COMPENDIUM OF
BEST PRACTICES

COMPENDIUM



13th Edition of FICCI
WATER
AWARDS
2025



Recognizing Excellence in
Water Management & Conservation



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This report is a compilation of best practices received as part of the 13th Edition of FICCI Water Awards. The case studies of the awardees are published in the report.

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Acknowledgements

FICCI acknowledges the eminent members of the Jury for their exceptional guidance in the final selection of the awardees. FICCI also acknowledges the valuable contributions of the Expert Screening Panel in assessing and evaluating each nomination. We also extend our gratitude to the organizations who participated under the various categories of the 13th Edition of FICCI Water Awards.

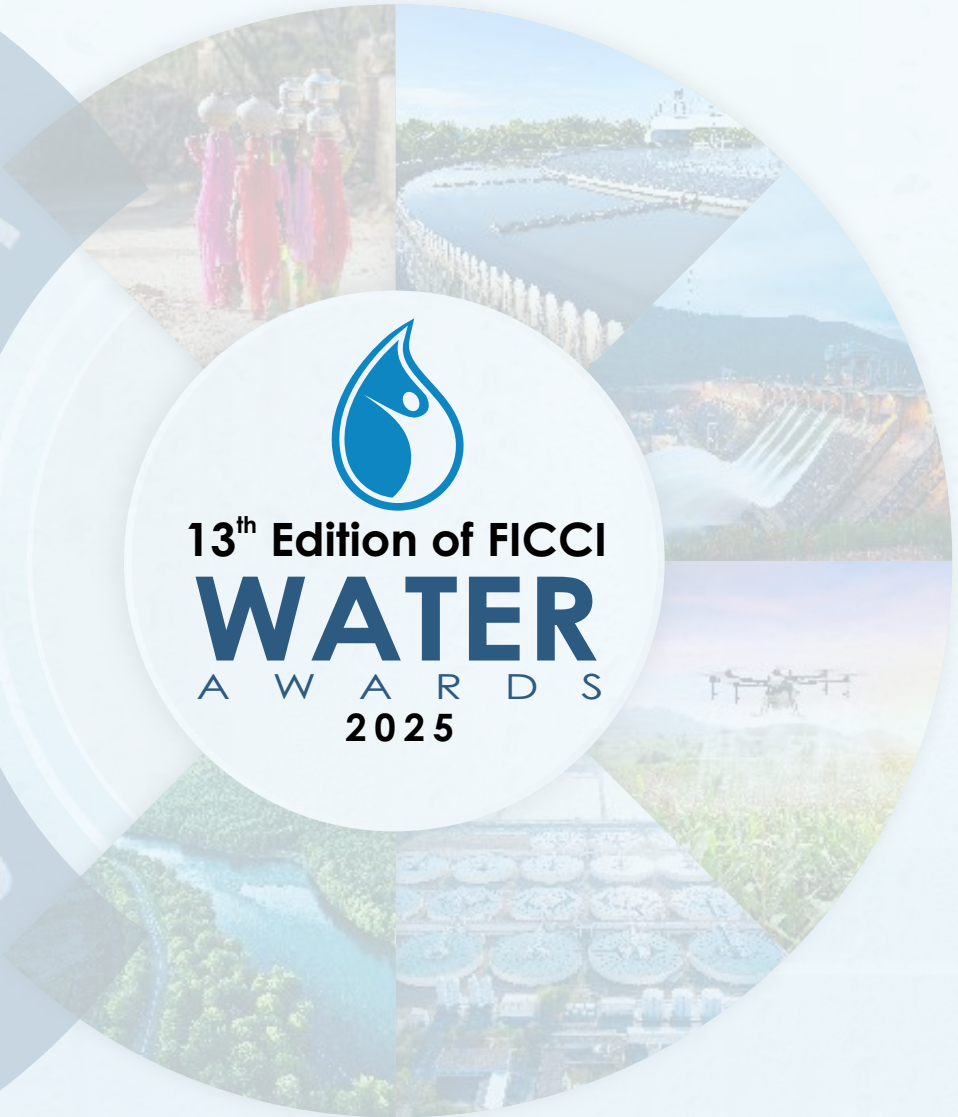
Team's Contribution to the FICCI Water Awards and Compendium

The entire process of the FICCI Water Awards and development of Compendium has been executed by the FICCI Water Mission Secretariat- Hemant Seth, Assistant Secretary General & Head, FICCI; Kirtika Arora, Senior Assistant Director, FICCI.

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FICCI 100
100 YEARS OF BUILDING TOMORROW

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FOREWORD



13th Edition of FICCI
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2025

Water lies at the heart of economic resilience, environmental balance, and social well-being. Yet, growing pressures from climate variability, urban expansion, industrial growth, and changing land-use patterns are placing unprecedented stress on water resources. Addressing these challenges demands a shift from fragmented interventions to integrated, forward-looking water management strategies that balance efficiency, equity, and sustainability.

Across sectors, there is a growing recognition that water must be managed as a shared and finite resource. Solutions today extend beyond conservation alone, encompassing efficiency improvements, wastewater treatment and reuse, basin-level approaches, and the adoption of innovative technologies. Together, these measures support a transition towards more resilient and circular water systems, where water is valued, reused, and protected throughout its lifecycle.

The role of industry and organized stakeholders in this transition is increasingly significant. Businesses are moving beyond compliance-driven approaches to actively embed water stewardship into their operational and strategic decisions. By understanding their water risks and impacts, and by collaborating with communities and local institutions, organizations are contributing to long-term water security while creating shared value for society.



FICCI, through its Water Mission, continues to serve as a platform for leadership, collaboration, and knowledge exchange on sustainable water management. The FICCI Water Awards recognize and celebrate organizations that have demonstrated outstanding commitment and innovation in areas such as industrial water efficiency, wastewater management, community engagement, technological innovation, and institutional leadership in water stewardship.

This Compendium of Best Practices brings together inspiring examples of excellence in water management from the award-winning initiatives. The case studies presented here reflect practical, scalable, and impactful solutions that can be adapted across regions and sectors. By documenting these experiences, the compendium aims to serve as a knowledge repository and a source of inspiration for organizations seeking to strengthen their water management practices.

I extend my sincere appreciation to the distinguished Jury and Expert Screening Panel for their rigor, insight, and dedication in evaluating the nominations. I also thank all participating organizations for sharing their work and commend the awardees for setting high standards of performance and responsibility. Collectively, these efforts reinforce the importance of collaboration and innovation as we work towards a more water-secure and sustainable future.

Naina Lal Kidwai
Past President, FICCI
Chair, FICCI Water Mission

SPECIAL MESSAGE BY CHAIR OF JURY





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WATER
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2025

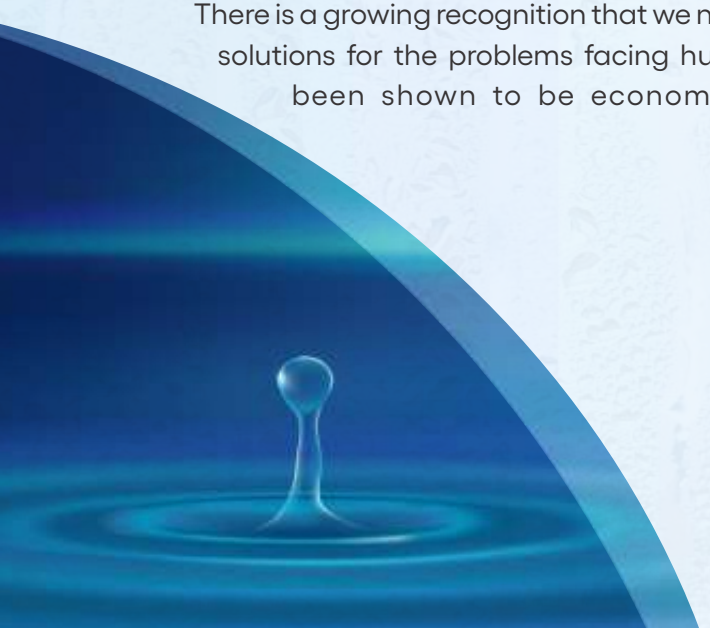
Over the past two decades, India has pioneered some of the most innovative policies in water management and governance, as we seek to move beyond the mid-20th century high cost, high energy, command-and-control paradigm. This is because the old assumptions of stationarity are no longer valid in this era of the Anthropocene and climate change. The past is no longer a reliable indicator of what is to come. Changing patterns and intensity of precipitation, as also rates of discharge of rivers, show that it can no longer be assumed that the water cycle operates within an invariant range of predictability. This demands an emphasis on agility, resilience and flexibility as the foundational principles of water management, so that there could be an adequate response to the heightened uncertainty and unpredictability of the future, based on new design - driven approaches, which are able to foresee incalculable outcomes and provide novel, alternative solutions to be experimented with and tested out in practice.

There is a growing recognition that we need to focus on nature-based solutions for the problems facing humanity. Such solutions have been shown to be economically viable and socially appropriate, based as they are on collective action by concerned stakeholders. They leverage the power of Nature to find cost-effective, sustainable solutions to the emerging water crisis, which deepens by the day.

The FICCI Water Mission is a unique initiative to recognise and showcase precisely these kinds of best practices and innovations. There are many unsung heroes who are making original but unrecognised contributions in this direction. This compendium will give you a glimpse into some of this work, which is showcased here after a very rigorous process of scrutiny and appraisal. The aim of the Water Awards Jury has been to reward those efforts that embody truly cutting-edge innovation, while also providing the best chances of replication on a large scale.

