CHAPTER III

IMPLEMENTATION OF JAL JEEVAN MISSION

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Variations were noticed in the number of households as per the JJM Dashboard and as per the 'VP Tax Portal' of the Department for assessment of Property Tax. As a result, veracity of achievement percentage for FHTCs shown in the JJM dashboard could not be established. Implementation of works by TWAD Board was affected due to delay in site identification, non-obtaining of permissions from line departments and delayed execution besides lapses in tendering procedure. Further, assets created in VPs were not put to use owing to non-completion of TWAD Board works, non-availability of water sources etc. In respect of works executed by RD&PR Department, no penalty was levied for delayed execution.

3.1 Introduction

JJM focused on piped water as the only means of delivering potable water in rural areas, marking a significant shift in the approach to erstwhile rural water supply schemes. The Mission has been extended up to 2028. JJM Operational Guidelines specifies a tap connection as 'FHTC' when it fulfils the following three criteria:

Adequate Quantity	:	Ensuring supply of a minimum of 55 lpcd
Regular Supply	:	Supply is continuous and sustainable in the long term
Prescribed Quality	:	Water provided meets the drinking water standards[1]

Besides rural households, provision of FHTCs to Schools, *Anganwadi* centres, Gram Panchayat building, health centres, wellness centres and community buildings was also envisaged in JJM. Whenever a particular Administrative Unit *viz.,* VP/Block/District completes the stages in providing FHTCs **(Exhibit 3.1)**, the Unit is termed as having achieved '*Har Ghar Jal*' (HGJ) status.

Exhibit 3.1: Three stages for '*Har Ghar Jal*' declaration process

The households that are provided with tap water connection are noted in JJM IMIS after verification of name and Aadhaar number of head of household. Once all households of the village are noted in JJM IMIS, the villages acquires status of village with 100 *per cent* tap water connection.

↓

'Reported' means water supply department of State/ UT has confirmed that water is being supplied through taps to all households, schools and *Anganwadi* Centers in that administrative unit.

↓

'Certified' means that the Gram Sabha has passed the resolution after ascertaining the claim of water supply department that all the households, schools and *Anganwadi* Centers are getting the tap water supply in village. This is carried out after the water supply department provided the certificate to Gram Panchayat declaring that all households are provided with tap water supply.

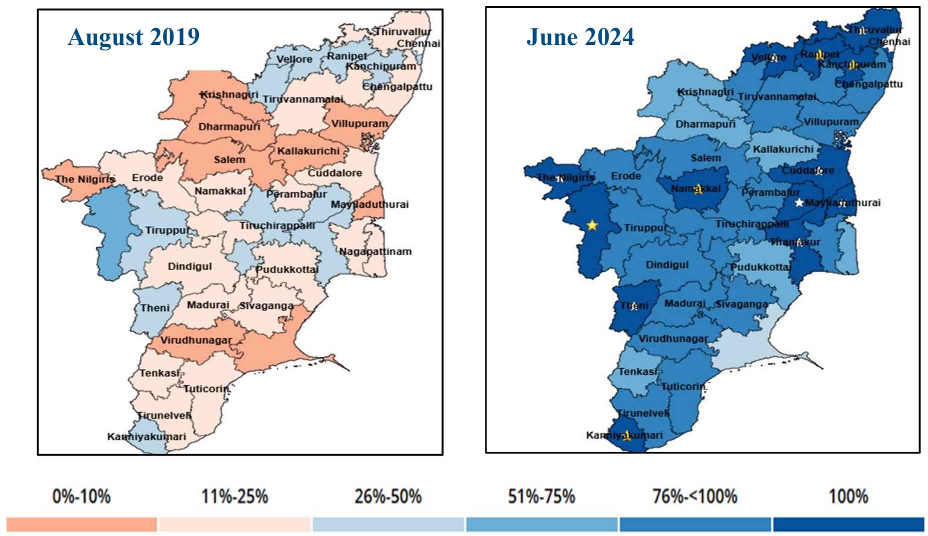
(Source: JJM dashboard)

[1] BIS: 10500:2012.

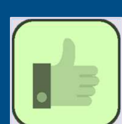
3.2 Coverage of FHTCs

At the launch of JJM i.e. 15 August 2019, Tamil Nadu had 21.76 lakh rural households with tap connections. This accounted for only 17.37 *per cent* (1.25 crore) of the total rural households in the State. As per the data provided in JJM Integrated Management Information System (IMIS) Dashboard, the State exhibited an overall achievement of providing FHTCs to 83.94 *per cent* (1.05 crore out of 1.25 crore) of rural households as of 2024 (**Exhibit 3.2**). Further, 100 *per cent* coverage was achieved in 10 districts[2].

