved soil moisture retention and enhanced groundwater levels. On each farmland, a shallow terraced recharge pit is constructed in a "pit within a pit" design, with farmers voluntarily contributing 5% of their cultivable land.
- v. In Banaskantha, Gujarat, a large-scale initiative has focused on the construction of low-cost artificial recharge structures in arid regions. This intervention was made possible by leveraging Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) funding and the active participation of farmer cooperatives. The model demonstrates how public-private collaboration can effectively address regional water stress, offering a scalable and replicable solution for water-scarce areas.

Panchayati Raj Institutions play a central role in mobilising communities, facilitating local-level planning and ensuring participatory implementation and monitoring of water conservation works. Women Self Help Groups, youth, students and local community groups are actively involved in awareness generation, behaviour change communication and social mobilization, thereby strengthening grassroots participation and ownership. Capacity building and sensitisation of local stakeholders form an integral part of JSA: CTR and JSJB. Review and coordination meetings are held with Central Nodal Officers and District Magistrates, supported by structured guidelines and checklists, to strengthen the water conservation works, implementation and monitoring. IEC activities, community meetings and field interactions are undertaken to enhance awareness, technical understanding and participatory implementation at the grassroots level.

Under Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM)- Har Ghar Jal, NGOs/ Community Based Organizations /Self Help Groups /Voluntary Organizations are empaneled as Implementation Support Agencies to handhold and train Village Water & Sanitation Committee /Pani Samiti in planning, mobilizing and engaging communities, disseminating information and encouraging women participation for ensuring long-term operation & maintenance of the water supply infrastructure. With a view to enable the local village community to play their role in planning, implementation and to shoulder the responsibility of operation and maintenance, Nal Jal Mitra Programme (NJMP) has been launched in collaboration with Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship under Jal Jeevan Mission.

As a result of consistent and cumulative efforts including community participation, the data indicates that the overall ground water situation in the country is showing steady improvement. As per the dynamic ground water resource assessment data of Central Ground Water Board (CGWB), total annual ground water recharge in the country has increased from 432 BCM (Billion Cubic Meters) to 448.52 BCM between 2017 to 2025. State-wise comparative status of assessment units (in %) in Over-exploited (O), Critical (C) and Semi-critical (S) categories as per Dynamic Ground Water Resources Assessments 2020 and 2025 is attached at **Annexure**.

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ANNEXURE REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PART (a) to (d) OF UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 4492 TO BE ANSWERED IN LOK SABHA ON 19.03.2026 REGARDING “COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION IN WATER CONSERVATION PROJECTS”.

S.No.	State/Union Territories	Ground Water Resource Estimation -2020			Ground Water Resource Estimation -2025		
		Over-exploited (%)	Critical (%)	Semi-critical (%)	Over-exploited (%)	Critical (%)	Semi-critical (%)
1	Andhra Pradesh	3.45	2.25	6	1.8	0.4	3.5
2	Arunachal Pradesh	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
3	Assam	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.41
4	Bihar	1.31	0.94	9.55	0.56	2.24	9.16
5	Chhattisgarh	0.0	6.16	18.49	0.0	3.42	14.38
6	Goa	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
7	Gujarat	10.08	1.61	9.68	9.92	1.19	12.30
8	Haryana	60.28	8.51	9.93	63.64	4.20	10.49
9	Himachal Pradesh	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
10	Jharkhand	1.16	0.77	3.86	2.28	1.90	4.56
11	Karnataka	22.91	4.41	15.42	18.99	4.64	15.19
12	Kerala	0.0	1.97	19.08	0.0	1.32	17.76
13	Madhya Pradesh	8.21	2.52	15.77	8.20	1.89	20.19
14	Maharashtra	0.0	2.27	17.85	1.95	1.39	11.14
15	Manipur	2.83	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
16	Meghalaya	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
17	Mizoram	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
18	Nagaland	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
19	Odisha	0.0	0.0	1.91	0.0	0.0	3.18
20	Punjab	78	4	6.67	72.55	6.54	9.80
21	Rajasthan	68.81	7.8	9.83	70.53	7.62	8.94
22	Sikkim	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
23	Tamil Nadu	37.31	5.4	19.3	32.91	7.35	19.49
24	Telangana	7.47	7.47	30.56	3.71	3.06	16.94
25	Tripura	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
26	Uttar Pradesh	7.95	5.9	20.96	6.46	5.74	20.45
27	Uttarakhand	0.0	0.0	22.22	0.0	0.0	20
28	West Bengal	0.0	0.37	28.36	0.0	2.61	9.86
29	Andaman And Nicobar	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
30	Chandigarh	0.0	0.0	100	0.0	0.0	0.0
31	Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu	50	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
32	Delhi	50	20.59	20.59	29.41	32.35	17.65
33	Jammu And Kashmir	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
34	Ladakh	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	5.56
35	Lakshadweep	0.0	0.0	22.22	0.0	0.0	20
36	Puducherry	0.0	25	0.0	12.50	0.0	37.50

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