I heartily congratulate the winners and hope that FICCI Water Awards will continue to make this invaluable contribution in moving India towards a 21st century paradigm of water management and governance.

Dr Mihir Shah
Chair of Jury- FICCI Water Awards 2025



MESSAGE BY DIRECTOR GENERAL



13th Edition of FICCI
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2025

Water scarcity continues to emerge as one of the most pressing challenges of our time, with far-reaching implications for societies, economies, and natural ecosystems. Climate variability, rapid urbanization, population growth, and changing consumption patterns are intensifying pressure on already stressed freshwater resources. Ensuring the availability and quality of water is therefore not only a social and environmental imperative, but also a critical enabler of sustainable industrial growth.

Industries are among the major users of water and, consequently, have a vital responsibility to manage this resource judiciously. Encouragingly, many organizations are stepping up to this challenge by embedding water stewardship into their operations, adopting innovative technologies, improving efficiencies across value chains, and contributing to the health of local water basins. These efforts demonstrate that economic progress and responsible water management can—and must—go hand in hand.

FICCI, through its Water Mission, remains committed to promoting sustainable water practices by engaging with industry, policymakers, and other stakeholders. The FICCI Water Awards, a key pillar of this mission, seeks to recognize and celebrate outstanding initiatives that set benchmarks in water conservation, reuse, recycling, and stewardship.

This compendium brings together exemplary practices and impactful solutions showcased by the FICCI Water Award winners. It serves as a valuable knowledge resource, offering scalable and replicable models that can inspire wider adoption across sectors and regions. I extend my heartfelt congratulations to all the awardees and express sincere appreciation to the Jury, Screening Panel, participating organizations, and the FICCI Water Mission secretariat for their dedication and efforts.

May this compendium inspire collective action and deeper collaboration as we work together towards a resilient and water-secure future.

Jyoti Vij
Director General
FICCI






FICCI
WATER AWARDS
CATEGORIES

13th Edition of FICCI WATER AWARDS 2025

FICCI WATER AWARDS

FICCI launched the Annual Water Awards in 2012. The awards were initiated with the following objectives:

- To recognize efforts and leadership in the area of water efficiency and conservation; and
- To develop a knowledge base on sustainable water management practices adopted by different stakeholders and disseminate best practices for encouraging their adoption.

AWARDS CATEGORIES

(Industrial units belonging to the water intensive sectors)

INDUSTRIAL WATER USE EFFICIENCY

COMMUNITY INITIATIVES BY INDUSTRY

(Industrial Units – CSR related but community focussed initiatives only)

(NGOs (Registered as a society, trust, not for profit organization) working in the area of watershed management, drinking water and sanitation)

WATER INITIATIVES BY NGO

INNOVATION IN WATER TECHNOLOGY

(Product developer/technology supplier in the area of innovative tools, techniques, products, technologies and technology application in Water Technology and Management)

(Any unit involved in water and waste-water supply and management in the urban space like, Urban Local Bodies (ULBs), Jal Boards, Water Intensive Industries etc. including the extraction, treatment, and distribution of water, and collection and treatment of wastewater activities which are directly managed by Water and Wastewater Utilities (WWUs))

URBAN WASTEWATER MANAGEMENT

BEST START-UP FOR WATER INNOVATION

(Start-ups offering water efficient product or equipment or technology)

SELECTION PROCESS

PHASE 3
Expert Screening Panel

The expert screening panel screened each nomination to check the authenticity of the data and information presented. Then the expert panel presented the screened applications to the jury at its first meeting.

PHASE 2
Preliminary Screening

Initial screening by the FICCI Water Secretariat, to ensure adherence to eligibility criteria.

PHASE 4
Jury Meeting

Each application under all the six categories were presented by the Experts Panel to the Jury. Jury upon thorough review and discussion over three meetings, shortlisted applicants to make presentation to the Jury and answer additional questions.



PHASE 1
Call for Applications

The call for awards is put up through print and online advertisements, and nominations for the different categories are received. A standard template for sending information is developed for every category. Through its network and database, FICCI Water Secretariat reached out to organizations working in the areas of water and wastewater.

PHASE 5
Final Awardees Selected

Post the presentation with the shortlisted applicants, the Jury finalized the winners in each category in forth & final meeting.




WATER AWARDS
THROUGH THE
YEARS

2024

1. Apollo Tyres (1st Prize) in the Industrial Water Use Efficiency Category
2. Hindalco Industries Ltd. (Unit Birla Copper Dahej) (2nd Prize) in the Industrial Water Use Efficiency Category
3. Diageo (United Spirits Ltd.- Goa) (Special Jury Award) in the Industrial Water Use Efficiency Category
4. ITC Royal Bengal & ITC Sonar (Special Jury Award) in the Industrial Water Use Efficiency Category
5. IndusInd Bank Ltd.- Livolink Odisha Project (1st Prize) in the Community Initiatives by Industry Category
6. People's Action for National Integration (PANI) (1st Prize) in the Water Initiatives by NGO Category
7. Earth Brigade Foundation (2nd Prize) in the Water Initiatives by NGO Category
8. SmarterHomes Technologies Pvt. Ltd. (1st Prize) in the Innovation in Water Technology Category
9. Vishvaraj Environment Pvt. Ltd. (1st Prize) in the Urban Water and Wastewater Management Category
10. Liquiclear Technologies Pvt. Ltd. (1st Prize) in the Best Startup - Water Innovation Category













2024

Winners of the Water Awards being felicitated by Mr. Amitabh Kant, India's G20 Sherpa; Former CEO, Niti Aayog; Mr. G Asok Kumar, Former Special Secretary, Former Director General, NMCG, Department of Water Resources, River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation, Ministry of Jal Shakti, Government of India; Ms. Naina Lal Kidwai, Chairperson, FICCI Water Mission and Past President, FICCI; Dr A K Gosain, Jury, FICCI Water Awards; Professor, Department of Civil Engineering, Indian Institute of Technology- Delhi; Mr. Shraman Jha, Co-Chair, FICCI Water Mission & CEO, Hindustan Unilever Foundation and Mr. Hemant Seth, Senior Director and Head –Water, Agriculture and Food Processing.







AWARDEES - 2023

1. Nayara Energy Ltd. (1st Prize) in the Community Initiatives by Industry Category
2. Grasim Industries Ltd. (Unit- Cellulosic Division Vilayat) (1st Prize) in the Industrial Water Use Efficiency Category
3. NTPC Ltd., Muzaffarpur Thermal Power Station, Kanti (Joint 2nd Prize) in the Industrial Water Use Efficiency Category
4. Century Enka Ltd., Pune (Maharashtra) (Joint 2nd Prize) in the Industrial Water Use Efficiency Category
5. ECOSTP Technologies Pvt. Ltd. (1st Prize) in the Innovation in Water Technology Category
6. NTPC Ltd.- Simhadri Super Thermal Power Plant, Visakhapatnam (2nd Prize) in the Innovation in Water Technology Category
7. Naturesani Pvt. Ltd. (Special Jury's Award) in the Innovation in Water Technology Category
8. Srijan India (1st Prize) in the Water Initiatives by NGO Category
9. Seventy One Percent Analytics Pvt. Ltd. (BluCred) (1st Prize) in the Best Startup for Water Innovation Category
10. Waterlab Solutions Pvt. Ltd. (Joint 2nd Prize) in the Best Startup for Water Innovation Category
11. Tellus Habitat Pvt. Ltd. (Joint 2nd Prize) in the Best Startup for Water Innovation Category

AWARDEES - 2022

1 Hindustan Unilever Ltd., (Khamgaon Factory) (1st Prize) in the Community Initiatives by Industry Category

2 Coastal Gujarat Power Ltd. (2nd Prize) in the Community Initiative by Industry Category

3 Talwandi Sabo Power Ltd. (Special Jury's Award) in the Community Initiatives by Industry Category

4 Honda Motorcycle & Scooter India Private Ltd., (Narsapura) (1st Prize) in the Industrial Water Use Efficiency Category

5 Hindalco Industries Ltd.- (Belagavi Works) (2nd Prize) in the Industrial Water Use Efficiency Category

6 The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI) (1st Prize) in the Innovations in Water Technology Category

7 Taylormade Renewables Ltd. (2nd Prize) in the Innovation in Water Technology Category

8 Centre for Environment Concerns (Special Jury's Award) in the Innovation in Water Technology Category

9 The City Administration of Aurangabad (AMC & ASCDCL) (Special Jury's Award) in the Urban Water and Wastewater Management Category

AWARDEES - 2021

1. Tata Steel Ltd. (1st Prize) in the Industrial Water Use Efficiency Category
2. Vardhman Fabrics (2nd Prize) in the Industrial Water Use Efficiency Category
3. Asian Paints Khandala (Joint 3rd Prize) in the Industrial Water Use Efficiency Category
4. Delhi International Airport Limited (Joint 3rd Prize) in the Industrial Water Use Efficiency Category
5. Green Lantern Engineering Pvt. Ltd. (1st Prize) in the Innovation in Water Technology Category
6. Himmotthan- Tata Trusts, Dehradun (1st Prize) in the Water Initiatives by NGOs Category
7. Bio-me Solutions (2nd Joint Prize) in the Water Initiatives by NGOs Category
8. People's Service Society Palakkad (2nd Joint Prize) in the Water Initiatives by NGOs Category
9. Watershed Organisation Trust (WOTR) (2nd Joint Prize) in the Water Initiatives by NGOs Category
10. Primove Infrastructure Development Consultants Pvt. Ltd. (1st Prize) in the Urban Wastewater Management Category
11. CWAS-CEPT University (2nd Prize) in the Urban Wastewater Management Category

