

# “SUJALAM SUPHALAM”

A Peoples' Movement  
for District-wide Water  
Resources Development

*Program Implementation by  
District Administration*

*Program conceptualized and facilitated by  
Bharatiya Jain Sanghatana (BJS)*



## Background

India is facing recurrent spells of drought with increasing severity which has affected overall socio-economic condition of the country. Water shortages affect agriculture, livestock and livelihood of millions living in rural India. Women and Children are especially vulnerable to the effects of drought. Recurring droughts have caused financial stress forcing many farmers to take extreme steps.

Water has been an important subject for both Central and State Governments, and they have brought out many schemes and initiatives in the past for better water management. In recent past, water conservation has become even more critical subject as ground water exploitation in some areas has reached alarming levels. Hon'ble Prime Minister creat-

ed a separate "Jal Shakti" Ministry for better coordination with State initiatives. Jal Shakti Ministry has launched "Jal Shakti Abhiyan" (JSA), in which initially detailed aquifer mapping has been taken up in 255 districts with the help of State Governments and respective District Administration. Similarly, various State Governments already have various existing water conservation schemes, and have further intensified their efforts. The Central and State Governments are working closely with CSR and Civil Society organizations on various water conservation initiatives. With collaborative efforts between Government and civil society organizations, the goal of making water conservation a public movement can be achieved within a shorter span of time.

## Goal

Sustainable water resource management to reduce the effect of climate change

## Objectives of "Sujalam Suphalam"

- To facilitate collaborative action amongst stakeholders such as District Administration, Gram Panchayats, CSR and civil society organizations for water conservation initiatives, aligned with the guidelines set by Central & State Governments.
- To increase surface and ground water availability through watershed treatments in the Program villages for agricultural and domestic use.
- To increase awareness and enhance capacity of Gram Panchayat (GP) and farmers for effective management of community water resources.

## “Sujalam Suphalam” Program

Bharatiya Jain Sanghatana (BJS) has been working in water resources development since 2013. BJS has designed and developed district wide water resources development model – “Sujalam Suphalam” and is currently being implemented in nine districts across three States. This is complementing the efforts of State governments towards improving water security. “Sujalam Suphalam” focuses on improvement of village water resources by undertaking rejuvenation of water bodies and undertaking watershed treatments for augmentation of groundwater. The program also focusses on building community capacity for undertaking various social disciplines for improved water management.

BJS works closely with the State Governments to identify the districts and setting systems in place for implementation of “Sujalam Suphalam”. This program is implemented under the ownership of the District Administration with involvement of Gram Panchayat. BJS provides support for project planning, program management, community engagement and program monitoring. The district administration, prepares detailed scope of work aligned with Central and State Government guidelines. The program involves various types of watershed treatments including earthworks with a Ridge-to-Valley approach. Heavy machines required for earthwork are provided by BJS (with support from corporates) and fuel is provided by the State Government. Silt removed from ponds and lakes is fertile and farmers carry it to their farmlands at their own cost. This enhances farm productivity. Thus, all stakeholders i.e. Government, community, BJS (with support from corporates) contribute to the project without any financial transaction between them.

At the village level, BJS adopts collaborative approach with the Gram Panchayats (GPs) and educates them on the need of collective efforts required for far reaching response to drought. BJS encourages GPs to understand their roles and responsibilities for Water Conservation and Management. BJS undertakes various capacity building measures for the

community in the areas of watershed planning, execution, monitoring and water management.

Sustainability of water conservation programs has been a big challenge before Governments and civil society organizations. BJS from its long experience in drought response has understood that carrying out a water conservation initiative alone is not enough. It is of paramount importance to make the younger generation understand the impending water crises, the need for water conservation and required mitigating actions.

