

Atal Bhujal Yojana: Safeguarding Groundwater for a Sustainable Future

Groundwater is a significant source of freshwater and is crucial for domestic, agricultural, and industrial purposes. However, unchecked extraction, overexploitation, and contamination pose serious threats to its sustainability. The Central Government recognized the importance of sustainable groundwater management and launched Atal Bhujal Yojana (Atal Jal) on April 1, 2020 for a period of 5 years with a total outlay of Rs. 6000 Crore (Rs. 3000 Crore from Government of India and Rs. 3000 Crore from the World Bank).

The scheme is being implemented in select areas that include 80 districts, 229 administrative blocks and 8220 water stressed Gram Panchayats of 7 states – Haryana, Gujarat, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh.

Atal Bhujal Yojana is aimed at improvement in groundwater management through bottom-up approach and involvement of the community to ensure the sustainability of this precious resource. The scheme enables the community to take decisions with the ultimate aim to inculcate behavioural change for sustainable groundwater management.



Communities in all 8220 Gram Panchayats **mobilized through existing Village and Water Sanitation Committees**



Community led **Water Security Plans (WSPs)** prepared in all 8220 Gram Panchayats



ABY achieved a **total expenditure of Rs. 1155.35 crore** in FY 2022-23 (more than 165% of its BE)



Almost Rs. 1575 crore released till now including Rs. 1194 crore for incentives after achieving results

The launch of Atal Bhujal Yojana heralded a paradigm shift in Government policy of groundwater management in the country from the predominately supply-side augmentation approach to one aiming at reducing the demand of water for various uses and ensuring active community participation.

Groundwater management, supported by the Atal Bhujal Yojana, is essential to ensure water security, maintain ecological balance, and meet the growing demands of a rapidly developing nation. By implementing Atal Bhujal Yojana, India seeks to mitigate the water crisis, protect ecosystems, and secure livelihoods. It highlights the significance of collective action in preserving this vital resource for present and future generations.