12 Digital EcoInnovision (1st Prize) in the Best Start-up in Water Innovation Category

13 NMCG , Special Jury's Award

AWARDEES - 2020

1. Tagros Chemicals India Private Limited (Joint 1st Prize) in the Industrial Water Use Efficiency Category
2. Trident Limited (Joint 1st Prize) in the Industrial Water Use Efficiency Category
3. ITC Limited (1st Prize) in the Community Initiatives by Industry Category
4. Daiki Axis India Private Limited (1st Prize) in the Innovation in Water Technology Category
5. Konark Fixtures Limited (2nd Prize) in the Innovation in Water Technology Category
6. JS Water Energy Life Co. Private Limited (3rd Prize) in the Innovation in Water Technology Category
7. Water Resources Department (WRD) Rajasthan (Special Jury's Award) in the Innovation in Water Technology Category
8. Aga Khan Rural Support Programme (1st Prize) in the Water Initiatives by NGOs Category
9. Jan Jagran Kendra (2nd Prize) in the Water Initiatives by NGO Category
10. Vishvaraj Environment Private Limited (1st Prize) in the Urban Wastewater Management Category
11. Vadodara Municipal Corporation (Special Jury's Award) in the Urban Wastewater Management Category

AWARDEES - 2019

1. Arvind Limited (1st Prize) in the Industrial Water Use Efficiency Category
2. SSP Private Limited (1st Prize) in the Innovation in Water Technology Category
3. Water, Sanitaation and Hygiene (WASH) Institute (Joint 1st Prize) in Water Initiatives by NGO Category
4. Pratiks Enviro Foundation (Joint 1st Prize) Water Initiatives by NGO Category

AWARDEES - 2018

1. ITC Maurya (1st Prize) in the Industrial Water Use Efficiency Category
2. HSBC (1st Prize) in the Community Initiatives by Industry Category
3. Transchem Agritech Private Limited (1st Prize) in the Innovation in Water Technology Category
4. WATSAN Envirotech Private Limited (1st Prize) in the Innovation in Water Technology Category
5. NTPC Ltd (3rd Prize) in the Innovation in Water Technology Category
6. Surat Municipal Corporation (1st Prize) in the Urban Wastewater Management Category

AWARDEES - 2017

1. Sterlite Copper Vedanta Ltd (1st Prize) in the Industrial Water Use Efficiency Category
2. Aga Khan Rural Support Programme (1st Prize) in the Water Initiatives by NGOs Category
3. Akhil Bhartiya Samaj Sewa Sansthan (2nd Prize) in the Water Initiatives by NGOs Category
4. Hindustan Ecosoftt Pvt Limited (1st Prize) in the Innovation in Water Technology Category
5. Technorbital Advanced Materials Pvt Limited (2nd Prize) in the Innovation in Water Technology Category
6. SM Sehgal Foundation (3rd Prize) in the Innovation in Water Technology Category

AWARDEES - 2016

1. ITC Ltd. Saharanpur, Winners, Industrial Water Efficiency Category
2. TATA Motors Ltd., 1st Runner - Up, Industrial Water Efficiency Category
3. ITC Ltd. Jalahobli, 2nd Runner - Up, Industrial Water Efficiency Category
4. ITC Ltd., Winners, Community Initiatives by Industry Category
5. Self Employed Women's Association (SEWA), Winners, Water Initiatives by NGOs Category
6. Group Photograph for the FICCI Water Awardees for 2016

AWARDEES - 2015

1. ITC Munger (1st Prize), Industrial Water Use Efficiency Category
2. Ambuja Cements Ltd (2nd Prize), Industrial Water Use Efficiency Category
3. Infosys Limited, Bangalore (3rd Prize), Industrial Water Use Efficiency Category
4. Ambuja Cements Foundation (1st Prize), Community initiatives by the Industries Category
5. Ultratech Cement Ltd (2nd Prize), Community initiatives by the Industries Category
6. Ramkrishna Jaidayal Dalmia Seva Sansthan (1st Prize), Initiatives by NGOs Category
7. SIRUTHULI and Watershed Organization Trust (joint 2nd Prize), Initiatives by NGOs Category
8. Sanjeevani Institute for Empowerment and Development (3rd Prize), Initiatives by NGOs Category

AWARDEES - 2013

1. Noamundi Iron Ore Mine - Tata Steel Limited, Winners, Industrial Water Use Efficiency Category
2. ITC Ltd – Bangalore, 1st Runner-Up, Industrial Water Use Efficiency Category
3. JSW Steel Limited, Vijayanagar Works, 2nd Runner Up, Industrial Water Use Efficiency Category
4. Ambuja Cement Foundation, Winners, Community Initiative by Industry Category
5. ITC Limited, 1st Runner Up, Community Initiative Category
6. Vikram Cement Works, 2nd Runner Up, Community Initiative by Industry Category
7. IRRAD (An Initiative of S. M. Sehgal Foundation), Winners, Initiatives by NGOs Category
8. Watershed Organisation Trust, 1st Runner Up, Initiatives by NGOs Category
9. KGDS RE Pvt. Ltd., DST & NIOT, Winners, Innovation in Water Technology Category
10. Ortho Clinical Diagnostic, J&J Company, 1st Runner Up, Innovation in Water Technology Category

AWARDEES - 2012

1. Essar Steel India Limited, Hazira, Winner, Industrial Water Use Efficiency Category
2. ITC Limited, 1st Runner Up, Industrial Water Use Efficiency Category
3. Tata Chemicals Limited, Winners, Community Initiatives Category
4. Hindustan Unilever Limited, 1st Runner Up, Community Initiatives Category
5. HSIL Limited, Winners, Innovation Category

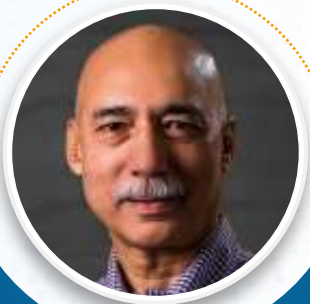



JURY
MEMBERS
2025

JURY



DR. MIHIR SHAH
Chair of Jury



DR. AK GOSAIN
Member of Jury



DR. HIMANSHU KULKARNI
Member of Jury



MR. VK MADHAVAN
Member of Jury

EXPERT SCREENING PANEL

DR. DIPANKAR SAHA
Expert Screening Panel





DR. SUJIT KUMAR SINHA
Expert Screening Panel



CHAIR OF JURY, FICCI WATER AWARDS 2025

DR MIHIR SHAH

Chair of Jury – FICCI Water Awards 2012-2025
Distinguished Professor, Shiv Nadar University; Former Member, Planning Commission

Dr. Mihir Shah is one of India's leading scholars, practitioners and policy-makers on water management and rural livelihoods. From 2009 to 2014 he was Member, Planning Commission, Government of India, handling the portfolios of Water Resources, Rural Development and Panchayati Raj. From 2019 to 2021 he chaired the Government of India's Committee to draft the new National Water Policy. This is the first time ever that a person from outside government was asked to chair this committee.

An economist by training, Dr Shah wrote a much-acclaimed doctoral dissertation at the Centre for Development Studies, Kerala. After teaching for some years at the Centre, he resigned to explore fresh terrain beyond the ivory towers of conventional academia, which culminated in 1990 in the formation of Samaj Pragati Sahayog (SPS), headquartered in a remote tribal village of Madhya Pradesh. Inspired by the life and work of Baba Amte, SPS is today one of India's largest grass-roots initiatives for water and livelihood security. As part of Team SPS, Dr. Shah lived and worked with India's tribal communities for over three decades, in the hinterlands of central India, forging a new paradigm of inclusive and sustainable development, which strengthens democracy at the grass-roots, based on the leadership of women.

Dr. Shah is a Founding Signatory of the Geneva Actions on Human Water Security, 2017. He was a Member of the International Steering Committee of the CGIAR Research Program on Water, Land and Ecosystems (WLE) from 2012 to 2018.

Dr. Shah has addressed audiences on his life's work all over the world from Stanford University to the World Bank in Washington, the OECD in Paris, the Arctic Circle in Iceland, Chatham House and University College, London and University of Cambridge, England, UNESCO-IHE, Delft, International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis, Austria, the EAT Forum, Stockholm, Rachel Carson Centre, Munich, Himalayan University Consortium, Chengdu, China, International Water Management Institute, Colombo, the Asian Development Bank, Manila, the Asian Institute of Technology, Bangkok and the Singapore Water Week. He was the Keynote Speaker at the Global Water Summit at Rome in 2012 and the International EcoSummit Congress at Montpellier in 2016.

JURY MEMBERS



DR A K GOSAIN

Emeritus Professor, Indian Institute of Technology- Delhi
Founder & Director, INRM Consultants (Incubate company of IIT Delhi)

Dr. Ashvani K. Gosain, is Professor Emeritus in the area of Water Resources Engineering and GIS Technologies from Indian Institute of Technology Delhi. Prof. Gosain pioneered the climate change impact assessment on Indian water resources incorporated in the NATCOM I & II – the National Communications made to the UNFCCC. Presently he has been associated with the Forth Communication focussing on the adaptation options to be used for the water sector. He has also been reviewer for AR4 and AR5 of IPCC.