Exhibit 3.2: Achievement in coverage of FHTCs under JJM during 2019-24



(Source: JJM dashboard)



- **The achievement of the State in providing FHTCs has improved from 17.37 *per cent* to 83.94 *per cent* during 2019-24.**
- **In selected districts, as against the initial status of 1.19 *per cent* of households with FHTCs, Viluppuram district recorded an achievement of 82.86 *per cent* in June 2024.**

Audit analysed the achievement of the selected districts reported in the JJM portal against the criteria for FHTC *viz.,* adequate quantity, regular supply and prescribed quality and the discrepancies noticed are detailed in the succeeding paragraphs.

3.3 Variations in households data

The core objective of JJM is to provide FHTCs to every rural household. As of April 2025, as per JJM dashboard, all the VPs in 13 and six districts had achieved '*Har Ghar Jal*' Reported and Certified status respectively.

Audit cross verified the data available in the JJM dashboard with the number of assessment as per the 'VP Tax portal' which is relied upon by the VPs for assessment and levy of property tax, water charges etc. The details of number

[2] Ariyalur, Coimbatore, Cuddalore, Kanchipuram, Kanniyakumari, Ranipet, The Nilgiris, Theni, Tiruvallur and Vellore.

of households in the selected districts as per the two data sets are given in **Table 3.1**.

Table 3.1: Number of households as per JJM and VP Tax portal

District	Total Households as per JJM portal	Households with Tap connection (as of November 2024)	Households as per VP Tax portal for 2024-25	Percentage of FHTC	
				JJM portal	VP Tax portal
Coimbatore	3,72,578	3,72,578	5,13,985	*100.00*	*72.49*
Nagapattinam	1,57,116	89,438	2,03,446	*56.92*	*43.96*
Ramanathapuram	3,33,279	1,11,024	4,24,073	*33.31*	*26.18*
Salem	6,46,114	5,65,111	7,46,427	*87.46*	*75.71*
Theni	1,85,013	1,85,013	2,36,911	*100.00*	*78.09*
Viluppuram	4,38,570	4,11,750	4,34,960	*93.88*	*94.66*

(Source: JJM dashboard and VP Tax portal data furnished by DRD)

From **Table 3.1**, it was seen that there was variance between the two sets of data relating to number of households. Further, out of the 60 selected VPs, 28 VPs were granted '*Har Ghar Jal*' status during the Audit period. Scrutiny revealed that, the number of FHTCs provided in these VPs was lesser than the households as per the 'VP Tax portal' indicating discrepancies in data adopted in two portals resulting in Audit not able to establish the veracity of achievement percentage shown in the JJM dashboard **(Appendix 3.1)**.

Government replied (April 2025) that the households in rural areas varied with time and as the households in IMIS data (updated up to June 2022) have been provided with FHTCs, it has been declared as '*Har Ghar Jal*'. The reply only indicated the fact that updation in IMIS portal is not real-time and VPs are to be certified '*Har Ghar Jal*' based on the provision of FHTCs to all households in the VPs as per the actual number of households at the time of certification.

Recommendation 3: The Government should direct the Department to update in a time bound manner, the household data in the IMIS portal so as to ensure complete coverage in all districts.

3.4 Implementation of Projects

According to JJM Operational Guidelines issued by GoTN, the RD&PR Department executes projects within individual VPs, while the TWAD Board is responsible for larger-scale projects that encompass multiple Blocks/Districts. **Table 3.2** below outlines the number of works carried out by the RD&PR Department during 2020-24 in six selected districts, along with the status of works and their associated financial implications.

Table 3.2: Year-wise works carried out by RD&PR Department

Year	Number of works			Amount (₹ in crore)	
	Sanctioned	Completed	Pending	Sanctioned	Expenditure
SVS Works					
2020-21	2,913	2,913	0	356.91	314.98
2022-23	369	369	0	106.04	85.16
2023-24	129	112	17	31.73	8.75
In-village component connected with TWAD Board works					
NEW MVS	1,864	516	1,348	190.91	48.99
MVS Retro fitting	1,482	1,482	0	139.00	106.17
Total	**6,757**	**5,392**	**1,365**	**824.59**	**564.05**

(Source: Details furnished by RD&PR Department)

- **All the SVS Works taken up by the Department during 2020-21 and 2022-23 were completed and there was no pendency.**

Further, in respect of MVS, out of 10 works valuing ₹5,595.47 crore taken up by TWAD Board during 2020-21 to 2023-24 in the selected districts, five works relating to 2022-23 are still pending.

