



जल शक्ति मंत्रालय
भारत सरकार
MINISTRY OF JAL SHAKTI
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA



स्वच्छ भारत मिशन - ग्रामीण





Women Achievers

Swachh Bharat Mission Grameen (SBM-G), Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM) & National Water Mission (NWM)

To mark International Women's Day, we attempt to shine a spotlight on some incredible women leaders who have contributed to transformational change in their community, villages, and panchayats. Among them are women representatives, Sarpanches, Swachhagrahis, ASHA & Anganwadi workers, Village Water and Sanitation Committees (VWSC), Pani Samiti members, Jal Vihini village leaders, water warriors and members of women Self Help Groups.

Right from the start of Swachh Bharat Mission Grameen (SBM-G), Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM), and the National Water Mission (NWM), these women realised that access to clean water and sanitation would not only meet their practical needs but also contribute to their socio-economic development, and gender equality.

From humble beginnings, they rose to leadership roles owing to their attitude, beliefs and values, refusing to let gender get in the way. For the cause of water and sanitation that would ultimately serve the entire community leading to health and well-being, they demonstrated grit, courage and perseverance.

Among the various roles women have taken in the WASH sector are that of Rani Mistris to construct toilets; Green Ambassadors to collect, segregate and treat waste; caretakers to operate and maintain community sanitary complexes; health promoters to promote covid appropriate behaviour; Swachhagrahis to engage in sanitation work; and entrepreneurs to start Barthan banks or make sanitary napkins; water warriors to ensure safe tap water to households, doing operation & maintenance of in-village water supply systems, carried out water quality testing at source and delivery points, water conservation, greywater management, water source augmentation - all of which have led to sustainable benefits for their villages.

All this goes to show that with the right support, women are capable of anything. Often, they are adaptable enough to acquire new skills, embrace new ideas and go the extra mile to empower themselves. Indeed, the women of our villages deserve applause. In their community and Gram Panchayats today, the women have earned respect, they are recognised, and serve as an inspiration to others.

The women achievers featured in this booklet were awarded at the '**Swachh Sujal Shakti Samman (SSSS)**' held on March 4, 2023 at Vigyan Bhawan, New Delhi.





एक कदम स्वच्छता की ओर

SWACHH BHARAT MISSION - GRAMEEN





Ms. Babita Gupta

Women SHG Representative,
Rupanpatti Mathurapur GP, Muzaffarpur
District, Bihar



Babita Gupta has demonstrated how plastic waste can be transformed into attractive decorative products, thereby reducing the harmful effects of plastic on the environment.

When misfortune struck her family owing to which her husband was disabled, Babita went from village to village selling bangles until she joined the SHG (Jeevika)- Vishwakarma Jeevika Samooh where she honed her entrepreneurial skills. Her creativity came to the fore when she began to create decorative and useful products from plastic waste that earned her an income to support her family.

In due course, she associated with the Plastic Waste Management Unit (PWMU) set up at Sakra in Muzaffarpur district under Swachh Bharat Mission (Grameen). The plastic waste collected from all GPs was stored in this PWMU and Babita found plastic waste in abundance at one place for her work.

When the district administration set up a training centre at the PWMU, Babita provided training on making useful products from plastic waste. She combined plastic waste with colourful cotton and wool yarn, and dyes to make products such as artificial flowers, bouquets, pendants, pouches, bags, and purses. She also visited households and mobilised women to learn this art and earn. So far, she has trained more than 200 women and many of them are earning well. She has showcased her work at the District Entrepreneurship Festival, Youth Festival, Rajgir Mahotsav, and the World Toilet Day 2022 event organised by the State Project Management Unit (SBM-G) in Patna. Today, the self-reliant entrepreneur is an inspiration to other women.





Ms. Bishnupriya Mahakud
Sarpanch, Sujanpur GP,
Jajpur, Odisha



Bishnupriya holds the distinction of being the Sarpanch of the first Gram Panchayat in Jajpur District of Odisha that transformed into an ODF Plus model GP owing to her efforts to ensure waste segregation at source, collection, disposal, and treatment of waste. This was done in the 4 villages of Durgapur, Hasanpur, Kashipur, and Sujanpur which are home to 1700 households and a population of about 8000.

With the help of SHGs, the 47-year-old sensitized households on source segregation, demonstrating to them the process in their home premises. The proactive village leader also ensured the cooperation of shopkeepers in the market area and the haat, providing them with separate bins for biodegradable and non-biodegradable waste and a composting pit. She also approached schools, institutions and parks and encouraged the authorities to keep their compounds clean which brought about visual cleanliness to the

villages. The revenue model that she established for SHGs in waste management is another of her achievements.

Generating awareness of composting at household and community levels, providing handholding support and conducting IEC activities that included interpersonal communication and community meetings on hygiene and sanitation; and the use of posters, banners, wall writings and rallies involving civil society and students, proved to be a game changer for the GP. All queries and challenges were addressed during community meetings. Besides, SLWM works were carried out through the convergence of funds between SBM-G, MGNREGA and Finance Commission Funds.





Ms. Dulari Kujur
Swachhagrahi, Rampur GP,
North & Middle Andaman,
A&N Islands



When activities of the Swachh Bharat Mission Grameen (SBM-G) commenced in her village, Dulari Kujur was keen to participate in cleaning up her Gram Panchayat. Given that the islands are popular tourist destinations, plastic litter was common and the Swachhagrahi was keen to manage it, having learned about the detrimental effects of non-biodegradable plastic waste on human health and the environment.

Her duties consist of collection of waste from the Karmatang Ward of the GP, transporting it to the Solid and Liquid Waste Management cluster at Karmatang, and segregation of the same into different categories to assist in the recycling process.