Prof. Gosain has served on many prestigious assignments within and outside the country. Prof Gosain served as member on the Task Group on "Water, Agriculture and Food Security" constituted for formulation of India's new Science, Technology, and Innovation Policy (STIP 2020). Prof. Gosain contributed to the formulation of the Ganga River Basin Management Plan (GRBMP), of which he was the Team Leader of the Water Resources Management group. He has also formulated the Drainage Master Plan of NCT of Delhi for the Delhi Government. He is part of the expert committees appointed by the National Green Tribunal to suggest solutions to deal with the ever increasing pollution levels in Ganga and Yamuna. He has to his distinction formulation of the Ganga Act on behalf of the Ministry of Water Resources, River Development & Ganga Rejuvenation (now Jal Shakti), as a member of the committee. Recently, he lead an ambitious research project "Water Security and Sustainable Development for NCT of Delhi" funded by Global Challenge Research Fund of UK. Prof Gosain has been conferred with the Global Excellence Award 2021 in Water Sector by the Energy & Environment Foundation. Prof Gosain is also Founder & Director of INRM (Integrated Natural Resource Management) Consultants, a company incubated by IIT Delhi. Prof Gosain has served as Head of the Civil Engineering Department and the Computer Services Centre of IIT Delhi.



DR HIMANSHU KULKARNI

Founder Trustee, Formerly Executive Director- ACWADAM & Scientist (Emeritus)- ACWADAM

Dr. Himanshu Kulkarni is a Founder Trustee, Formerly Executive Director and currently Scientist (Emeritus) with ACWADAM. Dr. Kulkarni has also been associated with three leading academic institutions in India and is currently also Professor of Practice for the MA in Rural Management Course at SNIoE (Deemed to be University).

Dr. Kulkarni has been working on aquifers and community action across India's diverse groundwater typology for forty-two years. He has held advisory positions on various committees of the Government, apart from anchoring many action-research collaborations on groundwater, including international programmes. He has published his work, while also working with communities at the grassroots, demystifying groundwater science and catalysing aquifer-based participatory groundwater management and governance. He has supervised, guided and mentored students from many institutions and disciplines on the singular subject of groundwater for many years in various positions.

Dr. Kulkarni continues to work on bringing a strong 'aquifer' based pedagogy into various dimensions of water management and governance in India.



MR V K MADHAVAN

Independent Development Professional

Madhavan has worked in the not-for-profit sector for over three decades following a Master's in International Studies from Jawaharlal Nehru University in 1991. Nearly half of Madhavan's professional experience has been whilst living and working in rural areas, first in the desert districts of north-western Rajasthan with the Urmul Trust and then in the Kumaun region of Uttarakhand with the Central Himalayan Rural Action Group (Chirag). Most recently, Madhavan was the Chief Executive of WaterAid India from 2016 till September 2025.

In his years as a development professional, Madhavan has worked on integrated approaches to development (community health, primary education, natural resource management, on and off-farm livelihoods and in facilitating robust institutions at a community level) and on governance, skill development and water, sanitation and hygiene.

EXPERT SCREENING PANEL



DR. DIPANKAR SAHA

Former Member (HQ) CGWB &
Former Member Secretary, CGWA

Dipankar Saha is former Member (HQ) CGWB and former Member Secretary, CGWA. He spearheaded the National Aquifer Mapping and Management Programme, as National Coordinator. He is PhD on Ground Water Management from IIT-ISM Dhanbad and has authored 66 papers in International Peer Reviewed Journals. He is professionally trained from Asian Institute of Technology, Bangkok and from JICA, Tokyo. Presented keynote addresses/papers under invite from World Bank at Kathmandu, International Atomic Energy Agency at Ho-Chi Minh City, and Vienna, World Water Week at Stockholm, India-UK Water Security Exchange at Wallingford, Oxfordshire, IAH Congress at Dajeon, Korea, University of Manchester at Manchester, Public talk in Lincoln University, and ASRT at Cairo, Egypt. He edited/co-edited 3 books published by the Springer. He is a recipient of National Geoscience Award – 2010, Excellence in Ground Water Award conferred by International Association of Hydrogeologist-India Chapter in 2014 and Eminent Engineer's Award from India water Resources Society IIT Roorkee.

He is now Chair Professor, MRIIRS, Faridabad and Board President of Water for People: India. He also worked as Advisor, Groundwater Govt of Gujarat, Adjunct Prof IIT KGP, Consultant to IWMI Colombo and Chairman, ,Accreditation Committee for Ground Water Consultant NABET, QCI.



DR. SUJIT KUMAR SINHA

Former Director, Atal Bhujal Yojna, Central Ground Water Board
Ministry of Jal Shakti, Government of India

Shri S.K. Sinha is an alumnus of University of Roorkee (now IIT, Roorkee), did M. Tech in Applied Geology in 1984. Further, in the year 1996, he perused Master of Hydrology at IIT Roorkee as a sponsored officer from Govt. of India. He started his career in Central Ground Water Board, Ministry of water Resources, Govt. of India in 1988, worked for more than 32 years in Government as ground water professional in various capacities in different parts of India. He superannuated from Government service in Sept 2020 and presently associated with "Atal Bhujal Yojana" as Team Leader and Advisor appointed by WAPCOS, The Atal Bhujal Yojana is one of the flagship schemes of Ministry of Jal Shakti, Govt. of India.

He has vast experience in dealing with various aspects of ground water in different terrains of India. He is an accomplished professional and researcher in the Water Resources Sector in general and ground water domain in particular.

He is visiting faculty at IIT, Delhi, IIT Roorkee and RGNGWTRI, training institute of CGWB, Raipur. He has been invited by UN, IAEA, Vienna and other International Agencies as an expert on ground water during various international programs. Shri Sinha is widely travelled with versatile experience of working in various facets of ground water management which includes Ground water exploration in alluvium & Hard rock areas, estimation of ground water resources, sustainable development and management of ground water, Artificial recharge to ground water.




AWARDEES
2025

13th Edition of FICCI WATER AWARDS 2025

AWARDEES 2025

Category 1

Industrial Water Use Efficiency

1st Prize

Reckitt Benckiser India Pvt. Ltd.

2nd Prize

DCM Shriram Ltd. (Sugar & Distillery Unit, Ajbapur, Lakhimpur Kheri)

Category 2

Innovation in Water Technology

1st Prize

Earth Fokus Earthwise Pvt. Ltd.

2nd Prize

UPL Sustainable Agri Solutions Ltd.

Category 3

Community Initiatives by Industry

1st Prize

Hindustan Unilever Ltd. (Sumerpur Factory)

Category 4

Water Initiatives by NGO

1st Prize

Biome Environmental Trust

2nd Joint Prize

North East Initiative Development Agency (NEIDA)

2nd Joint Prize

Development Support Centre (DSC), Ahmedabad

FICCI WATER AWARDS 2025 CATEGORIES

- Industrial Water Use Efficiency
- Community Initiatives by Industry
- Innovation in Water Technology
- Water Initiatives by NGO






INDUSTRIAL
WATER USE
EFFICIENCY

RECKITT BENCKISER INDIA PVT. LTD.

1st PRIZE



MR. J P SINGH
Unit Head- Sitarganj Plant

> "At Reckitt, water efficiency isn't just a goal. it's a responsibility. By optimizing processes and innovating sustainably, we ensure that every drop is valued, protected, and preserved for generations to come."

Brief message from CEO and long-term goals:

At Reckitt, our purpose is to protect, heal, and nurture in pursuit of a cleaner, healthier world. Guided by our compass, we commit to doing the right thing, always—ensuring every action contributes to sustainability and resilience

Sustainability Ambitions (Goals)

REDUCING OUR WATER FOOTPRINT

- 50 % Reduction in product Water Footprint by 2040 vs 2015.
- 30% Reduction in Water use by 2025 vs 2015.
- Water Positive: Water Positive in Water –stressed Sites by 2030
- Supporting SDG 6 – providing universal access to water and sanitation for all by 2030.

Water Stewardship Approach

We aim to protect, heal, and nurture in pursuit of a cleaner, healthier world. Our ambitions create a positive impact for people and society while supporting resilience and growth for our business. Site has successfully implemented Water and Wastewater management standard, water road map aligned with long-term sustainability goals , water efficiency target with measurable outcomes, Cross-functional Engagement involving employees and stakeholders to sustain and improve water efficiency.

Our strategy is to optimize, reuse, and respect every drop of water—driving cultural change and empowering employees to be responsible citizens of Earth.

Winning the FICCI Water Efficiency Award 2025 is a proud milestone—but for us, the true reward lies in the ripple effect of sustainable change

WATER MANAGEMENT STRATEGY & PROJECTS - A SNAPSHOT

		PREVENT/ REPLACE	REDUCE	REUSE/ RECYCLE
Process		DM to SW (2 products)	Spray Gun (Mfg. vessels)	ZLD Permeate process (Product)
		DM to RW (initial CIP Flush)	Spray Ball (CIP)	
		Arresting leakage (Pumps)	Smaller Trial Batch (R&D)	
Industrial		PHE instead jacket (Process heating).	• Overfill protection - tanks/Cooling Tower. • Arresting Leakages	• ZLD Permeate (Utility) • RO Reject (Cooling Tower)
Domestic		Dry Mechanized (Floor cleaning)	Taps (mist nozzle)	Rejects Water (Flushing)
Harvest		Inhouse Rainwater Harvesting	Watershed Program - Pond Rejuvenation	

STRATEGIC PROJECT - ZERO LIQUID DISCHARGE PLANT

Name of the Initiative: Reduction, Recycle, Reuse for long Term sustainable goal

Location: Sitarganj- Uttarakand

Primary Goal: Minimize fresh water use through Recycling & Reuse of ETP treated water in process

1. Separation of ETP & STP (Unlock Potential Recycling)

STAGE - 1





50% + reduction in industrial effluent volumes annually.

- Unlock ETP treated effluent recycling in ZLD.