Audit observations based on scrutiny of execution of works by both RD&PR Department and TWAD Board and records maintained by the implementing agencies are discussed in the following paragraphs.

3.5 Discrepancies in Tendering and Contract Management

3.5.1 Splitting up of work to avoid tender transparency requirements

In order to ensure transparency, competitive pricing, and accountability, GoTN revised (August 2017) the financial norms for advertising Notice Inviting Tenders in newspapers as detailed in **Table 3.3**.

Table 3.3: Financial norms for advertising

Value of Procurement	Newspapers in which to be published
Above ₹10 lakh and up to ₹25 lakh	One Tamil daily - District edition
Above ₹25 lakh and up to ₹3 crore	One English daily and one Tamil daily - all editions in the State

(Source: Government Orders)

Under JJM works, the work of providing new MVS[3] in Ramanathapuram District was taken up by TWAD Board during 2021-22. Tenders for surveying and levelling works to aid in preparation of the Detailed Project Report (DPR) for the new MVS, at an estimated cost of ₹1.74 crore was initiated in January 2022. The works were split up into ten packages (between ₹12.70 lakh and ₹24.33 lakh) and the same was finalised in February 2022 (**Appendix 3.2**).

In this regard, Audit observed that in spite of the scope of work being similar, the works were split up into smaller contracts to avoid the tender transparency thresholds and it was also not published in the newspaper as per the norms.

[3] 4 Municipalities, 7 Town Panchayats and 2,189 rural habitations.

Further, based on the classification of soil as 'ordinary soil' in the survey and levelling work, the DPR was finalised. However, during execution the soil classification was reassessed as 'including ordinary soil, soft disintegrated rock, Dense Medium Rock not requiring blasting and Dense Medium Rock requiring control blasting' resulting in excess expenditure. The issue is further discussed in **Paragraph 3.6.1 (b)**.

The Government stated (April 2025) the non-availability of contractors due to COVID-19 outbreak and the urgency of work as reasons for splitting up of tender. It was further stated that all the reports were completed as per the agreement. The reply is not acceptable as adherence to tender conditions is mandatory and the finalisation of tender was done after the COVID-19 outbreak.

3.5.2 Lack of transparency in tender procedure

As per the proceedings (November 2023) of the District collector *cum* Chairman, DRDA, Ramanathapuram District, an amount of ₹45.68 lakh was allocated to the 11 Blocks of the district for printing of hoardings, posters and pamphlets towards IEC activities. Scrutiny of records in the two[4] selected blocks revealed that the quotations submitted by vendors lacked dates and were not countersigned by the Tender Inviting Authority. Further, no records were furnished to Audit to substantiate that the BDOs had called for quotations[5] from the Suppliers in the first place. These lapses indicated violation of the provisions of the Tamil Nadu Transparency in Tender Act / Rules besides raising concerns about the validity and authenticity of the tender process.

The BDO (VP) replied (September 2024) that proper tender conditions would be followed hereafter. Government replied (July 2025) that invitations were sent to three selected vendors in both the blocks and that due to documentary lapses in some of the works signing procedures would have been missed out by the Tender Inviting Authority. The reply is contradictory to the earlier reply of the BDO and the documentary evidence in support of the reply was not furnished.

3.5.3 Non-compliance of Agreement procedures

As per GoTN Operational Guidelines, a tripartite agreement must be executed between VP, DWSM and Implementing Agency before commencement of work.

- Scrutiny of records relating to Nagapattinam during 2019-24 revealed that in 39 out of 104 works, no contractual agreement was executed with the respective contractors and in 47 works taken up by four contractor, the signatures of VP authorities were not available in the agreements.

  Government replied (July 2025) that tripartite agreement has been executed for all JJM works in Thirumarugal Block. The reply is not acceptable as the cases pointed out in Audit included works executed in the Thirumarugal Block also and no documentary evidence was furnished by the Government in support of the above reply. Further,

4 Thiruppullani and Thiruvadanai Blocks.

5 As per Rule 8 of the Tamil Nadu Transparency in Tender Rules, 2000, Notices Inviting Tenders and decisions on tenders in all cases, where the value of the procurement exceeds ₹10 lakh and is below ₹25 lakh, shall be published.

the current reply is in contradiction to the earlier reply given in April 2025 wherein it was stated that all tender conditions would be strictly followed in future and necessary instructions were issued.