Under Phase II of SBM-G, 24 solid waste management (SWM) clusters were set up, and mapped to 70 Gram Panchayats across the islands. These clusters have provisions for treatment of organic waste by means of composting, and are also equipped with bailing and shredding

machines for processing of non-biodegradable solid waste. While recyclable plastic, paper, cardboard, tetra packs and multilayer plastics are bailed and sent for recycling; non-recyclable waste is shredded and used in rural road construction.





Ms. Gadge Meenakshi
Sarpanch, Mukhra K Village,
Adilabad District,
Telangana

Mukhra K. Village which has 220 households and a population of 1080 individuals was declared ODF Plus Model in 2021 under the leadership of Sarpanch Gadge Meenakshi. All along, the village leader's focus while carrying out integrated development activities was to ensure an impact that is sustainable, leaving no one behind without access to hygiene and sanitation.

Sharing a good camaraderie with the SHG women, she motivated them to generate awareness on the need for maintenance of IHHLs and retrofitting which could be done using MGNREGA funds. Further, she constituted a 15-member village sanitation committee which oversaw all sanitation activities, while ensuring the usage of toilets. As a result, not only were all household toilets retrofitted, but the village also got a community sanitary complex to cater to visitors.

The Sarpanch left no stone unturned in her quest to make the GP ODF Plus. Following the construction of a waste segregation shed under MGNREGA,

ASHA and Anganwadi workers distributed 2 bins each to every household to enable them to segregate waste at source. While biodegradable waste was converted into compost and sold to farmers, earning a handsome amount; plastic waste was sold to recyclers. The ban on single use plastic reduced the use of plastics in the community. To address the issue of greywater generated in households and that which flowed through the drains, the Village Development Committee got magic soak pits constructed in all households, and community soak pits at the tail end of all drains using funds from MGNREGA and the 15th Finance Commission.

The appearance of her village where 60,000 saplings were planted, making it a green, clean and healthy village is something the Sarpanch takes pride in. There is also a nutri garden where organic vegetables are grown and provided for the midday meals of children.





Ms. Geeta Devi

Sarpanch, Pallanwala Lower GP,
Jammu District, Jammu & Kashmir



Overcoming deep-seated cultural resistance to women's participation in decision making, Sarpanch Geeta Devi was able to catalyse change in her village as head of the Gram Panchayat. Keen to make her village visually clean, she involved in various IEC activities such as spreading awareness on hygiene and safe sanitation for the health and well-being of the community. This resulted in almost all households having individual toilets and with the construction of 2 community sanitary complexes, ODF sustainability is assured.

However, to address the issue of solid and liquid waste management, the Sarpanch visited homes, held regular Gram Sabhas and Ward Sabhas and communicated with women groups through Mahila Sahhas informing them about the need to segregate waste at source, and composting of biodegradable waste. After the distribution of garbage bins to all households in the various Wards, she organised systems for the collection of

dry waste and its appropriate disposal to recyclers. Schools were included in her campaigns where she organised debate competitions with the theme – Swachhata Hi Sewa Bal.

When the District officials visited the GP, impressed with the efforts of the Sarpanch, they provided 2 large community garbage bins, and a tricycle and e-rickshaw for collection of dry waste. Thereafter, the GP appointed two workers for collection of waste and user fees from the beneficiaries. Further, a segregation shed has been constructed for the segregation and storage of plastic waste until it is sold to recyclers.

Today, cleanliness drives are a regular feature in the GP. Aware of the importance of keeping the environment clean, the village community participates actively in the payment of user fees and in sanitation activities.





Ms. Geeta Vinod Pawar
GP Member, Dhupatmahagao
GP, Bidar District,
Karnataka

There was a time when mosquito menace made life difficult for residents of Dhupatmahagao Gram Panchayat - the problem exacerbated owing to stagnant water and open drains. As a result, vector-borne diseases such as Malaria and Dengue were common among children and the elderly in the GP of 4 villages and 680 households.

When the district administration began greywater management interventions, proactive resident Geeta Vinod Pawar was convinced of the need for individual and community soak pits at households and water collection points that would prevent stagnation in low-lying areas and overflow onto the village paths. She not only got an individual soak pit constructed near her house but she also got involved in construction of cemented rings that were used in soak pit construction for the community.

Her involvement in IEC activities included visiting homes and convincing stakeholders of the need for greywater management, segregation of waste at source, and composting. In due course,

all greywater generated in the village was successfully managed either through soak pits or its use in kitchen gardens, making the village a model Panchayat in the district.

With regard to solid waste management, although all households managed their biodegradable waste at the household level, non-biodegradable waste was a major issue. To address this, the Zilla Parishad constructed a waste management shed where all the collected dry waste which amounted to about 60 kgs per day was assembled for segregation. The high-value materials were sold to local scrap dealers, fetching an income for the GP. The GP boasts 100% toilet usage and the visual cleanliness of the village has improved after fines were imposed on commercial establishments for throwing their waste within the GP premises.





Ms. Harjinder Kaur Kahlon
Sarpanch, Peroshah GP,
Gurdaspur, Punjab



The hard work and determination of Sarpanch Harjinder Kaur Kahlon made Peroshah village (Households and population) visually clean, thereby setting an example for other villages.

When she was elected Sarpanch, Harjinder Kaur Kahlon envisioned making her village neat and clean and was determined to do all that she could to meet her target. Together with her panchayat members, she created mass awareness amongst the community about the need for a solid waste management project in the village involving local NGOs and Youth Clubs.

Thereafter, involving one woman per household in training in composting and solid waste management, Peroshah village set up a solid waste management plant and appointed a waste collector. Today, it is the only village in the district that not only converts its waste into manure but also has created market linkages for the sale of compost

produced. The compost prepared is also used by households and farmers, yielding good results.

Furthermore, the village has turned a dirty pond into which the entire village drainage flows and made it a valuable resource for irrigation and to serve them during times of water shortage.