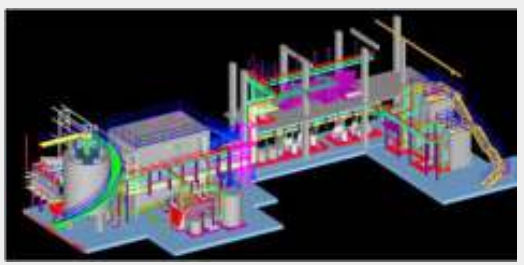
27% reduction in domestic water consumption over 3 years.

- STP-treated water reused for gardening/Toilets

2. ZERO Liquid discharge Plant

STAGE - 2







ZLD implementation:

Treated water reused in industrial operations.

Project is cost adverse, but part of Water positive journey.

Water Savings
40,000 KL/ Year

Cost Savings
INR 40,00,000/ Year

Investment
INR 20 Crore

Communicating goals is a key to get all on the team for effective engagement.

Communicate through Board



Communicate through Board



Communicate through Campaigns



DCM SHRIRAM SUGAR & DISTILLERY LTD.

2nd PRIZE



MR. ROSHAN LAL TAMAK
ED & CEO

> Our initiatives have saved water equal to the lifetime drinking needs of over 1.18 Cr people.

Brief message from CEO and long-term goals:

Sustainable Water Management : Commitment to Water Conservation and Community Support

Water is one of the most essential requirements for life, and its conservation remains central to our operations at DCM Shriram Ltd. Across all our units, we continue to adopt practices that not only reduce fresh-water dependency but also maintain the natural water balance for communities and the environment.

At the Ajbapur Sugar & Distillery Unit, our strong ESG commitment is reflected through a wide range of CSR initiatives—rejuvenating village ponds, converting abandoned wells into recharge systems, and creating rainwater harvesting structures both inside and outside the factory premises.

A major step forward was achieved in 2024 with the installation of a 2,000 KLD condensate treatment plant, one of the largest in the sector. By systematically collecting and segregating condensates based on quality, we ensured efficient treatment and reuse in the sugar power plant and distillery. This breakthrough enabled:

- **Zero borewell extraction for the 13,500 TCD sugar plant**
- Reduction of borewell use in the power plant **from 147 to 66 litres/tonne of cane**
- Reduction of borewell use in the distillery **from 4.5 KL to 3.6 KL per KL of ethanol**

As a result, the Ajbapur unit saved **1,78,000 KL of groundwater in 2024–25,** contributing to a cumulative saving of **4,56,287 KL over the last six years.**

Our efforts extend to our farmer community as well. Over the past nine years, we have promoted water-saving practices such as trash mulching, drip irrigation, skip- furrow irrigation, laser levelling, and green manuring. These techniques have collectively led to **1,243 billion litres of water savings,** equivalent to providing **lifetime drinking-water needs for approximately 1.18 crore people.**

Looking ahead, our long-term goal is to adopt cost-effective technologies for **ETP- treated water recycling,** with the ambition of operating our entire complex—**13,500 TCD sugar plant, 380 KLD distillery and 12 TPD CBG unit—with zero borewell dependence.**

At DCM Shriram Ltd., water stewardship is not just a responsibility—it is a commitment we uphold for the future of our communities and our planet.

Name of the Initiative: Industrial Water Use Efficiency in DCM Shriram Ltd Sugar Complex

Location: Ajbapur ,Distt-Lakhimpur Kheri

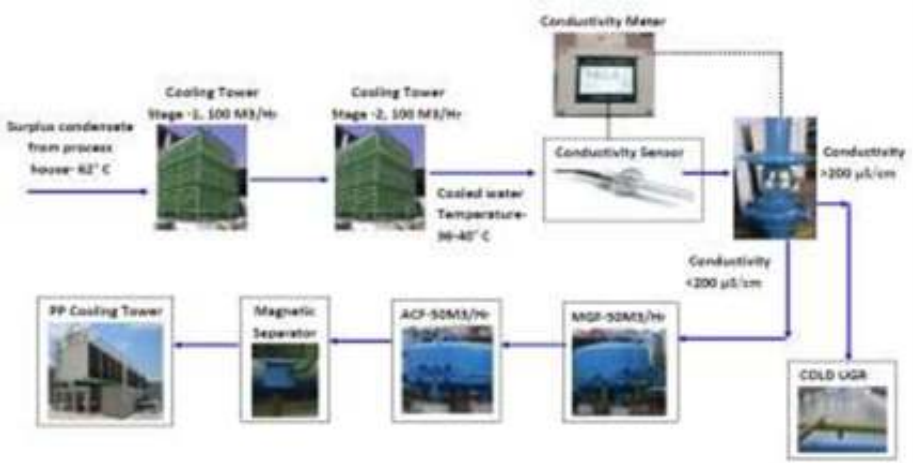
The Initiative/Innovation

1. AI-Based Three-Way Valve and Magnetic Separator System Installed 2018-19

- Recycle available/treated water in order to reduce the Borewell extraction
- Reduction of waste generation, chemicals, plant operating costs and carbon emissions
- Indigenously developed technology and continue communications on Whatsapp group with all team members related to analysis and actions.
- They continuously monitor power plant CT and Surplus water parameters through AI based segregation and have saved 32266 m3 water

2. Segregation and Collection of Good quality water (Year 2023-24)

- High COD and Low COD water were separated in phased manner.
- Low COD water was diverted to condensate treatment plant.
- High COD water utilized for tube cleaning operation and plants other requirement.
- High cod water after utilizing in the various activities was sent to ETP for proper treatment.
- Resulted in significant water conservation and improved effluent quality.



3. CPU Plant Installed in (2023-24)

Installation of condensate treatment plant of capacity 2000 KLD having equipment such as anaerobic digester followed by aerobic treatment long with tube settler HRSCC ,MBF ,ACF and UV has resulted into

- 13500 TCD sugar plant operation on zero borewell
- 60-65 % water reduction in boiler and power plant
- 30% bore well water reduction in distillery plant
- Annual saving of bore well water was 178449 m3
- Lesser load on ETP resulted in lesser chemical consumption

Consistently Achieving Superior CPU outlet Water Quality (2024-25)-

- Outlet TDS maintained around 149–174 mg/L within desired norms.
- TSS consistently controlled at 1–2 mg/L, indicating excellent suspended solids removal.
- COD values largely in the low range of about 10–40 mg/L, reflecting effective organic load reduction.
- Turbidity mostly below about 2-4 NTU, showing clear treated water quality.
- BOD generally between about 3–5 mg/L, meeting good effluent discharge standards.

4. Effluent Treatment Plant (ETP)



DCM has established a dedicated **Effluent Treatment Plant (ETP) of 2,200 KLD capacity,** commissioned in **2018,** equipped with an advanced **IC Reactor,** aeration system, and automated monitoring and management controls. To meet increasing operational requirements as plant was expanded, the facility was **expanded from 2,200 KLD to 2,800 KLD in 2022,** ensuring robust and reliable treatment of effluent generated from manufacturing processes.

The treated effluent is safely utilized for irrigation purposes in 14.40 Hectare (144042 Sq. mtr) horticulture Area. Experimental trials on the use of treated water in the factory lawn, gardens, and adjoining farms have shown highly encouraging results. The treated water contains valuable plant nutrients, including Nitrogen, Phosphorus, Potash, Calcium, Magnesium, Copper, Manganese, Iron, and Zinc, which significantly enhance soil fertility and support healthy vegetation growth. In line with the objective of maximizing resource recovery and promoting circular use, the factory now utilizes **100% treated effluent** for its gardening , greenbelt requirement, and farmer fields.

Additionally, the **biological sludge** generated from the ETP is effectively reused as a **manure and soil conditioner** in the factory's own agricultural fields, further strengthening the sustainability loop.

This integrated approach underscores DCM's commitment to **environmental stewardship, resource conservation and sustainable industrial practices.**

5. Advanced 250 KLD Sewage Treatment Plant Facility

DCM has also established a **Sewage Treatment Plant (ETP) of 250 KLD capacity,** commissioned in **2017** for Efficient Wastewater Treatment for Campus Residences and Industry — Treating 250 KLD of domestic and industrial sewage from local colonies and factories, the plant supplies high-quality recycled water for irrigation and eco-friendly operations, supporting water conservation and sustainable reuse initiatives.



6. Water Saving in Agricultural Through Advanced On-Farm Practices

They have conducted various trainings to farmers for changing the agricultural practices and work with them on following practices

- Trash mulching
- Drip irrigation
- Solar-powered drip systems
- Skip- furrow irrigation
- Laser land leveling
- Composting
- Green manuring to reduce field water demand.

These techniques improve soil moisture retention, reduce evaporation and ensure that every drop of water reaches the root zone efficiently, leading to higher productivity with lower water use.

Impact statement:- By adopting these methods, **about 25% water saving has been achieved in agriculture over 9 years,** conserving nearly **1,243.12 billion litters** of water for Mother Earth so that the next generation can have secure and reliable water resources. This water saving was audited and verified by Indian institute of Sugar Cane Research (IISCR)

7. Rainwater Conservation

At DCM Shriram Ltd, they have adopted 18 ponds in nearby factory with annual recharge capacity **395175 m3.** The pond relates to storm water drain and water collected in pond during rain fall and inside the plant, Godown roof rainwater harvested/ collected 5000 M3 in Lagoon and further used for process plant trial and testing purpose during off season.

They have also taken up abandoned well and converted them to water recharge system.