- Further, out of 340 in-village works executed in Ramanathapuram during 2023-24, Audit test checked 44 works in which it was noticed that agreement was not executed in 16 works and in the remaining 28 works, agreement was entered into only after the completion of the works. Government endorsed (July 2025) the reply of Mission Director, JJM (June 2025) that due to documentary lapses in some of the works signing procedures was missed out by the Tender Inviting Authority and that all the works were completed successfully without any financial and legal issues. Government also stated (July 2025) that Mission Director will pursue in taking action for the lapses of non-compliance of agreement procedures against the erring officials.
- Audit also noticed that the agreement with the assigned Third Party Inspection Agencies as per JJM Operational Guidelines was not executed by Ramanathapuram and Sivagangai Divisions of TWAD Board. As a result, the TPIA functioned without a contract agreement between the concerned authorities that outlined the terms of service, roles, and responsibilities. Government replied (July 2025) that the agreement was since concluded in February 2025 and the delay in concluding the agreement was because the Third Party Inspection Agency did not provide the necessary security deposit on time.

As the agreement would serve as a legally binding document, these procedural lapses not only undermine the integrity of the contract management process but also expose the Department to potential legal and financial risks.

Recommendation 4: The Government should fix responsibility for the lapses in tender procedures and direct the Implementing agencies to ensure adherence to the relevant Act and Rules.

3.6 Execution of works under JJM by TWAD Board

3.6.1 Ramanathapuram New Multi Village Scheme

GoTN accorded (December 2022) administrative approval for New MVS under JJM in Ramanathapuram district to ensure a minimum of 55 lpcd of water supply at a cost of ₹4,187.84 crore. The project area was made as two systems *viz*., Systems 1 and 2 encompassing Ramanathapuram and Dindigul districts respectively with river Cauvery as the source. System 1 was divided into four packages having components like Headworks[6], Zonal Balancing Reservoir[7] (ZBR), Service Reservoirs (OHT), Master Balancing Reservoir, Gravity Main, Feeder main, etc., and the work orders were issued in March/April 2023, with a target completion period of 18 months. As of May 2025, the percentage of completion of works ranged between 81 *per cent* and 90 *per cent* only, even

6 A civil engineering term for any structure at the head or diversion point of a waterway.

7 These are typically smaller than main balancing reservoirs and are located within a specific zone of a water distribution system. They are used to regulate water pressure and distribution within that zone.

after six/seven months from the target date of completion. The factors which contributed to the delay are discussed in succeeding paragraphs.

(a) Procedural delays


Exhibit 3.3: Intake Well Ramanathapuram MVS

Work order for construction of intake well (**Exhibit 3.3**) under Head works component of Package I was issued in April 2023 before the actual possession of site, in violation of TWAD Board instructions (February 2011) and the site was handed over to the contractor only in June 2023. As a result, the work began in July 2023 only.


Exhibit 3.4: Master Balancing Reservoir at Thumbaipatti VP

Similarly, in Package III, the Master Balancing Reservoir (**Exhibit 3.4**) location was changed four[8] times from April 2023 up to October 2023. Further, due to public objection, the construction was delayed and commenced only in May 2024. Government replied (April 2025) that necessary notice has been issued to the contractor to speed up the work and stated that the work would be completed before September 2025. The reply is not acceptable since Work order was issued before finalisation of site in violation of instructions.

In addition, there was delay (ranging between 93 days to 411 days from the date of Agreement - April 2023) in providing drawings for the Head works, Water Treatment Plant, etc., by TWAD Board to the contractor. These were handed over between July 2023 and June 2024. Government replied (April 2025) that the design and drawings for headworks and Water treatment plant were handed over to contractor during agreement stage itself, for ZBRs and OHTs by December 2023 and other drawings after April 2024. The fact remains that delayed finalization of drawings impacted the completion of works.

(b) Incorrect classification of soil & execution of additional items without approval of the Board

Proper soil classification is essential for designing and construction of infrastructure for water supply schemes. Incorrect soil classification affects excavation techniques, foundation design, and pipe-laying methodologies.

As discussed in **Paragraph 3.5.1**, the tender for survey and levelling works for identification of soil classification for New MVS work in Ramanathapuram was done in February 2022. Scrutiny of records revealed that the soil classification for earthwork was taken as 'Ordinary soil' in the sanctioned DPR. The contractor stated (July 2023) that presence of hard rock was noticed in certain areas during execution, which required controlled blasting for excavation. In view of this, an addendum to the agreement incorporating the supplementary item for excavation of hard rock was sought for by the contractor.