Ms. Kavita Devi
Sarpanch, Purara GP,
Bageshwar district,
Uttarakhand

From the outset, Sarpanch Kavita Devi was in full support of the Swachh Bharat Mission Grameen which she knew was a commendable effort by the Government of India. She believed that it was each one's moral responsibility to keep their surroundings clean. She consistently reminded the residents of Purda of their responsibilities in this regard.

When she began her tenure as Sarpanch in 2019, the GP which is home to 332 households and a population of 1600 had already been declared Open Defecation Free. It was her duty to bring about visual cleanliness to the village through the effective management of solid and liquid waste.

She began with the construction of garbage collection centres in both the revenue villages of the GP - Purda and Rampur Talia. Each family was provided with separate dustbins for the collection of organic and inorganic waste. The waste collected from households and establishments is taken to the centres for further segregation. While the wet waste is converted into organic compost, the

plastic waste is being stored. When the Plastic Waste Resources Management Centre which is currently under construction 5 kilometers from the Gram Panchayat is completed, plastic waste will be sent there for appropriate disposal/recycling. Further, to ensure menstrual hygiene management, a sanitary napkin vending machine was installed in the Government Girls Inter College Purda through Swajal. The initiative has curtailed dropouts to some extent.

For the management of liquid waste, 100 soak pits and 1500 metres of a drainage system were constructed with the help of funds from Swajal, MNREGA, and the Panchayati Raj Department. To keep the momentum going, the Navyuvak Mang Dal, Mahila Mangal Dal organises monthly cleanliness drives in which the entire community participates. Due to their untiring efforts, the Gram Panchayat was declared ODF Model.





Ms. Anjita Gopesh Sahu
Sarpanch, Chhattisgarh, Patora GP,
Durg District, Chhattisgarh



Overcoming deep-seated cultural resistance to women's participation in decision making, Sarpanch Geeta Devi was able to catalyse change in her village as head of the Gram Panchayat. Keen to make her village visually clean, she involved in various IEC activities such as spreading awareness on hygiene and safe sanitation for the health and well-being of the community. This resulted in almost all households having individual toilets and with the construction of 2 community sanitary complexes, ODF sustainability is assured.

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dry waste and its appropriate disposal to recyclers. Schools were included in her campaigns where she organised debate competitions with the theme – Swachhata Hi Sewa Bal.

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Today, cleanliness drives are a regular feature in the GP. Aware of the importance of keeping the environment clean, the village community participates actively in the payment of user fees and in sanitation activities.





Ms. Neelam Singh
Sarpanch, Bharatpur,
Aligarh,
Uttar Pradesh



Sarpanch Neelam Singh firmly believed that nothing is impossible if you set your mind to it. Keen to make her village clean and healthy, she gathered all details of how the SBM-G Phase II programme can be implemented. Thereafter, she called for a meeting of the entire community including Self Help Groups, and together, they chalked out a plan to improve hygiene and sanitation and make the Gram Panchayat ODF Plus Model.

The Sarpanch also explained to the community the importance of waste management and sought the cooperation of the entire community knowing well that every individual needed to do their bit to make it a success.

A swachhata oath was administered to all women who committed to segregating waste at the source and depositing the same on time into community bins installed for the purpose. The construction of a Resource Recovery Centre, installation of community

garbage bins and plastic banks into which people could deposit their plastic waste for appropriate disposal and other waste to wealth initiatives helped immensely in making the village visually clean. Garbage heaps on roadsides and street corners are a thing of the past in this village, as garbage is collected and taken to the RRC every day.

Heartened by the cooperation of the people, the Sarpanch addressed the issue of greywater with the construction of soak pits, leach pits and drains; with each household connected to one of them. With the installation of filter and silt chambers and the construction of a waste stabilisation pond, all greywater is treated and thereafter used in agriculture. The Sarpanch is determined to ensure the sustainability of all interventions.





Ms. Neetu Parihar
Sarpanch, Pura Banbar GP,
Gwalior, Madhya Pradesh



When Phase II of Swachh Bharat Mission Grameen was announced, Neetu Parihar, Sarpanch of Pura Banbar made it her personal mission to transform her GP into ODF Plus Model. With this in mind, she went about getting her village cleaned with the proper management of solid and liquid waste.

From organising segregation of waste at source to garbage collection and transportation, recycling of non-biodegradable waste, and construction of 15 NADEP pits for composting of biodegradable waste that produced good quality organic manure, she put in place systems for waste management. The ban on plastic made the village plastic waste free.

To address the issue of greywater generated in households that often flowed onto the roads; a drainage system measuring 2300 metres and 10 community soak pits at water collection points were constructed, using funds

from SBM-G as well as the 15th Finance Commission. The initiative contributed to visual cleanliness and health of the community.

Further ODF sustainability is ensured in the GP of 2 villages, 450 households, and a population of 1785 individuals with the construction of two community sanitary complexes that cater to visitors and passers-by. The GP was declared ODF Plus Model on 4th February 2023; and the ISO award that was received the same day added a feather to its cap.





Ms. Nikita Chauhan
Sarpanch, Joshi Gothan GP,
Dehradun District,
Uttarakhand

Joshi Gothan Gram Panchayat which is situated in the Jaunsar tribal belt was transformed into an ODF Plus model village under the dynamic leadership of Sarpanch Nikita Chauhan.

Once systems for solid waste management were put in place, the Sarpanch made special efforts to effectively manage liquid waste. In this regard, households were oriented to the concept of community soak pits and the treatment of greywater while enhancing the groundwater table. As many as 11 community soak pits were constructed under the Swachh Bharat Mission (G) near water collection points with the help of deputy Gram Pradhan, ward members, PRI members, village motivators, and the community.

Around 55 households that discharged greywater out into the open to stagnate in low-lying areas or overflow onto the village paths were connected to the community soak pits. The initiative

served to keep the village roads clean, preventing the spread of greywater, particularly during the monsoons. It also helped curb vector-borne diseases.