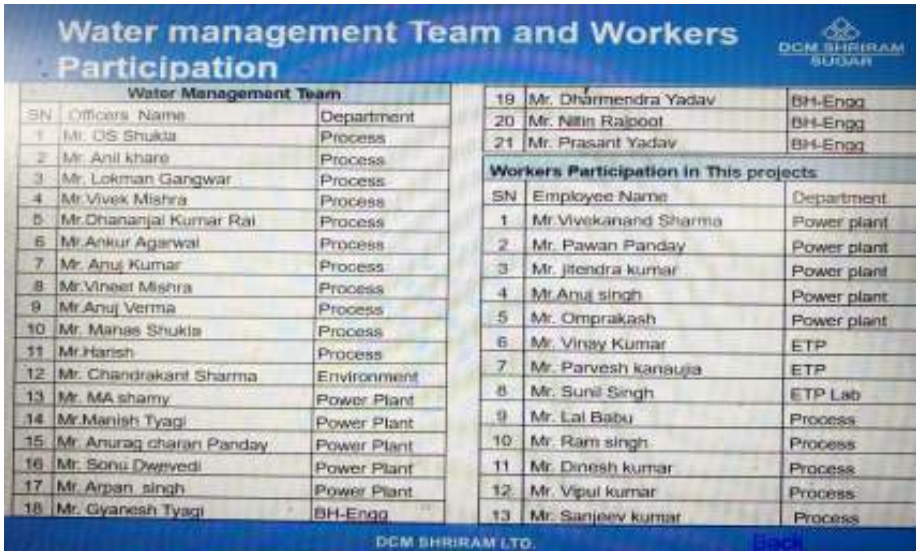
8. Awareness Activities & Training:

A water management team has been formed which includes senior management, officers, and workers.

This team has undergone for various water saving brainstorming session /training and how to use the existing available resources for water conservation.

The group communicates through walkee-Talki and whatsapp message during the operation

The Meetha Sona project based on 3 'S' principles i.e., suitability, scalability and sustainability, has positively impacted 2.5 lakhs farmers. A multi-pronged approach by DCM Shriram Ltd.'s Sugar Business is leading to productivity enhancement, large-scale conservation of water resources and soil health enhancement in the catchment area of our four sugar mills in Uttar Pradesh.



Impact

- ✓ 13500 TCD Sugar plant is being operated at zero borewell water extraction
- ✓ Specific water consumption in power plant and boiler from 147.7.2 to 66.13 lit per ton of cane.
- ✓ Distillery plant specific water consumption reduced from 4.5 to 3.6 KL per KL of alcohol, improving environmental sustainability and lowering carbon footprint.
- ✓ Effluent load on ETP reduced by about 10%, from 188.6 to 169.4 lit per ton of cane in 2024–25, enhancing ETP efficiency and reducing environmental impact.
- ✓ Reduced load on ETP has saved is approximately Rs. 38.58 lakh

Outcome:- Their water saving initiatives has resulted into the lifetime drinking water requirement for 118.25 lacs human beings.

Future Goal for long term water saving:- Their long-term goal is to search cost effective technology for ETP treated water treatment which will make their complex (13500 TCD sugar ,380 KLD Distillery and 12 T CBG) operating on zero bore well extraction



1243.12 Billion Liters In 9 years



Communication through what's app message


INNOVATION
IN WATER
TECHNOLOGY

EARTHFOKUS EARTHWISE PRIVATE LIMITED

1st PRIZE



MR. RISHI VANDHAN
Co-Founder & CEO

> "India's water challenge cannot be solved by sourcing more water alone. The real opportunity lies in reducing what we waste. At EarthFokus, we believe every drop saved is a drop created — and that measurable reduction is the strongest form of sustainability."

Brief message from CEO and long-term goals:

Water stress today is no longer a distant risk; it is an operational reality for industries, commercial buildings, and cities. EarthFokus was founded to address this challenge with a clear philosophy — **measure accurately, manage intelligently, and minimize consumption permanently.**

Our long-term water sustainability plan focuses on shifting organisations from reactive water management to proactive water reduction. We combine real-time water intelligence with on-ground reduction technologies to ensure that savings are verified, sustained, and scalable.

By integrating smart monitoring, analytics, and physical recovery systems, EarthFokus enables organisations to reduce freshwater intake, improve operational efficiency, and move toward long-term water positivity. Our goal is to ensure that water efficiency becomes a core operational metric, not just a sustainability statement.

Integrated Water Intelligence & Evaporative Loss Recovery System

Location: Multiple industrial, commercial, and institutional facilities across India

The Initiative / Innovation

Large facilities consume significant volumes of water, yet a substantial portion of this consumption remains invisible — especially losses occurring in cooling towers, inefficient fixtures, and unmonitored processes. EarthFokus identified this gap and developed an integrated solution that combines **digital water intelligence with physical reduction technologies.**

The initiative begins with real-time monitoring of water flows across key consumption points, providing accurate visibility into how, where, and why water is used. This intelligence layer is then paired with EarthFokus' proprietary **evaporative water loss recovery system for cooling towers,** designed to recover water lost through evaporation without disrupting existing operations.

Unlike conventional approaches that focus only on monitoring or manual optimisation, EarthFokus closes the loop by directly reducing water losses at the source, converting previously wasted water into a usable resource.

Impact

- ✓ Achieved 30–40% reduction in cooling tower freshwater makeup water across deployed sites
- ✓ Enabled measurable and verifiable water savings across large facilities
- ✓ Reduced dependency on freshwater sources while maintaining operational performance
- ✓ Supported organisations in improving compliance, reporting, and long-term water resilience
- ✓ This initiative demonstrates that water sustainability can be engineered, quantified, and scaled — turning water efficiency into a repeatable operational outcome rather than a one-time intervention.

UPL SUSTAINABLE AGRI SOLUTION LIMITED

2nd PRIZE

Brief message from CEO and long-term goals:

At UPL, as a leader in Sustainable Agriculture Solutions in India, we recognize water as the most precious natural resource for farming, with the farmer at the core of all our initiatives. Our focus is on two key aspects of water usage:

Behavioral Transformation: Driving a shift from traditional practices to sustainable methods such as drip irrigation, alternate wetting and drying, and direct seeded rice through capacity-building programs in crops like sugarcane, rice, and corn.

Technology Transformation: Scaling innovative solutions like **Zeba** and other natural plant protection products to enhance water-use efficiency and expand adoption across geographies and crops.

Water is not just a resource for agriculture—it is an irreplaceable asset. India was once blessed with abundant water through rivers, canals, groundwater, and reliable monsoons. But is that still true today? Unfortunately, no. Decades of misuse have turned water from a freely available resource into a precious commodity, and agriculture now stands on the brink of a severe water crisis.

UPL Sustainable Agri Solutions: Changing the game with Zeba Technology

UPL has been the global leader in Sustainable Agri Solutions & food security providing end-to-end solutions to farmers and concerned stakeholders in agriculture value chain. Over last 56 years of its strong connect with Indian farmers, UPL is not just working on improving farms productivity and return on investment for the farmers, but they are making sure that the value chain becomes sustainable to reduce the water footprint of agriculture on environment and create win-win situation for all its stakeholders by its products, services and technologies.

Sustainable Crop Programs: Initiatives to reduce water & fertilizer footprints, GHG emissions and Improve Farmers productivity & ROI -

To address the higher water footprint in agriculture, UPL has initiated Sustainable Crop Programs in crops like **Sugarcane (Project Name – Shashwat Mithaas), Rice (Project Name – Low methane Rice)** and many more. In these projects apart from Advanced irrigation technologies and usage of IoT and Sensors, **UPL's Zeba Technology** plays the crucial role



MR. RAVISHANKAR CHERRKURI
CEO

"Zeba is transforming water management in agriculture by ensuring every drop counts. Its unique technology optimizes soil moisture retention, reducing irrigation needs and safeguarding water resources for a sustainable future."

UPL's Zeba technology is Super Absorbent made up of Corn Starch Granules, which is biodegradable in nature. Zeba being SAP (Super Absorbent Particle) when applied at root zone of soil and as it encounters water, absorbs 450 times of Water of its own weight, retains it and releases the same as and when needed by Plant root system.

Zeba repeats this cycle for 5-6 months and gets biodegraded in soil after 6 months adding organic carbon to soil.

With this, Zeba helps to

- Reduce water losses by evaporation, run off and leaching in farms
- Increase Water Usage Efficiency (WUE) of applied irrigation or rainwater
- Increase the interval between two rounds of irrigation thereby reducing no. of rounds of irrigation



पारंपरिक पध्दती शाश्वत मिठास - प्रात्यक्षिक क्षेत्र

Their trials with different research institutes, Universities, and internal R & D centers along with commercial trials says about 30% reduction of fresh water from Agriculture without penalizing the yields

Key Success story & scale up

Bharat Taware, Sugarcane farmer from Vadgaon Rasai, Block Shirur, District Pune, State – Maharashtra, Crop – Sugarcane (9004609333) is associated with UPL's Zeba technology since 2021, using its over 40 Acres.

The Impact:

Zeba has helped Mr. Bharat to Save 6 Lakh liters of water per acre since its application every year leading to savings of 24 million liters in a year, this has also helped him to reduce his urea usage by 25 % & electricity usage required for Water pumping by 30%.

Per Acre Electricity saving of INR 1500 with reduced irrigation, which turns to INR 60000 for 40 Acres & Additional yield of average 10 MT per acres which is almost 400 MT total adding 12 Lakh total to farmer's income in a year from 40 acres.

Just like Mr. Bharat Taware, since last years we have scaled this program to key sugarcane districts of Maharashtra, Uttar Pradesh and Karnataka and around implemented on 75000 + acres with 100 % adoption rate.