With this belief, Shantilal Muttha Foundation (SMF), started by the founder of BJS, has developed a curriculum for imparting knowledge on water management to school children. The curriculum developed is aligned with the education policy of the State and student-learning outcomes. In Maharashtra, the curriculum is already being implemented by Government teachers in classes 1st to 4th in 67,000 Government schools, under the “Mulyavardhan” program. Maharashtra State Education Department has also approved the curriculum for classes 5th to 9th which is being piloted in one District. With the experience of this program in Maharashtra, it can be replicated in other States with due approvals.

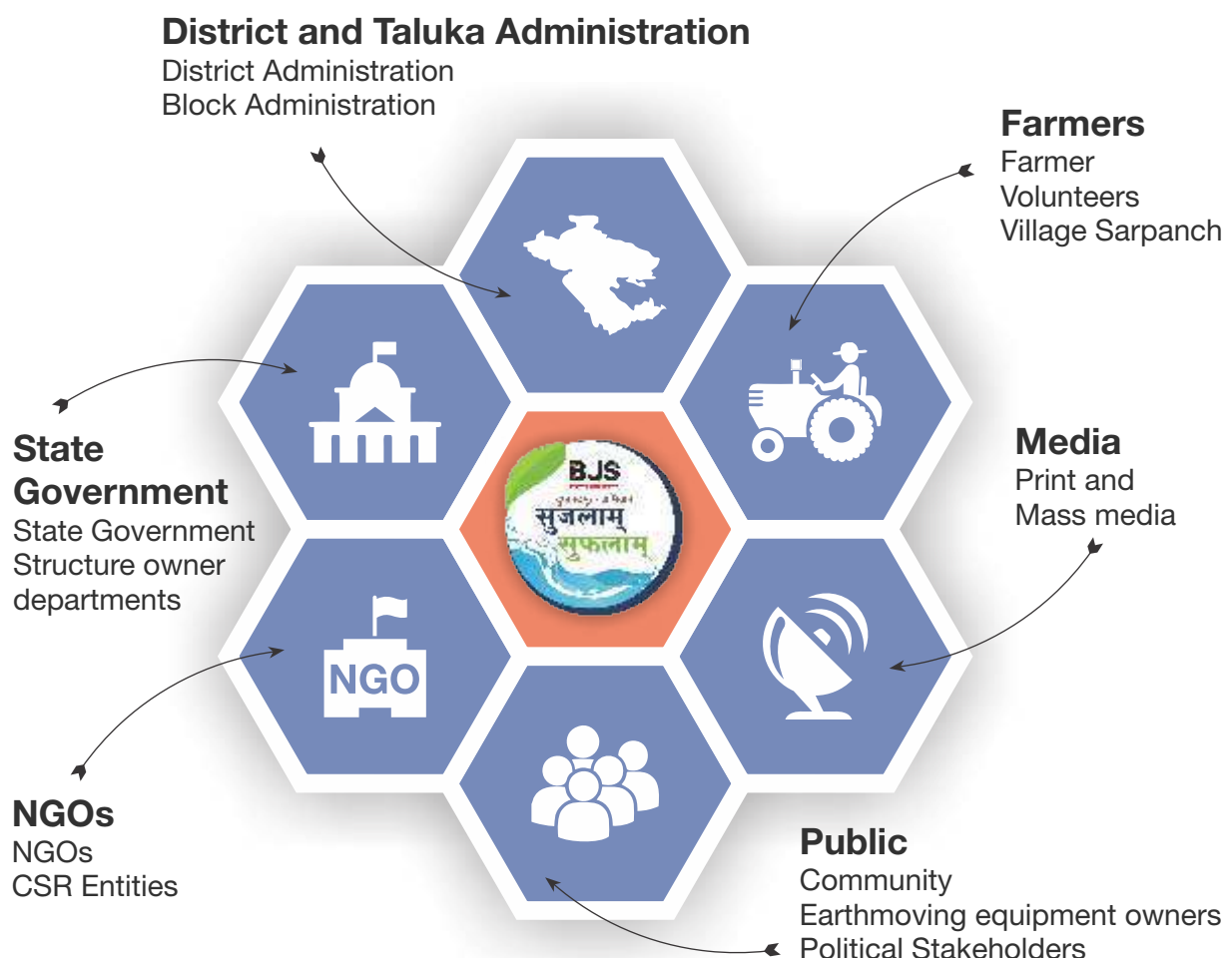
## Unique Features

“Sujalam Suphalam” distinctive features are:

- Unique collaboration amongst several stake holders like State Government, District Administration, Gram Panchayat, CSR and Civil Society Organizations.
- Farmers carry silt from the water bodies to their farmland at their own cost. Farmers’ contribution to the project is thus substantial.
- The program is designed with District as an administrative unit under the ownership of District Administration.
- High impact visible within short span of time.
- Replicable and scalable model.
- Active involvement and ownership of community leading to greater sustainability
- Transparency is high as there is no money transaction between Government, BJS and farmers.

## Key Stakeholders

Strong partnership between government, non-government / private organizations, media and public representatives, gram panchayats, community, farmers and others make the program a peoples’ movement.





## BJS–Government Partner Network

In the last 25 years, BJS has had experience of working in disaster and drought response across 15 States. It has worked closely with, and coordinated with many State governments over these years.

The subject of water is owned in a major way by the Government, as all water bodies are owned by different departments of State government. Government is the major service provider in this field. Hence BJS has always designed and developed its drought-response programs with Central and State governments as major stakeholders. BJS also ensures very close working with the concerned Government and its related departments.

In March 2018, Government of Maharashtra signed a MoU with BJS for implementation of Sujalam Suphalam in the drought prone district of Buldhana. Seeing the success of the pilot in a short period of three- months, the State Government scaled up the program to four more drought-prone districts.

In addition, State Governments of Jharkhand and Karnataka signed MoUs with BJS and are replicating Sujalam Suphalam for rejuvenation of water bodies in their respective aspirational districts.

Currently, implementation of Sujalam Suphalam has commenced in nine districts (which include six Aspirational Districts) of Maharashtra, Jharkhand and Karnataka.

BJS works closely with the District level officials, structure owner departments, taluka officials for obtaining technical and administrative approvals of structures, structure prioritization, setting up of the diesel supply mechanism, review and monitoring. After successful completion of the water structure treatments, BJS obtains the work completion status with the help of District and taluka officials.

## BJS-Corporate Partner Network

BJS has designed its Sujalam Suphalam program on the premise that water conservation initiatives will be carried out with the help of corporate support. Also, Social Responsibility is important to Corporate houses and many of them have taken interest in the area of water management. Hence, BJS and Corporates collaborate with each other fruitfully.

BJS focuses on Districts which either fall under Aspirational Districts, so designated by Niti Aayog because of low development indices, or water-critical districts which Ministry of Jal Shakti has prioritized. Corporates would also want to work in geographies which are more affected by water crisis, and therefore BJS and Corporates have area of common interest.

In 2017, district wide water conservation model was shared with Tata Trusts, and they resolved to support BJS on a long term basis in Maharashtra drought-free movement. Tata Trusts purchased 134 heavy earthmoving machines in the name of BJS to carry out Sujalam Suphalam project in Buldhana district, Maharashtra. In addition, they gave support for program management and also provided valuable inputs to the BJS team to strengthen program effectiveness. Tata Trusts initiative was appreciated by Corporates and state Governments.

District level water conservation model was appreciated by various corporates and they came forward to support BJS. Program was scaled up across three States, with the support of other corporate houses, Public Sector Enterprises and philanthropists. Some prominent names are HT Parekh Foundation, Reliance Foundation, ENAM Securities,

Bain Capital, ATE Chandra Foundation, Tata Technologies, Firodia Trust-Pune, Shilpa Medicare Ltd. Raichur, Overseas Volunteers for Better India (OVBI), Mehta Foundation, Jain University, Caring Friends Foundation, Radhakrishnaji Damani, Pradeepji Rathod, Dilipji Lakhi, NTPC and Airports Authority of India (AAI).