Owing to the SBM-G campaign, the village community understands the importance of ODF Sustainability and keeping their surroundings clean and green.





Ms. Puja Devi

**Ward Member, Markacho North GP,
Koderma District, Jharkhand**



An active and vigilant ward member, Puja Kumari has been involved in social work for over 6 years. On a regular basis, she conducts night Choupals, weekly Gram Sabhas, and collective cleaning campaigns in Arkosha village focusing on the subjects of hygiene, sanitation and environmental protection.

The literate village is open defecation free given that all households have toilets and their usage is 100%. There is a complete ban on single-use plastic and if an individual is caught using plastic, he/she is fined Rs 5. All other plastic discards are sold to recyclers.

As a result, Arkosa village has become the first single-use-plastic-free village in Koderma district, the achievement credited to her efforts.

In addition, households and institutions ensure the proper disposal and management of both organic and inorganic waste ensuring segregation of waste at source.

To manage the greywater generated in the village, soak pits and drains have been constructed, connecting all 98 households and institutions. So far, about 712 saplings have been planted to enhance greenery.

Puja Devi is regularly called upon to create awareness about composting, menstrual hygiene management, tree plantation, safe sanitation practices and the need to curb the use of plastics in 15 villages of 3 panchayats in Markachho Block.





Ms. R. Rajeshwari
Sarpanch, Modachur Panchayat,
Erode District, Tamil Nadu



Women are making enormous strides in several formerly male-dominated roles. Take the example of Sarpanch Rajeshwari of Modachur Panchayat who through hard work and determination has successfully implemented a greywater management system in her village, gaining the respect and admiration of her community.

Disposal of greywater has been a major problem in the peri-urban panchayat with 130 households. Greywater generated in households and establishments would stagnate in low-lying areas or overflow onto the paths leading to waterborne diseases and an unhygienic environment.

After discussions with the district SBM-G team and technical experts, the Panchayat planned to construct drains at two locations by connecting all the small inner street drains, and a small horizontal planted gravel filter. Given that the hamlet was a water-logging area with a high water table, this was considered the best possible solution.

The horizontal Planted Gravel Filter that was constructed had the following components: a) a screen chamber to

restrict the entry of unwanted floating materials such as plastic, paper, and dry leaves into the subsequent treatment units; b) a grease trap with a grit chamber where oil and grease in the incoming water were removed before its application over the filter bed that was filled with 4mm to 8mm broken stones and selected plants such as canna indica, reed, etc., and c) a collection chamber for collecting the treated water for reuse.

This safe, biological method used for the safe disposal of greywater reduced the Biological Oxygen Demand (BOD) level to 8mg/l, which is within the permissible limit. Construction of the horizontal planted gravel filter solved the problem of greywater stagnation while improving the aesthetics of the area that is now covered with greenery.





Ms. Rajiben Vankar
Representative of Women SHG,
Kukma GP, Kutch District,
Gujarat



Rajiben used her creativity to make the best out of waste. She wove plastic waste into attractive and functional products such as shopping bags, totes, cosmetic and pencil pouches, spectacle cases, and trays that people could use.

The process involved collecting, cleaning and sorting plastic bags, cutting them into long strips; and thereafter hand-weaving the strips on a traditional loom. It was a meticulous task as the process took more time and energy than it took to weave cotton yarn. Yet, it was an eco-friendly initiative by which 70 single-use plastic bags were woven into every meter of hand-woven sheets which in turn were transformed into useful products, resulting in a cleaner village.

As Rajiben's artistic creations caught the attention of people and the demand for those products increased, she started training women in the village who were keen to learn the craft and at the same time earn an income. The intervention turned Rajiben into an environmentalist

as well as an entrepreneur. Her initiative now engages 15 enterprising women artisans and the team has upcycled more than 10,000,00 single-use plastic bags and counting.

The women of Kuldevi Sakhi Mandal are currently receiving a monthly income of Rs. 7000 to Rs. 8000 each through the operations of this plastic division. Even as it allows them to make a living, it helps them make an invaluable contribution to protecting the environment. The women also generate awareness of the need to use alternatives to plastic, curb the use of single-use products and reuse their by-products.





Ms. Rasika R. Khandeparkar
Pissulem GP,
North Goa District, Goa



Rasika is a dedicated Swachhagrahi who has contributed immensely to managing plastic waste and curbing the use of single-use plastics in the Pissurlem Gram Panchayat. Her hard work has paid off, earning her a sense of respect and self-worth that she is making a valuable contribution to society.

Her main duties involve collecting plastic waste from different Wards of the Village Panchayat, and accumulating dry plastic waste collected from households at the identified prime locations in all 7 Wards. Thereafter, once a fortnight, she collects the garbage and takes it to the Material Recovery Facility (MRF) shed. At the MRF shed, she participates in further segregation of non-biodegradable waste into paper, plastic, glass, metal, etc., and stocking of the same separately, to be sold to scrap dealers. Sale of such items have helped the Panchayat earn an income. The segregated plastic waste is transported to the Goa Waste

Management Corporation in Saligao, Goa.

Rasika follows a strategic planning map to collect plastic waste and owing to her sincerity, she has been able to cover the maximum number of households in the residential areas. She collects plastic discards from 4 villages and around 800-827 households, her collection amounting to 0.06 tonnes per day. Every opportunity she gets, she advises people to use alternatives to plastic and curb the use of single-use plastics.





Ms. Salila Jena
Women SHG Representative,
Akarapada GP, Jajpur District, Odisha



Having seen and experienced the pain of women who were forced to stay indoors and unable to fulfill their dreams, Salila Jena was bent on breaking the shackles of gender-based inequality in her community. Her persistent efforts made her a leader and her tireless efforts to bring positive change to her village made her a role model for women.