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8 Initially proposed at Ganapathipalayam but was subsequently changed (July 2023) to Aatukulam, then to Navinipatti (August 2023), and finally to Thumbaipatti in the first week of October 2023.

Subsequently, the soil was reclassified (as per TWAD Board instructions) as ordinary soil, soft disintegrated rock, Dense Medium Rock not requiring blasting and Dense Medium Rock requiring control blasting. Accordingly, an additional amount of ₹36.70 crore was approved (July 2023/March 2024) by the Chief Engineer (CE), Madurai.

As the value of the additional items exceeded ₹50 lakh, prior approval from the Technical Committee was required before execution. Audit observed that, the additional works were carried out without obtaining approval for the same, which was in violation of the delegation of financial powers. Further, the delay was compounded due to obtaining approval from District Collector for blasting activities.

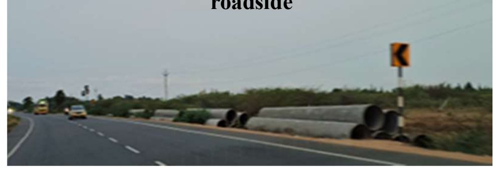
Government replied (April 2025) that after completion of all the packages, additional/substituted items of executed works will be submitted by the concerned executing division to TWAD Board Head Office for approval. The reply is not acceptable since the changes exceeded the delegation of power (more than ₹50 lakh) which required the approval of the Tender Committee and the same was not done. Further, the reply is silent about the action taken for the submission of incorrect soil classification in the DPR.

(c) Delay in obtaining approvals from line department

As per TWAD Board's instructions (February 2011), prior approval from the relevant line departments must be obtained before commencing a project. The New MVS included works related to laying of pipelines along the road in National Highways[9] (NH) for which prior approval of the concerned Department, i.e., Ministry of Road Transport and Highways, GoI was required. In this regard, Audit observed that, while the agreement for new MVS was finalised in April 2023, the request for permission for laying of pipelines was submitted to the Regional Office, National Highways Chennai only in July 2023 in violation of instructions (February 2011). After much deliberations and the decision of the National Highways to widen the Highway (four-laning), TWAD Board was advised (September 2024) to lay the water pipeline along an alternative route as the existing road width was insufficient to accommodate both the pipeline and proposed road widening.

This resulted in completion of only 62 *per cent* of the pipeline laying work (October 2024), though 82 *per cent* of the pipes were procured, which was noticed, during JPV, as stored along the roadside at multiple locations (**Exhibit 3.5**).

Exhibit 3.5: Pipes for JJM works lying on roadside



Government replied (April 2025) that the approval from NHAI was yet to be received and the contractor has been requested to lay the pipeline in the feasible reaches. The reply is not tenable since, the work was taken up without firming up the site and as such the expenditure incurred till date remained unfruitful.

[9] Package II - permission sought for 100.134 Km in NH 32, 85 and 87; Package IV - permission sought for 64.187 Km in Paramakudi - Ramanathapuram and Ramanathapuram - Mandapam NH.

(d) Construction of ZBR and Service Reservoirs

The package-wise number of ZBR and service reservoirs taken up and status of works as of May 2025 are detailed in **Table 3.4**.

Table 3.4: Status of progress

Particulars	ZBR	Service Reservoirs
	(In numbers)	
Completed	35	596
Under progress	62	164
Not started	0	64
Total	**97**	**824**

(Source: Details furnished by TWAD)

Though the target for completion of the New MVS work was October 2024, it was noticed that only 36 *per cent* of ZBRs were completed as of May 2025. Further, during JPV of the works, it was also observed that the construction of headworks, establishment of Water Treatment Plant, laying of pipelines and Over Head Tanks works were also not completed as per agreed milestones.

Government replied (April 2025) that sufficient skilled labour was not available. It was also stated that notice has been issued to the contractor to complete the balance works within the time period. Audit observed that delay in the completion of reservoirs affected the availability of water storage capacity for effective water distribution, which in turn affected the overall achievement in JJM as only 31 *per cent* of the households were covered as of June 2024.