## Program Monitoring

- District Collector reviews and monitors the progress with the concerned government District and taluka level officials and BJS.
- A community based monitoring system is established with involvement of village Gram Panchayat to improve program effectiveness.
- BJS has a system for concurrent monitoring of the program through a user friendly Technology Platform, developed in-house.
- BJS appoints dedicated staff on its payroll at district and taluka level for day to day operations and monitoring of the program
- BJS State and District level office bearers participate in all planning, review and monitoring meetings with Government officials. They also support ground level monitoring in close coordination with taluka level officials and BJS staff.
- BJS has a robust mechanism of Management Information Systems, Technology, Monitoring & Evaluation, to support field operations. The senior management team of BJS keeps the State Nodal Officer updated on the periodic progress of the project.
- Baseline and impact assessment studies are conducted.

## Sustainability

- Participatory approach of involving farmers and community, right from inception till the completion of the program.
- Capacity enhancement of Gram Panchayat members for water conservation and management.
- District Administration felicitates 'Best performing Gram Panchayat Volunteers and Community Members' and motivates them for sustaining the project initiatives.
- Education to school children on water conservation and management enhances understanding of the next generation, making them responsible citizens thereby ensuring long-term sustainability.

## Outcomes

- Improved access to surface and ground water resources for domestic and agricultural usage.
- Improved fertility of the silt-applied farmlands.
- Community-based collective actions for water resource development.
- Enhanced capacities of the Gram Panchayats and community towards integrated water resources management.

## Role of BJS

BJS plays a key role of facilitator cum catalyst in bringing together Government, Gram Panchayats and community to work together to jointly address water scarcity issues. Specific role of BJS is:

- Orientation of District administration, Taluka administration, and structure owner departments on implementation processes for effective project execution.
- Organizing community awareness and sensitization program.
- Taking silt from the water body to the farmland is a key aspect of the project. It is a cost which is not easy to bear for a farmer. BJS plays a big role in motivating the farmers.
- Supporting Gram Panchayat for individual and community level water conservation and management.
- Rolling out water literacy curriculum in schools in the project villages.
- Providing heavy earth moving machinery to the district administration with corporate support for undertaking earthwork.
- Supporting the District Administration for project implementation and monitoring
- Supporting State Government in conducting various studies, program documentation, and evidence-based impact assessment.
- BJS works on a mission mode which ensures a high momentum and ultimately leads to a public movement.



## Role of State Government

- The State Government treats Sujalam Suphalam as a high priority program and provides it visibility through adequate publicity.
- State Government appoints a dedicated nodal authority at State level for coordination and management of this program.
- State Government makes necessary budgetary provisions for program implementation.
- State Government issues necessary instructions and orders, as per program requirements, to District Administration.
- State Government / Nodal authority conducts program review meetings and takes necessary measures to overcome implementation issues.
- State Government undertakes impact assessment studies to measure the effectiveness of the program

## Role of District Administration

- Sujalam Suphalam is implemented under the ownership of District Administration
- District Administration, with the help of all structure owner departments, prepares the scope of work.
- District Administration appoints a nodal authority at District level and a committee at taluka level to oversee the overall implementation of the program.
- District Administration accords necessary technical and administrative approvals for execution of work.
- District Administration organizes technical workshops for department officials and training programs for different stakeholders including farmers.
- District Administration issues necessary orders to Taluka committee and structure owner departments for diesel payments and to setup diesel delivery mechanism at project site.
- District Administration reviews and submits progress status and work completion reports.













Level 8, Muttha Chambers II, Senapati Bapat Road, Pune 411016, Maharashtra, India.

@ info@bjsindia.org

 www.bjsindia.org

 www.facebook.com/bjsindia