As a part of the women's SHG, she has been involved in various solid and liquid waste management activities which included generating awareness on safe sanitation practices, assessing household waste management practices, construction of toilets, O&M of community toilets, retrofitting and collecting data on desludging practices. Engagement with the communities for regular mechanised desludging through a referral-based system and monitoring the process while preventing illegal disposal of septage, were a part of her work.

Salila Jena is well informed with exemplary oratory skills, making her a source of inspiration to other women. Her contribution has increased mechanised desludging, reduced instances of manual scavenging and

generated alternate sources of income for her SHG members through an incentive mechanism.

Her SHGs which manage Faecal Sludge and Septage Management (FSSM) services in the GP convince neighbouring households about the need for desludging every 3 years. Once a household agrees, the SHG forwards the request to the municipality. The SHGs check with the households on matters pertaining to accessibility, availability of disinfectants, and location of the septic tank in the house before finalising requests with the cesspool operator and thereafter monitor the process, ensuring transparency and financial accountability.

Although in a nascent stage, 10 blocks of the district have been covered with FSSM services. Regular IEC activities including behaviour change communication and interpersonal communication are used to convey key FSSM messages. This in turn has increased the demand for desludging services.





Ms. Hemlata Mondal
Anganwadi worker,
Madhupur GP,
Andaman & Nicobar Islands



Dedicated to the cause of helping people, Hemlata Mondal has been engaged as an Anganwadi worker since 2009. Having started work at an early age, she was respected for her outstanding social work. During the implementation of the Swachh Bharat Mission Grameen campaign, she attended all training programmes conducted by the Directorate of Rural Development, Panchayat Raj Institutions and Urban Local Bodies under both SBM-G Phase I and II. Her sincerity and hard work led to the ODF Plus declaration of her Gram Panchayat which is home to 196 households and a population of 681 individuals.

Today, Hemlata continues to be involved in nutri-gardens and plantations within the premises of Anganwadi centres and teaching children handwashing techniques. Over the years, she has conducted various cleanliness drives including those to accelerate the implementation of Greywater

Management in Keralapuram Gram Panchayat and helped with training programmes, in accordance with SBM-G Phase II guidelines.

In the course of her work, she visited every home in her GP to convey to them the importance of soak pits to scientifically manage greywater and advised how to maintain them. Along with awareness building on segregating waste at source, recycling and proper disposal of waste, she motivates the community to use the greywater generated in their homes for their kitchen gardens.





Har Ghar Jal
Jal Jeevan Mission

JAL JEEVAN MISSION





Ms. Anita Chaudhary

VWSC member, Garhmau Village/
GP, Chhindwar, Madhya Pradesh



"If you are not alert now, then you may have to yearn for water in the coming times. Decreasing groundwater is indicating this. It would be better to understand this sign and curb the wasteful expenditure of water. Women contributing in every field can play a commendable role in this direction as we are the primary water managers at home" with this motto Anita Chowdhary of Garhmau village is preaching to women.

Anita as a homemaker had seen the struggle for water that she and other women and girls of her village faces. So, she started working to conserve water. She started sensitising women about the severe water woes they may face due to depleting groundwater levels. As women are the primary water managers, they can start using water judiciously while doing household chores and can manage the greywater. She says that there was a program in the village regarding water conservation.

When the in-village water supply was planned under the 'Har Ghar Jal' scheme, Anita who was a member of Srishti Self Help Group (SHG) and working as Jalsakhi is chosen as a member of the Village Water and Sanitation Committee (VWSC) by the Panchayat. She took the charge of motivating her people to pay community contributions for the in-village water supply scheme and collected ₹2,88,135.

Today, with 100% tap connections at the household and institution level Garhmau village has certified itself as 'Har Ghar Jal Gaon'. After the handover of the water supply scheme, Anita geared up to ensure operation & maintenance. She regularly conducts monthly meetings and keeps the records of Jal Kar (Water user charges). As a trained member of the surveillance committee, she undertakes testing of water sources and delivery points with Field Test Kits (FTKs).





Ms. K Asha
Panchayat President,
Alinjivakkam Village/ GP,
Thiruvallur, Tamil Nadu



Alinjivakkam Panchayat has 6 wards, 4 Habitation 480 Household with 2,232 Population. All families are getting potable water through household tap connections of adequate quantity (55 lpcd) on regular basis. All public Institutions like School, anganwadi Centre, library, SHG, and panchayat buildings also have tap water connections. The Panchayat has been certified as 'Har Ghar Jal Panchayat' through a resolution passed in Gram Sabha.

The in-village water supply scheme has 1 Borewell and 4 OHT facilities. In Alinjivakkam Panchayat 2 OHT Operator, Fitter, and Electrician are working to ensure the operation and maintenance of the water supply system. K Asha ensures that the OHT Operator fills the tank daily and maintains the timing. wherever any leakage is found in pipelines or electrical problems in the pump house, corrective measures are

taken immediately by Fitter and Electrician, so that regularity of water supply is maintained.

It was quite difficult to motivate people to pay water user charges as it is unexpected for them. K Asha did multiple meetings and finally convinced them, a resolution was passed by the panchayat, and each household is now paying 60 per month as water user charge.

K Asha also ensures grievances raised should be addressed timely. She personally takes grievances through WhatsApp and passed them to the concerned PHED official and keeps following up till it is resolved.





Ms. Munni Devi
Sarpanch, Pithoria GP,
Ranchi, Jharkhand



Pithoriya is a single revenue village Panchayat in Kanke Block of Ranchi District with total 1,688 households. Pithoriya Rural Piped Water Supply Scheme is based on the surface water of the Jumar river located almost 7 K.M from the village.

