

PM Ujjwala Yojana: Transforming Rural India with Clean Cooking Fuel

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Introduction

The **Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana (PMUY)** is a flagship social welfare scheme launched by the Government of India to provide clean cooking fuel to economically weaker sections, especially women in rural areas. Since its launch in May 2016, the scheme has made significant progress in improving health outcomes, reducing indoor pollution, and empowering rural women.

In this article, we explore the objectives, benefits, eligibility criteria, application process, and impact of PM Ujjwala Yojana, followed by a comprehensive FAQ section.

What is PM Ujjwala Yojana?

PM Ujjwala Yojana (PMUY) aims to provide LPG connections to Below Poverty Line (BPL) households to reduce dependency on traditional cooking fuels like firewood, coal, and dung cakes. These traditional fuels pose severe health risks due to indoor air pollution and are a major cause of respiratory diseases, especially in women and children.

Scheme Highlights

- Launch Date: 1st May 2016
- Launched By: Prime Minister Narendra Modi
- Nodal Ministry: Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas
- Target Beneficiaries: Women from BPL households
- Goal: To provide 80 million LPG connections to eligible families

Objectives of PMUY

- To reduce indoor air pollution and related health hazards
- To empower rural women by providing them with clean fuel access

- To reduce deforestation and environmental degradation
- To create awareness about clean cooking practices
- To enhance ease of living for rural households

Key Features and Benefits

Free LPG Connection

Eligible households receive a free LPG connection, including a gas cylinder, pressure regulator, and installation cost.

Financial Assistance

A subsidy of Rs. 1,600 per connection is provided by the central government.

Loan Facility for Stove and First Refill

Oil Marketing Companies offer interest-free loans to cover the cost of the stove and the first LPG refill.

Empowering Women

The scheme provides connections in the name of women, promoting gender inclusion and dignity.

Health and Environment Benefits

It significantly reduces the exposure to smoke and helps in curbing respiratory illnesses, especially among women and children.

PMUY 2.0 (Launched in August 2021)

Under PMUY 2.0, additional provisions were introduced to extend the benefits further:

- One free refill and stove along with the new connection
- Extended to migrant families without permanent address proof in the location of work
- Simplified documentation and self-declaration for address proof

Eligibility Criteria for PM Ujjwala Yojana

To avail the benefits, applicants must meet the following conditions:

- Must be a woman from a BPL household
- Must be above 18 years of age
- Must not already have an existing LPG connection in the household

- Should be listed in the SECC (Socio-Economic Caste Census) 2011 data
- Possess a valid Aadhaar card and bank account

Required Documents

- Aadhaar card
- BPL certificate or SECC-2011 data inclusion proof
- Bank account passbook
- Address proof (Ration card or self-declaration in PMUY 2.0)
- Passport-size photo

How to Apply for PM Ujjwala Yojana

Step-by-Step Process:

1. Visit the nearest LPG distributor (Indane, Bharat Gas, or HP Gas)
2. Collect or download the PMUY application form
3. Fill in details and attach necessary documents
4. Submit the form to the distributor
5. After verification, the connection will be issued

Alternatively, one can also apply online via the official websites of Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs).

Impact of PMUY So Far

- Over 9.6 crore LPG connections distributed as of 2024
 - Reduced dependency on solid fuels in rural India
 - Improved air quality and public health
 - Boosted women's empowerment and safety
 - Helped achieve climate and environmental goals
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Challenges and Criticisms

Despite its success, PMUY has faced some challenges:

- **Refill affordability:** Many beneficiaries struggle to afford refills after the free supply
- **Awareness and accessibility:** Some remote areas still lack proper information and infrastructure
- **Behavioral shift:** Habitual use of traditional fuels continues in some regions due to convenience or cultural reasons

Conclusion

The Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana has been a transformative step toward ensuring clean energy access for all. By targeting the most vulnerable sections of society, especially women, the scheme contributes to health, environmental protection, and women's empowerment. With ongoing enhancements under PMUY 2.0, the initiative is poised to reach even more homes, creating a cleaner and healthier India.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

1. Who is eligible for PM Ujjwala Yojana?

Women from BPL households, listed in SECC 2011, who are above 18 years and do not already have an LPG connection.

2. How much subsidy is given under PMUY?

Rs. 1,600 per LPG connection is given as subsidy by the government.

3. Is the stove included in PMUY?

Yes, under PMUY 2.0, a free stove and first refill are also included.

4. Can I apply for PMUY online?

Yes, you can apply through the official websites of Oil Marketing Companies (Indane, Bharat Gas, HP Gas).

5. Is the LPG connection given in the name of the woman?

Yes, the connection is mandatorily registered in the name of the adult woman in the household.

6. What is PMUY 2.0?

Launched in 2021, PMUY 2.0 added features like free refills, stoves, and simplified documents for migrant workers.

7. How many people have benefited from PMUY?

As of 2024, more than 9.6 crore households have received LPG connections through PMUY.

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