COMMUNITY
INITIATIVES BY
INDUSTRY

HINDUSTAN UNILEVER LIMITED

1st PRIZE



MR. BP BIDDAPPA
Executive Director,
Chief People, Transformation & Sustainability Officer
Hindustan Unilever Limited

"Water is a core priority at Hindustan Unilever Ltd. We champion water stewardship through sustainable operations and community conservation. In FY 2024-25, we reduced factory water use by 50%, with our Sumerpur factory earning IGBC Platinum Certification and our Chhindwara factory becoming the first Unilever site globally to receive the Alliance for Water Stewardship Platinum Certificate.

Our Community initiatives have created over 230 billion litres of water potential, impacting thousands of lives. Our Hindustan Unilever Foundation, a not-for-profit company, has helped enable 3.9 trillion litres of water potential across India in collaboration with partners. As water risks rise, we remain committed to conserving this vital resource."

Brief message from CEO and long-term goals:

Hindustan Unilever Limited (HUL) is India's largest Fast-Moving Consumer Goods company with its products touching the lives of nine out of ten households in the country. HUL works to create a better future every day.

Prabhat is the community development initiative of the Company, aiming to create sustainable and inclusive communities. It leverages HUL's scale for good, contributing to a fairer, more socially and environmentally inclusive world. Over the past decade, Prabhat has positively impacted ~11 million lives across 12 States and 2 Union Territories.

Name of the Initiative

Project Name: Prabhat Jal Sanrakshan Pariyojana – Sumerpur Factory

Location: Bharuwa Sumerpur block, Hamirpur district, Bundelkhand region, Uttar Pradesh

Villages Covered: 15 villages

Core Goals:

- Conserve and recharge groundwater
- Reduce water demand in agriculture
- Increase farm productivity and incomes
- Build community-led water governance

The Initiative

Prabhat, Hindustan Unilever's sustainable community development initiative, is dedicated to fostering a more equitable, socially inclusive, and environmentally responsible world by leveraging HUL's scale for positive impact. Aligned with the Unilever

Compass, Prabhat engages with communities in and around HUL sites, nurturing local potential in harmony with India's development priorities and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

At its core, Prabhat strives to build resilient and sustainable communities through targeted interventions in three key areas:

- Economic Empowerment – promoting skilling, entrepreneurship, and value chain development
- Health & Nutrition – advancing well-being and access to better nutrition
- Environmental Sustainability – driving initiatives in water conservation and waste management

The Company runs the 'Water for Public Good' programme, which emphasizes water conservation, the establishment of community-led institutions for effective water governance, and the improvement of farm-based livelihoods through the adoption of responsible water management practices.

At HUL Sumerpur, the programme's cumulative and collective outcomes—achieved through collaborative partnerships and independently assured—include

Water Conservation: 26.77 BL of water potential created

Crop Yield: Additional agriculture production of over 3945 tonnes has been generated

Livelihoods: Over 2.91 lacs person-days of employment have been created though water conservation and increased agriculture production

Outreach: 3570 farmers

Approach



Awareness in Pingohata village dt Hamirpur, Uttar Pradesh

HUL's Sumerpur factory is located in the Hamirpur District of Uttar Pradesh, which has a population of nearly 11 lacs and a literacy rate of 70.16%. The region receives an average annual rainfall of about 850 mm, yet it has been classified by the Central Research Institute for Dryland Agriculture as highly vulnerable to drought and water scarcity.

Sumerpur faces multiple challenges, including limited water availability, uneven rainfall patterns, unorganized farming practices, and degraded natural resources. The continued reliance on traditional agricultural methods has further contributed to low productivity and heightened vulnerability to droughts.

Our strategy is built on four pillars: **Planning, Implementation, Maintenance, and Sustenance.**

The journey began with a comprehensive needs assessment in villages identified by the factory leadership team. Based on these insights, the programme was carefully designed and rolled out. Team members received training from their technical partner, ACWADAM, on critical aspects such as groundwater management, aquifers, and water- efficient agricultural practices.

To strengthen execution, paraprofessionals — the key drivers of the project—were onboarded. A participatory village development plan was then co-created with community members and the implementation partner, ensuring collective ownership and alignment.



Preparation of Participatory Village Development Plan at Para Raipura village, dt. Hamirpur, Uttar Pradesh

With a well-structured plan of action, the teams-initiated efforts to enhance water potential in this water-scarce region. From the outset, sustainability has remained a central focus of the programme.

The initiative adopted a dual approach:

- Expanding water potential through the construction of conservation and recharge structures
- Equipping farmers with knowledge and skills to adopt less water-intensive agricultural practices.

Demand Side Intervention

The programme emphasizes the adoption of modern and smart agricultural practices aimed at conserving water. Key practices include the use of improved seed varieties, soil health management, across the slope sowing, intercropping, and advanced irrigation methods such as sprinkler systems and rain pipe technology.

By embracing these techniques, farmers have successfully reduced water demand, enhanced crop yields, and lowered cultivation costs. To date, more than 3,570 farmers across 15 villages have benefited from the adoption of water-saving technologies and sustainable farming practices.



Deployment of sprinkler system at project village

Supply Side Interventions:

The efforts are centered on conserving and enhancing water potential through the creation of physical structures. The interventions include farm bunding, water absorption trenches, continuous contour trenches, nala deepening, loose boulder and gabion structures, nala bunds, de-siltation of check dams, as well as the construction of farm ponds and community ponds.

As part of the project, a total of 576 structures have been developed, significantly contributing to water conservation and recharge capacity in the region.



Development of farm bunding in Chandpurwa village, at. Hamirpur, Uttar Pradesh

Capacity Building for Sustainability:

Sustainability has been the cornerstone of the project from its inception. To ensure long-term impact and continuity beyond our direct involvement, multiple initiatives were undertaken to strengthen community capacity. These included training paraprofessionals, forming water user groups, organizing exposure visits, facilitating interactions with KVK scientists, and conducting field visits by HUL leadership.

Throughout the project, over 20 community programmes and training sessions were organized, reaching more than 3,500 farmers. These initiatives equipped participants with the knowledge and practical skills required to sustain the project's benefits and ensure its long-term impact.



HUL team visit to project villages for capability building

Partnership

In the community, for the community and by the community has been their approach to the project. This project has been a collective endeavor of Community, Industry & Government Machinery.

HUL Prabhat, HUF: Funding, governance, and overall coordination

PSSS: On-ground implementation and community mobilization

ACWADAM: Technical expertise in hydrogeology and groundwater management

Government & Gram Panchayats: Local support, participatory involvement, and convergence funding

COVERAGE AND IMPACT

Our efforts on the Demand Side



Water Conserved – 10.14 BL
Area Covered – 8141 Ha
Labour Day Generated – 189515

Addn Agri Output – 3945 Tonnes
Addn Income – 16 Crs
Farmers Reached – 3000+

Our efforts on the Supply Side



Water Conserved – 16.63 BL
Area Covered – 35286 Ha
Labour Day Generated – 101598

Structure Created – 576 Nos

Conclusion

The Prabhat Jal Sanrakshan Pariyojana in Sumerpur demonstrates how community-led water stewardship can restore ecological balance, improve farm incomes, and create rural employment. By treating water as a common good, the project has built resilience against drought and empowered farmers to adopt sustainable practices.


WATER
INITIATIVES
BY NGO

BIOME ENVIRONMENTAL TRUST

1st PRIZE



MR. AVINASH KRISHNAMURTHY
Co-founder and Director

> "It is important that corporates think beyond efficiency and offset in the context of CSR. CSRs need to engage with civil society in the spirit of equal partnership and begin to address issues of resource management, equity and climate resilience in the coming years."

Name of the Organisation: Biome Environmental Trust

Name of the Initiative: REDEFINING WASTEWATER USE & SHALLOW AQUIFER AS A CLIMATE RESILIENCE STRATEGY

Location: Devanahalli Town, Bengaluru Rural District

Project Outcomes

- Establish and demonstrate a sustainable and adequate source of domestic water supply through the integrated management of the shallow aquifer and treated domestic wastewater.
- Establish and demonstrate cost-effective water treatment methods necessary to ensure compliance with BIS 10500 water quality standards within his setup.
- Develop a methodology for characterizing the shallow aquifer and ensuring its sustainable yield, thereby laying the scientific foundation for replication and scaling.
- Prepare a list of Standard Operating Procedures (SoPs) and best practices for implementing indirect potable reuse projects using treated domestic wastewater.

Impact

- ✓ Water supply: Meets 12% of water supply of 5400 KLD / 5.4 MLD considering 135 LPCD
- ✓ Water Quality Metrics: Comprehensive monthly Water quality tests, specifically Total Dissolved Solids (TDS), will be tracked. The shallow aquifer's TDS is expected to remain below 500 mg/L, compared to over 1500 mg/L in deep aquifers.
- ✓ Energy Efficiency: Comparison of energy consumption between deep borewells and shallow filter borewells. Energy savings measured in INR per kiloliter, targeting savings of INR 7.82 per KL.
- ✓ Livelihood benefit: A contract to grow fish in the lake has been given to local fishermen. In return the fishermen also take responsibility for maintaining the health of the lake.
- ✓ Circular economy: The whole process is providing livelihood and, in turn saving money for the gram panchayat
- ✓ Cost Savings: Annual cost savings of INR 17, 12,580 from reduced energy consumption. Five-year savings projection of INR 51, 37,740
- ✓ Sustainable source of water: This has provided and been reliable source of water even in droughts of 2023-2024

NORTH EAST INITIATIVE DEVELOPMENT AGENCY (NEIDA)

2nd PRIZE

Brief message from CEO and long-term goals:

We are honoured to have been selected by the Jury for the 2nd Joint Prize under the Water initiatives by NGO category for the 13th Edition of FICCI Water Awards. This recognition strengthens our resolve to advance long-term water sustainability for communities. About 60–70% of the population in the Indian Himalayan Region (IHR) depends directly on spring water for their domestic and livelihood needs. Our initiatives focus on Springs revival and recharge interventions to secure water sources, especially to the mountain community. Empowering local institutions such as community-led water governance to manage resources equitably. We believe that water security is not just about access today, but about safeguarding tomorrow. This award inspires us to deepen our commitment to resilient ecosystems, empowered communities, and sustainable development.