Smt. Muni Devi, Mukhiya of the Panchayat has been playing a crucial role in ensuring assured tap water connections to households. Her leadership in the Panchayat has transformed the lives of the communities in terms of water availability with quantity and quality. The journey was not easy, when the water supply scheme was handed over to VWSC, the main challenge was to collect monthly water user charges and ensure O&M. Smt. Muni Devi come forward and under the guidance of DWSD, Ranchi West team, she along with her Jalsahiya and other VWSC members conducted Gram Sabha, community meetings, and focus group discussions, where she elaborated on importance of potable water and its health benefits. Her regular and dedicated efforts helped in motivating people. The collect monthly water user charges of ₹62 per household and one-

time tap connection charge ₹310 per household.

At present Pithoriya VWSC has collected an amount of ₹7.5 Lakhs from user charge fees and ₹4.00 Lakhs from one-time tap connection charges. She also ensures water testing at the source and delivery point using FYK by the trained team comprising Jalsahiya and four women. Muni Devi makes sure school and anganwadi children consume potable water. She ensured skilled manpower as plumber, pump operator, and electrician for efficient service delivery. Grievances are registered in a register kept at the water supply scheme office, and the same is raised through WhatsApp and Jhar Jal App, operated at the state level. Under her leadership communities of Pithoriya Panchayat are happy to receive regular, assured tap water. Water meter has been installed to check the daily water supplied. Because of her work and true leadership, Smt. Muni Devi has been elected twice as Mukhiya of Pithoriya Panchayat.





Ms. Rosalina C Borges

**Asst. Engineer, Verna Village/GP,
South Goa, Goa**

Rosalina is serving as an Asst. engineer in the Work Division of water supply which has jurisdiction having 12 constituencies of Salcete & Mormugao Taluka, Goa. There are altogether 45 nos. of villages under my work division. The water supply to all these villages is supplied under the Multi villages scheme and treated water is supplied from a water treatment plant.

She also looks after three Municipal councils. She is part of the technical section of the division as well deals with estimation, tendering, design of water supply schemes, execution of works, monitoring of water quality billing, and revenue collection.

After the announcement of Jal Jeevan Mission by the Hon'ble Prime Minister of India on 15th August 2019, she along with her engineer colleagues conducted a detailed survey of all the rural areas in consultation with panchayats and identified houses without the facility of tap water connection. Based on the baseline report proposals are prepared for extension of pipelines.

All the households were visited and motivated to avail of tap connections, and more than 90% paid community

contributions for household tap connections. The community was duly supported by her team for all the assistance required in completing the formalities. She identified water scarcity areas, and corrective changes were made in the system to resolve the water supply issues in these areas.

The quantity of water is regularly monitored & checked, and water samples are tested in NABL-accredited laboratories. She gives importance to billing and collection of water tariffs. She motivated people to pay the water user charges and now 100% tariffs are collected, and people are happy in view of the improved service provided by the department.

Expressing her feelings Rosalina says, "I am blessed being a part of this humongous task and noble cause of providing water through taps right at people's doorstep. During this journey, I received a lot of good wishes from the public and also personally gained a lot of satisfaction. My sincere gratitude to Hon'ble Prime Minister of India for taking up this Mission."





Ms. Shaikh Mannbi Mujaffer Patel
Sarpanch, Hingani Haveli village,
Nandur Haveli Gram Panchayat,
District Beed, Maharashtra



Shaikh Mannbi Mujaffer Patel is a Sarpanch of Nandur Haveli. Since the time 'Har Ghar Jal' programme was started by Jal Jeevan Mission the team of women led by the Panchayat representatives have been working to provide tap water connection in every rural household of the village.

Women of Nandur are regularly collecting water user charges which is called the 'Pani Patti' in local dialect. The money collected from the community is used to carry out minor repairs.

Under the leadership of the Sarpanch, the team of women frequently visits the homes to sensitize the villagers on the importance of safe drinking water and its judicious use to ensure long-term sustainability. They make a note of the concerns and all the grievances are immediately addressed.

Today, the village is providing water through taps to all the households. The Jal Surakshak are trained to check the

water pressure and undertake repair if the tail-end houses face any issues. As the concerns of the community are addressed immediately, there are no pending complaints in the register which remain to be resolved.

No leakage or wastage of water is found in the village which goes a long way in managing the usage of drinking water. A team of women are trained to use Field Test Kits (FTKs) and test water samples at source and delivery points thereby ensuring that the water supplied is of prescribed quality. Regular cleaning of tanks, and chlorination/ disinfection is taking place in Nadur.





Ms. Tanmay Ben Devrambhai Thakre
President WC/ Sarpanch,
Malegaon Village/ GP, Dang, Gujarat



Mrs. Tanmay Ben Devrambhai Thakre is a science teacher, Sarpanch, and Chairman of Pani Samiti of Malegaon. She handles all her responsibility with dedication. Tanmayben is an exceptional leader who understands the challenges of the geographical location of her village and works tirelessly to provide water to every household in her village.

Tanmay Ben always preaches about the importance of water conservation, sanitation, and other development projects in her village. She has helped other members of the Pani Samiti to understand the situation and solve water issues effectively.

Working in Dang is quite tough as it is a geographically challenged region. Tanmay Ben is aware of the challenges and is always looking for innovative ways to provide clean water to her community. She believes that water conservation is the key to a sustainable future, and always encourages her community to conserve water.

Tanmay Ben's dedication has earned her the respect and admiration of her peers. Her tireless efforts to ensure that every

household in her village has access to water have transformed the lives of the villagers, especially women, and girls. Under her leadership, the Pani Samiti is successfully maintaining the in-village water supply system. For the Operation & maintenance of the water supply scheme, she motivated the community and monthly ₹50 is being collected per household.

Tanmay Ben Devrambhai Thakre is an exceptional community leader who understands the challenges of her village and works tirelessly to provide water to every household. Her experience as a science teacher has helped her in educating her community members about the benefits of the scheme, and her role as the Sarpanch has given her the opportunity to oversee the development projects in her village. Tanmay Ben's leadership and dedication to her community have made her an inspiration to many, and she is a role model for anyone who wants to make a difference in their community.