3.6.2 Delay in execution of Retrofitting work of CWSS in Salem District

GoTN accorded Administrative Sanction (July 2022) for ₹85.63 crore[10] towards retrofitting work of the existing[11] scheme (from June 2003) in Salem District, to enhance the service levels from 40 lpcd to 55 lpcd. To achieve this, the additional requirement for the ultimate stage target year of 2054 was assessed as 5.166 MLD (Million Litres per day).

The work order was issued in August 2023, with a targeted completion period of 12 months (August 2024). However, as of March 2025, the work remained incomplete. Based on JPV and the records furnished to Audit, the factors contributing to the delay are detailed below.

(a) Delay in obtaining approvals from line departments

Exhibit 3.6: Pipes not laid pending clearance

One[12] of the pipeline sections covering 1.4 km, remained incomplete due to delays in obtaining approval from the Highways Department. Although TWAD requested permission to lay pipes in November 2022, the Highways Department has yet to decide whether the pipes should be laid on the right or left side, and the approval is still pending. As a result, the pipeline for this stretch has not been laid to date (**Exhibit 3.6**), with pipes stored along the

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10 TWAD Board - implementation of source-to-overhead tank components at a cost of ₹43.53 crore; RD&PR Department - execution of in-village components including the distribution system and FHTCs at a cost of ₹42.10 crore.

11 Combined Water Supply Scheme (CWSS) for 136 fluoride-affected habitations and 512 wayside habitations in Kadayampatty and three other unions in Salem District'.

12 Pipeline between Thindamangalam BPT and Thimirikottai Pirivu in Omalur Union.

roadside at multiple locations, awaiting clearance from the Tamil Nadu Road Sector Project.

(b) Incomplete pipeline installation

One of the key components was the laying of a 5.6 km MS pipeline. However, as of March 2025, only 4.2 km has been supplied and installed, while the remaining 1.4 km of MS pipeline was yet to be laid due to non-availability of MS pipes. Thus, non-firming up of MS pipes before the commencement of the project contributed to the delay in completion of the project. Thus, the significant delays hindered the scheme's objective of supply of 55 lpcd of water to these habitations.

Recommendation 5: The Government must direct the TWAD Board to ensure that all the necessary approvals have been obtained before commencement of works so that all the water supply works under JJM are executed without delay.

3.7 Execution of in-village components by RD&PR Department

The district wise number of sanctioned in-village works for the period 2020-24 in six selected Districts is given in **Appendix 3.3**.

3.7.1 Delay in completion of work

As per the general conditions of Contract, penalty will be levied and collected from the contractor for delay in completion of work. In case of delay beyond 60 days, the work order issued should be cancelled, security deposit forfeited, and the contractor blacklisted and penalised.

Audit observed that in four[13] districts, out of 4,261 works, there was delay in completion in respect of 4,010 works, the delay ranged between 30 days and 1,380 days. Though, the delay warranted, besides levy of penalty, cancellation, blacklisting, etc., no action was taken in this regard. Further, the delay in execution of in-village works affected the last mile service delivery and ultimately impacted the achievement of objective of JJM.

Government replied (April 2025) that fine of ₹16.47 lakh has been imposed in 786 works relating to Coimbatore district. No specific reply has been given in respect of the remaining three districts. The reply is silent about levy of penalty in respect of the remaining three districts and also in respect of all the works in Coimbatore that were delayed. Further, it was also silent on the action taken on the defaulting contractors.

3.7.2 Non-adherence to TWAD norms in construction of OHTs

In respect of construction of OHTs, staging height[14] is crucial to ensure minimum residual pressure for water supply. The norms followed by TWAD Board stipulates that staging height of 12 metre is required for OHTs with capacity of 30,000 litres and above.

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13 Coimbatore, Salem, Theni and Viluppuram.

14 Height of staging is the difference between the lowest supply level of tank and the average ground level at the tank site.

Test check of four OHTs constructed (May/July 2022) by RD&PR Department in three[15] VPs of Coimbatore District revealed that though the capacity was 30,000/60,000 litres, the staging height as per TPIA report ranged between 6 metre and 9.1 metre. This is in violation of the above said norms. Inadequate staging height of these OHTs would affect the minimum residual pressure required for sustained supply of water till the tail end habitation.

3.8 Infrastructure not put to use

Ramanathapuram District

During JPV (September 2024) in Ramanathapuram District, Audit noticed that although construction of OHTs was completed, water was not stored in them due to non-connection with the CWSS/MVS feeder or local bore well. Further, the distribution pipelines with FHTCs were not connected with OHTs.

