



GOVERNMENT OF KERALA

Abstract

LSGD - Implementation of Operations & Maintenance (O & M) policy for the projects under Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM) - Sanction accorded - Orders issued.

LOCAL SELF GOVERNMENT (DC) DEPARTMENT

G.O.(Ms)No.91/2026/LSGD Dated,Thiruvananthapuram, 15-03-2026

Read 1 Minutes of the meeting chaired by Honble Minister for LSGD on 12/06/2025.

2 Letter No. LSGD/PD/32609/2025-DPLD4 dated 23.11.2025 and 31.12.2025 of the Principal Director, LSGD

ORDER

Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM) has been launched in partnership with States, to enable every household in villages to have Functional Household Tap Connection (FHTC). It is envisaged that with FHTC, each household will have potable water supply in adequate quantity of prescribed quality on regular and long-term basis. To implement the mission, institutional arrangements at various levels have been made and State's PHE/ RWS Departments are to play a critical role. They have to help Gram Panchayat and/ or its sub- committee to plan, implement, manage, operate and maintain its in-village water supply systems. A sense of ownership has to be instilled in the village community as they are at the centre of this mission .

2. Clause 3.5 of the Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM) Operational guidelines states the following:

"It may not be feasible for State Government/ Department to manage water supply to every household and therefore role of Gram Panchayat and/ or its sub-committee/ local community becomes critical in planning, implementation, management, operation and maintenance of water supply within the villages. Moreover, Panchayats have a constitutional mandate to manage

drinking water. Further, it is necessary that within the villages, local community/ Gram Panchayat and/ or its sub-committee, i.e. VWSC/ Paani Samiti/ User Group, etc. plays the key role for O&M, cost recovery, and good governance".

It further states that, respective "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. VWSC/ Paani Samiti/ User Group, etc. to plan, implement, manage, operate and maintain in-village water supply system inter alia which includes powers, responsibilities, internal processes, composition of VWSC/ Paani samiti, etc., power to decide, levy, collect water service charges, etc.;

3. On the basis of the Operational guidelines under Jal Jeevan Mission, Kerala Water Authority had submitted draft Operations & Maintenance (O & M) Policy comprising of distinct models for consideration. As per the minutes read as 1st paper above, it was decided that, the opinion of the Local Self Government Department on the O & M policy should be communicated to the Water Resources Department, explaining the additional burden that would arise if LSGIs are required to assume the responsibility of Operation and Maintenance (O & M) of drinking water supply, in addition to their other constitutional responsibilities, after analyzing the financial position of Local Self Government Institutions and entrusted the Principal Director of the Local Self Government Department to submit a proposal accordingly.

4. As per the letter read as 2nd paper above, the Principal Director, LSGD has submitted proposal for Operations & Maintenance (O & M) policy for the projects under Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM) listing out the difficulties in entrusting the Operations & Maintenance (O & M) to LSGIs on account of lack of technical expertise, Human Resource (HR) constraints, lack of coordination and service benchmarks at LSGI level, financial and legal liabilities.

5. After detailed deliberations, Principal Director, Local Self Government Department, (LSGD) and Managing Director, Kerala Water Authority were directed to work out and furnish a feasible O & M policy for Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM) projects. As per the letter read

as 2nd paper above, the Principal Director, Local Self Government Department, (LSGD) had submitted a revised draft proposal for Operations & Maintenance (O&M) policy, describing the responsibility of Operation and Maintenance of in-village infrastructure of rural water supply schemes vested upon the respective Gram Panchayats.

6. Government have examined the matter in detail and are pleased to accord sanction to handover the ownership of assets for the projects under Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM) to the respective Local Self Government Institutions subject to the condition that the Operations & Maintenance (O&M) of assets completed and those meeting service level benchmarks shall be executed by Kerala Water Authority (KWA). All the operational activities under Jal Jeevan Mission such as maintenance of assets, service, billing, infrastructure development, modernization, grievance redressal etc shall be entrusted by individual LSGIs to Kerala Water Authority (KWA) in view of lack of technical expertise and Human resources and KWA shall develop suitable mechanism for decentralized Operations & Maintenance (O&M).

7. The Additional Chief Secretary, Water Resources Department and Principal Secretary, Local Self Government Department shall finalize the terms of Operations & Maintenance (O&M) policy under Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM) by taking into account the service level benchmarks, capabilities of KWA and LSGIs, the source management and bulk water supply. The Additional Chief Secretary, Water Resources Department and Principal Secretary, Local Self Government Department shall estimate the additional requirement of funds towards the Operation and Maintenance (O&M) and make recommendations on the mobilization of funds through user charges, CFC grants and additional budgetary allocation, without causing undue burden to Local bodies.

(By order of the Governor)
ANUPAMA T V I A S
SECRETARY

To:

The Principal Director, LSGD

The Managing Director, Kerala Water Authority

The Secretary of all Gramapanchayats (through the Principal Director, LSGD)

The Principal Accountant General (A&E) Kerala Thiruvananthapuram

The Accountant General (Audit I/ Audit II), Kerala
Thiruvananthapuram
The Information Officer, I&PRD (Web & New Media)
The Executive Director, Information Kerala Mission.
General Administration (SC) Department (Vide item No.3968)
Stock File / Office Copy.

Forwarded /By order

Section Officer

Copy to :-

The Private Secretary to Min (LSGD)

PA to ACS , Water Resources Dept

PA to Principal Secretary, LSGD