NATIONAL WATER MISSION





For Water Conservation (Jal Shakti Abhiyan – Catch the Rain)



Ms. Sharda Devi
Jal Saheli, Vijaypura,
Lalitpur, Uttar Pradesh

Sharda Devi is from Vijaypura village of Talbehat block of Lalitpur district, belongs to the Scheduled Caste community. When she got married in 1999, there was such a huge water crisis in village; she had to constantly migrate with her family to work in the city for livelihood. Like most of the families in her village all the decisions were also being taken by the males in the family and the females had no freedom to express themselves, no freedom to go out of the house except for work. It was also mandatory to be in veil.

Initially Sharda had to face a lot of resistance when she tried to go out and work for water conservation. When water conservation got started in the village by Parmarth Organization, it inspired her and gave her confidence. Finally, she started working as "Jal Saheli" in the village.

As "Jal Saheli", Sharda formed a "Pani Panchayat" by mobilizing women of 30 to 40 women were members.

Not only did she make sincere efforts to mitigate water crisis in her village, but also took leadership role in rejuvenation of Barua River of Lalitpur district. Initially people were reluctant and also were not

convinced that a river can be revived. But she persistent her efforts and finally women joined hands to work for the river rejuvenation.

All the women members of the Pani Panchayat started working for the revival of the Barua River and also protested mining in the river and organized public awareness programs, planted trees on the banks of the river and initiated river walks. They coordinated with gram panchayats and block level officials and started the work of construction of check dam and silt cleaning for the revival of Barua River.

In 2021, the women members of Pani Panchayat also constructed an earthen dam of 5000 sacks on the Barua River, to preserve rainwater during monsoon. Their collective efforts borne fruit and during the monsoon the river had water aplenty. Now the Barua River has ample water for people, animals and is a flowing river today.





For Water Conservation (Jal Shakti Abhiyan – Catch the Rain)



Ms. Dharmo Devi
Adhyaksh of Forest Development
Committee Dhaula Kuan, Paonta Sahib,
Sirmaur, Himachal Pradesh

Mrs Dharmo Devi Paonta Sahib, Sirmaur, Himachal Pradesh, is currently Adhyaksh of Forest Development Committee (FDC) formed for execution of water recharge and catchment area protection work in the reserve forest area (Naurangabad beat), her village comes under Jal Jeevan Mission initiative and has been taken up by Himmotthan Society (Tata Trusts). Dharmo Devi belongs to a poor farmer family and having small kids; manages all tasks herself and faced lots of challenges in initiating the catchment work for Catch The Rain initiatives in the reserve forest area. Then she collected the village women and men and met forest department with the clear vision of increasing the underground water level through catching the rain activities; DFO – Mr Kunal Angrish (IFS), forest division, Paonta Sahib, HP suggested them to form a Forest Development Committee. After formation of FDC she faced challenge in registering the committee and this took lot of time as well as the approval from higher authorities of Forest Deptt. – Himachal, took a year to register. She faced challenges managing house, catchment work, agriculture work

and other domestic tasks, but she did it successfully.

After formation of FDC; she mobilized other women of the area and motivated them to work for the catchment area protection and recharge activities on the basis of daily wages. Many of women and men came forward to do the work in the remote reserved forest area and she was able to accomplish such a challenging task with the support of the Himmotthan Society and finally able to construct 30-hectare trenches, seven-hectare plantation (3500 plants) and barbed wire fencing in 5-hectare area.

Due to protection and plantation in the catchment area the water table has increased. Approximately 109 million liter of water has been recharged through injecting of 3050 cubic meter water, through 975 trenches, 208 recharge ponds and 23 different types of check dams. Now the other organizations and the other area villages are visiting this area which is showcased as a model for water security through leadership of women.





For Water Conservation (Jal Shakti Abhiyan – Catch the Rain)



Ms. Parvati Devi
Panchayat Samiti Member,
Jarga, Koderma,
Jharkhand

Parvati Devi, Panchayat Samiti member of Kajhatad of village Jarga, Panchayat Jarga of Koderma block of Koderma district, has been making continuous efforts for the past 8 years to make her village and community aware of the importance of clean water conservation. During this she had to face a lot of challenges like organizing the community, illiteracy, problem of migration from the village and need of money for the project.

Inspired by Mr. Aditya Ranjan, Deputy Commissioner of the District, the villagers of Jarga village decided to change the picture of Jarga village with dogged determination. Parvati Devi, a member of Panchayat Samiti of Jarga village came forward and achieved great success 450 tree plantations, 675 TCBs, 3 mango plantations, 90 pansokhas, 6 ponds, 850 medhbandi and 1 water tower (for agricultural work) have been constructed with collective labor under

her leadership. Today the picture of Kajhatad is that the people of the village are living a healthy and happy with plantation of crops with help of rain water harvesting structures. The Landscape of the village has become greener.

It is the result of the continuous hard work done by Parvati Devi that about 175 houses of Jarga village of Jarga panchayat of Koderma block are living a happy life in their village today. This has also resulted in generation of employment, increase in literacy and has helped to stop the migration from village to the city.





For Water Conservation (Water Warriors)



Ms. Ganga Rajpoot
Jal Saheli, Bhoyra,
Chhatarpur, Madhya Pradesh



Ganga Rajput comes from a humble and ordinary background with an extraordinary leadership quality. 35 years old Ganga Rajput belongs to a very poor family from backward community of village Bhoyra, of Bada Malhera block of Chhatarpur district of Madhya Pradesh. Her village was facing severe water crisis causing the people of the village to travel more than 3-4 kilometres every day to fetch water. In the village, there used to be a large pond, Baba Talaab, a 12-acre pond originally built by Chandela rulers. However, the pond became defunct due to neglect almost four decades ago.