In reply, Additional Collector/Project Director of DRDA, Ramanathapuram stated (September 2024) that (i) Water from own source (bore wells) depends on monsoon (ii) Once CWSS/MVS works were completed, it would be possible to ensure supply of 55 lpcd drinking water and (iii) all infrastructure would effectively be put up into use after completion of retrofitting and New MVS scheme works.

Thus, the intended benefits of providing a sustainable and adequate water supply to every household was not achieved, leaving residents to seek alternative and costly sources of drinking water.

Viluppuram District

The District Collector, Viluppuram accorded administrative sanction (August 2020) for construction of five[16] Borewells for Vikravandi Block at an estimated cost of ₹73.48 lakh. During JPV (September 2024), Audit observed that in Kuthampoondi VP, out of two borewells, one borewell was lying idle for over 24 months due to the absence of essential provisions such as motor and pump room and all the three borewells of Kayathur VP created under JJM remained idle. Non-utilisation of the above assets denied the public of the purpose of construction of borewells.

Government replied (April 2025) that water from the bore wells have been sent for water test in TWAD laboratory and based on the report, necessary action would be taken to utilise the bore well. The reply is not tenable since the water quality testing should have been done before taking up the work.

Theni District

The District Collector/Chairman, DRDA, Theni accorded administrative sanction (August 2020) for the work of ‘Providing water supply to Sillamarathupatty village from existing infiltration well to ground level sump’ for Bodinayakkanur Block at an estimated cost of ₹1.30 crore and the work was completed in November 2022. During JPV, Audit observed that water was not being pumped from the infiltration well as planned but rather from a local borewell source. The reasons for the same was not available on record.

[15] Thekkampatti, Rasichettipalayam and Vadhambacheri.

[16] Two Borewells at Kuthampoondi VP and three Borewells at Kayathur VP.

Consequently, the failure to supply water from the infiltration well to the sump rendered the incurred expenditure of ₹1.30 crore ineffective.

In response to the audit query, the District Rural Development Agency stated (September 2024) that under JJM work, a 40 HP motor was provided. However, there was no sufficient water for the above motor capacity. The pumping main pipes also got burst due to the high-capacity motor. It was also stated that the motor capacity was since reduced to 20 HP and trial runs were in progress.

Government replied (April 2025) that work for an additional sump to utilise the water supply from infiltration well will be completed. The reply is not tenable since in case of insufficient water in the existing source after utilising reduced capacity of motor, alternative source should be looked into and not construction of additional sump.

Recommendation 6: The Government should direct the Department to rectify the deficiencies in the execution of work so as to ensure proper utilisation of all assets created, at the earliest for achievement of the intended objective.

3.9 Construction of excess storage structures

The GoTN Operational Guidelines for implementation of JJM has provided detailed instructions with regards to proposal and sanctioning for construction of storage structures such as Over Head Tanks (OHTs) and Ground Level Reservoirs (GLRs). Accordingly, the following assessments were to be made:

- New storage structures may be proposed only when necessary, based on the additional requirements identified.
- Need for an OHT is determined by evaluating the daily total water demand of the selected habitation for the ultimate design period.
- The capacity of the OHT should be designed to meet 50 *per cent* of the total daily demand, allowing the supply to be managed with two fillings per day, ensuring efficient use of funds.

Director, RD&PR Department had identified (2015) several VPs having storage structures exceeding the required capacity due to taking up of construction under different schemes. Consequently, instructions were issued (April 2015) that additional OHTs should not be built if they result in excess water storage structures, as this would lead to wasteful expenditure. Further, prior approval had to be obtained from the District Collector, along with a clear justification for the requirement wherever construction of an additional OHT was deemed necessary.

(a) Ramanathapuram District

Audit analysed the data in the DRDA's report detailing the population and the available storage structures in each habitation as of 01 April 2023, against the daily water requirements and storage needs projected for the ultimate design period of 2053. The adequacy of water storage structures in 2,306 habitations in the district pre and post JJM and other schemes during 2020-24 are given in **Table 3.5**.

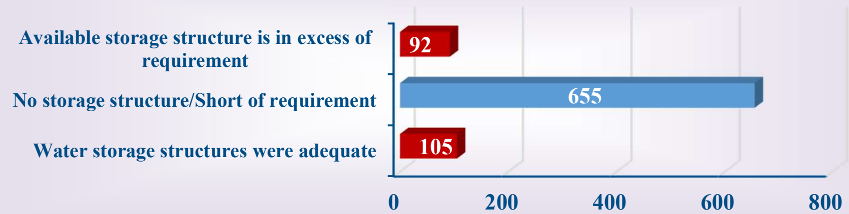
Table 3.5: Adequacy of water storage structures in the habitations of Ramanathapuram

Capacity of existing storage structures in habitations	Prior to commencement of JJM	After creation of structures during 2020-24	Percentage of increase (+)/ decrease (-)
Excess	363	655	*80.44*
Adequate	487	729	*49.69*
No storage structure/Short of requirement	1,456	922	*(-) 36.68*

(Source: Audit analysis of the capacity of storage structures furnished by RD&PR department)

A total of 943 OHTs were constructed in the district during the said period. From **Table 3.5**, it can be seen that, habitations having excess storage even before commencement of JJM were provided with additional OHTs even when there were habitations with shortage. Further, in 830 habitations out of 1,456 that did not have any storage structure prior to commencement of JJM, 430 (out of 922 habitations) continued to remain in the same state. The details of additional OHTs provided to habitations under JJM and other schemes during 2020-24 is given in **Exhibit 3.7.**

Exhibit 3.7: Habitations provided with additional OHTs

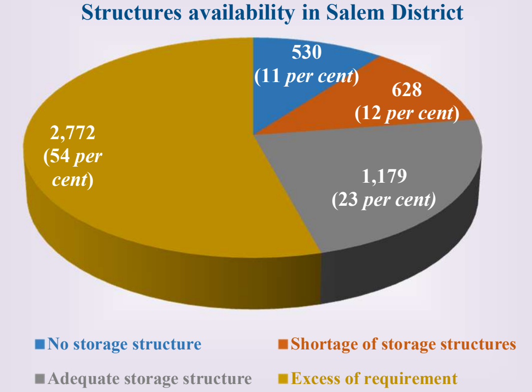


(Source: Audit analysis of OHTs sanctioned to habitations)

From **Exhibit 3.7**, it is seen that 105 out of 487 habitations (21.56 *per cent*) which had adequate water storage structures and 92 out of 363 habitations (25.34 *per cent*) which had excess water storage structures prior to commencement of JJM were provided with additional OHTs. Further, more than one OHT was sanctioned to 12 out of 92 habitations that already had excess storage structures.

(b) Salem District

Exhibit 3.8: Habitations with Storage Structures availability in Salem District



In respect of Salem District, Audit reviewed (March 2025) the available storage structures as per the DRDA's Report as of April 2023 against the daily water requirements and projected storage needs for the ultimate design period of 2053. It was noticed that out of 5,109 habitations in Salem District, while 530 habitations (10.39 *per cent*) lacked storage structures entirely, 2,772 habitations (54 *per cent*) had storage capacities exceeding their requirements (**Exhibit 3.8**).

The District Collector, Salem granted Administrative Sanction (June 2022) for construction of 26 OHTs and 15,031 FHTCs to Kaveripuram and Kolathur Union at a cost of ₹19.98 crore. Audit conducted JPV (March 2025) of the OHTs constructed and observed the following:

- Water was not being supplied to the newly constructed OHTs at three[17] habitations.
- The 26 OHTs were constructed by RD&PR Department under JJM without any prior intimation to TWAD.
- Additional OHTs were also constructed alongside existing OHTs **(Exhibit 3.9)**.

Exhibit 3.9: Newly constructed OHT adjacent to existing OHT at Kolathur Block

- The TWAD officials also stated that water could be supplied to the new OHTs from the CWSS only after replacing the pump set with a suitable type and capacity and upgrading the pipelines with the appropriate diameter.

Audit observed that (i) the reasons for not supplying water to OHTs and the reasons for utilising different type of pipelines, as against the standard specifications were not on record (ii) the construction of OHTs could have been avoided and utilised in habitations having shortage of storage structures (under-served areas) indicating inadequate planning and resource mismanagement besides underutilization of the created assets.

Government replied (July 2025) that the staging height and age of OHTs were also considered before arriving at the requirement. Once after completion of new MVS and Retrofitting works of existing CWSS in Ramanathapuram, the OHTs which are aged more than 20 years will be subjected to demolition and the remaining OHT will meet the ultimate demand population for the district. The reply is not tenable since the above procedure should have been considered only after construction of OHTs in habitations where there is no such infrastructure.

Recommendation 7: The Government should ensure that storage infrastructure are created only in needy habitations to avoid idling of the assets created besides optimum utilisation of valuable resources.

[17] Chettipatti Colony, Kanavaikadu and Melmolaporaiyur Blocks.