People stayed away from reviving Baba Talaab because of a prevailing superstition – the story in the village goes that when a sarpanch (village head) tried to revive Baba Talaab, he lost both his children. This superstition kept people away from reviving the pond. With no water left in it anymore, the residents began to use the dry land for the cultivation of crops.

The village was facing a severe water crisis as there was no facility to store water. There was not a single pond in the village. The hand pumps became too dry. Water shortage became a regular feature, especially in the summers.

Being severely affected by the water woes, Ganga decided to do something for the revival of this pond. She convinced the village women to take on the task of reviving Baba Talaab. She formed a group of 25 women from the village to form a water user group

(Jal Saheli) and led the way to revive this pond. This revival was planned with the help of Parmarth Samaj Sevi Sansthan, a social organisation.

There was initial resistance to reviving the pond. Then there were objections by people who had been growing crops on the dry area where the pond once existed. She mobilized the community and told them that "it was better to die for water than to die for superstition".

The village people cleaned the pond and removed the silt, and a check dam was constructed through community participation and convergence. When it rained, water was collected in the pond that also helped in groundwater recharge. Irrigation facilities also increased and for the first time the farmers cultivated wheat during Rabi season. Today the pond is full of water, and village community have managed to retain water in the pond which earlier used to flow out.

Ganga also mobilized the communities residing in the villages located at the bank of a local river Bachhedi river to form a river basin group for river rejuvenation efforts. Besides, she has been instrumental in revival of 6 other water bodies by community participation.

Ganga in her own humble way had fought with poverty, conservatism and superstitions to bring prosperity through reducing water crisis in her village. She received Paryavaran Award, from Government of India at Chennai Workshop.





For Water Conservation (Water Warriors)



Ms. Gayatri Devi Yadav
Water Warrior, Kheri Milak,
Jaipur, Rajasthan



Ms. Gayatri Yadav spent her life in fetching the water to fulfil her family's needs. She collected information about different government Water related Schemes which could help to fulfil her water requirements and she applied for a farm pond. However, due to "error of exclusion", at government level her name was not selected. She was able to convince her husband to construct farm pond.

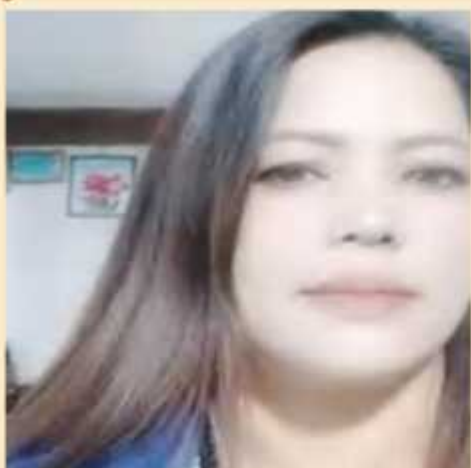
She decided to take the initiative to spread awareness about the importance of collection and storage of rainwater and water recycling. She has been continuously working to change thousands of women's lives in nearby 15 villages of Sambhar Lake Block, which comes under the extensive water crisis region in Jaipur District. Gayatri Devi has been working for last 5 years in Sambhar Region as a "Water Warrior" and influencing farmers to construct farm pond in their farms. She identifies the problem of region where water contaminated with high percentage of

fluoride has been causing bone related problem in children and malnutrition is prevalent in this region.

She is a pioneer in collaborating with the government and other organizations to build farm ponds to collect rainwater. This has been demonstrated by making a farm pond in the Sambhar Lake block of Rajasthan and its huge impact and promotion among farmers made this activity a mass movement. Linking with government schemes, she motivated farmers to construct farm ponds. This is incredible that in the last few years she helped 345 women to become entitled to the government's "Khet Talai" farm pond scheme. As a result, these women-led households started taking double crops every year and doing off-farming activities such as nutrition gardening.

This small initiative taken by Ms. Gayatri Devi is really important for the overall development of the region and plays a vital role in women's empowerment.





For Water Conservation (Water Warriors)



Ms. HS Lalawmpuii
President of Village Council,
Sairep, Lunglei, Mizoram

The current President of the Village Council Mrs HS Lalawmpuii who currently resides at Sairep village of Lunglei District is one woman one can learn a lot from. Being the VCP, she tackled many issues and challenges such as the scarcity of water in their village due to deforestation, the substandard connectivity to their village and lack of employment etc. Despite being one of the most crucial villages in the region as the water source starts from it, Sairep is populated by just 204 people as per the latest data due to the points mentioned.

Mrs HS Lalawmpuii has implemented and done significant work for her village. Some of the key activities she carried out included awareness drive among the residents on conservation of forest; awareness drive on rainwater harvesting; community mobilization on afforestation by organizing Shramdaan; provide support and work closely with the Government Departments and other NGOs who are implementing developmental works in their village. She initiated proposals to the stakeholders to provide development for their village and organize plantation drive for afforestation. She developed and implemented a new rule as a Village

Head to prevent deforestation.

Her efforts created a lot of positive impact. Five times tree plantation drives were organized. This had never been done before in their village in the past. Four water storage tanks were constructed from various sources of funding rounding up the total capacity to 6.9 lakhs liters. There were only 2 tanks with a capacity of 3 lakhs liters. Women were involved and they carried the construction of water conservation structures through Shramdaan, 4 times in one year. Two times Village level Gram Sabhas were conducted to spread awareness of catchment area conservation.

Funds from different government schemes were utilized for the construction of water conservation structures. Development funds from the 15th Finance Commission were mobilized and utilized for the village. Swachh Bharat Mission funds were utilized for cleanliness drive for the village. Mrs HS Lalawmpuii contribution in making it possible is exemplary.





सत्यमेव जयते
Government of India

Ministry of Jal Shakti
Department of Drinking Water & Sanitation
C Wing, 4th Floor, Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya Bhawan,
CGO Complex Lodi Road, New Delhi - 110003
Phone- 011-24361011, 011-24361245 Fax-011-24361297