Name of Initiative: Water Security Programme

Location: Nagaland, Mizoram and Arunachal Pradesh

The initiatives/innovation

- 966 number of Springs Inventoried
- Conducted 313 Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) Exercises
- 309 WATSAN/Springshed Committee/WUGs adopted/formed
- Preparation of 582 number of Detail Technical Report (DTR)
- 519 number of springs were treated covering 972.11 ha
- Trained 312 Barefoot Hydrogeologists
- Conducted 1632 trainings for SCs & Communities on springshed management
- Developed 230 Plans for Operation & Maintenance (O&M) of Springshed areas
- Development of Videos, Posters and Banners for SBCC Campaigns



MS. SENTIMONGLA TEMSU
Executive Director, NEIDA

> This recognition at the FICCI Water Awards reaffirms our belief that sustainable water security begins with community-led action. By reviving springs, strengthening local governance, and investing in climate-resilient practices, we are not only addressing today's needs but safeguarding tomorrow's generations.









Project Impact

1. Witnessed an average increase in spring discharge by 23.63% during the lean-season.
2. Improved water access for 36,800+ HHs and increased overall water availability
3. Physical water-quality parameters are expected to improve by 20% with the higher spring discharge.
4. Increased water availability has reduced water-fetching time by over 30 minutes, easing the burden on women and children. Higher spring discharge has also enabled communities to start or resume terraced wet rice cultivation, strengthening self-reliance.
5. A 5% increase in green cover (2017–2025) and 453 ha of catchment areas have been protected/conserved by the communities

    - **Success story:** Longkongke is an important spring for the Longtsunger village, Kiphire district Nagaland. It serves as a water source for approximately 95 households with a population of over 475. Longkongke spring was dry during the hydrogeological survey in the month of April 2023. Spring occurs in a local depression. Over the past decade, slow decrease in discharge of the spring has been observed. As part of the Springshed Management project, a comprehensive recharge intervention was successfully implemented in Longtsunger village during September 2024. The initiative aimed to enhance groundwater recharge and strengthen local water security through scientifically designed treatment measures.

    - **Treatment Area Coverage:** A total of 3.5 hectares of recharge zone was treated through different bioengineering measures, selected based on hydrogeological suitability and community consultations. Staggered Contour Trenches: Approximately 930 staggered contour trenches were constructed across the recharge area. Each trench measured 2.0 meters in length, 0.5 meters in width, and 0.45 meters in depth, designed to intercept surface runoff, reduce soil erosion, and facilitate percolation. Dugout Ponds: In addition, three small dugout ponds were excavated, each with dimensions of 2.5 meters (L) × 2.0 meters (W) × 1.0 meter (D). These ponds serve as micro water harvesting structures, supporting moisture retention and localized recharge during rainfall events.



Longkongke spring taken on August 2024



Longkongke spring taken on November 2025

DEVELOPMENT SUPPORT CENTRE (DSC), AHMEDABAD

Joint 2nd PRIZE



MR. MOHAN SHARMA
Executive Director
Development Support Centre

> Water security is not created by structures alone—it evolves when people learn to measure, conserve, share, optimise and govern water collectively. When this community wisdom is reinforced by enabling policies, science and trusted partnerships, every drop transforms from a crisis into a shared asset for long-term well-being.

Brief message from CEO and long-term goals:

At Development Support Centre (DSC), water is understood not merely as a physical resource, but as a shared foundation for livelihoods, ecosystems, and social equity. Over the past three decades, DSC has worked with rural and tribal communities across India to strengthen people-centred natural resource management, grounded in science and local wisdom, learning, and partnerships.

DSC is a learning-by-doing organisation. Our institutional journey has evolved with experience—from early supply-side watershed development and participatory irrigation management (PIM), toward demand-side water management in agriculture, and finally to integrated water resource management and groundwater governance. This progression reflects a clear learning: sustainable water outcomes require informed communities, responsive institutions, and enabling systems—not infrastructure alone.

Our long-term strategy is anchored in five interconnected steps: assessing local water realities, co-designing solutions with communities, building robust and dynamic institutions, documenting solutions rigorously, and scaling proven approaches responsibly through partnerships. Central to this approach is investing in water literacy, youth leadership, and women's participation so that communities themselves drive resilience in a changing climate.

The team DSC extends its sincere gratitude to the FICCI Water Awards Jury for recognising this work. This platform has recharged our collective resolve to deepen our engagement with vulnerable water geographies. As DSC completes 31 years of collaborative journey, I acknowledge the vision of our founders led by Shri Anil Shah, the guidance of our Chairperson Shri O. P. Rawat (Retd. IAS) and Board members, our government and knowledge and funding partners, and—above all—the communities whose commitment continues to shape water-wise futures.

Name of the Initiative

"Strengthening Community Water Security through Integrated Resource Management and Participatory Irrigation Practices across Diverse Agro-Ecologies"

Location

Mehsana District (Gujarat);
Agar Malwa and Alirajpur Districts (Madhya Pradesh)

The Initiative / Innovation

Across India's groundwater-stressed plains and climate-vulnerable tribal landscapes, Development Support Centre (DSC) initiated a multi-location water security programme to address not only physical scarcity, but the deeper challenge of how communities perceive, use, and govern water.

In the over-exploited aquifers of Mehsana, the semi-arid plateau of Agar Malwa, and the hilly tribal belt of Alirajpur, groundwater was long perceived as limitless. DSC's intervention focused on reversing this mindset through **participatory groundwater management, village-level water budgeting, rainwater conservation, artificial recharge, on-farm water measurement, and nature-based solutions,** supported by GIS-informed planning and simple, field-tested tools.

Local youth were trained as 170 **"Bhujal Jankars"—barefoot groundwater volunteers—creating strong local social capital** capable of monitoring rainfall, groundwater levels, and water quality and translating scientific information into accessible village dialogue. Women's groups played leadership roles in water quality testing and awareness programmes, while farmers tested water-efficient practices directly on their own fields.

Rather than prescribing solutions, DSC followed its institutional pathway of:

Assess » Design » Build » Prove » Document » Scale

ensuring that solutions were validated on the ground, documented as learning, and then expanded through partnerships.

This approach reflects DSC's evolution as a learning organisation—moving from watershed works and canal irrigation management toward demand-side efficiency and finally to **integrated water governance,** where informed communities and institutions jointly steward shared resources.

Impact

Implemented across 192 villages, the initiative engaged over 1.04 lakh rural households across Gujarat and Madhya Pradesh. A core outcome was a behavioural shift—communities moved away from the long-held belief that groundwater is infinite, toward measuring, budgeting, and collectively governing surface and groundwater as a finite shared resource. This change translated into tangible hydrological, environmental, and livelihood gains:

- **Reduced groundwater stress:** In Mehsana district, once characterized by unchecked extraction, the annual groundwater demand–supply gap declined from 2,806 to 1,126 lakh cubic metres between 2021–22 and 2024–25 due to integrated rainwater conservation, groundwater recharge measures and on farm demand-side water management.
- **Improved water quality:** Regular groundwater monitoring showed a stabilisation and rise of 10–15 feet in groundwater levels across several villages in Mehsana, along with improvements in TDS, electrical conductivity (EC), and pH.
- In Palodar (Mehsana), a nature-based greywater treatment system reduced TDS (864→165 mg/L), EC (1650→303 µS/cm) and corrected pH (8.4→7.7), enabling safe reuse for irrigation while preventing surface and groundwater contamination.
- **Enhanced groundwater availability and ecosystems:** In Agar Malwa, groundwater levels rose by 1–2.5 feet, with wells remaining functional later into summer. Soil and moisture conservation, afforestation, and grass seeding improved infiltration, reduced erosion, and strengthened recharge zones.
- **Higher farm incomes through water-wise practices:** Adoption of "More Crop per Drop" principles resulted in 10–32% increases in net farm income, driven by improved water-use efficiency and reduced input costs. Low-

cost options such as alternate furrow irrigation enabled wide adoption among small and marginal farmers.

- **Mehsana:** Economic water productivity rose sharply—cotton increased from ₹17/m^3 to ₹120/m^3 and castor from ₹14/m^3 to ₹76/m^3 under drip and mulching.
- **Agar Malwa:** Water-wise practices generated net agricultural returns of ₹3.21 crore, averaging ₹29,365 per hectare.
- **Alirajpur:** Interventions achieved a farm productivity ratio of 3.24, yielding net returns of ₹2.60 crore and an average additional income of ₹25,753 per hectare.
- **Sustained community institutions:** 474 community-based organisations—including Sujal Samitis, PGWM Committees, farmer field schools, and women's SHGs—engaged over 1,600 village leaders who mobilised ₹12.77 crore public funds and trained Bhujal Jankars. These local water stewards now independently monitor groundwater, manage assets and finances, and update village water security plans annually beyond the project period.
- It has been **recognized as a replicable, community-manageable solution** with potential for **scaling across rural Gujarat and beyond.** The initiative contributed to the institutional recognition of Bhujal Jankars as a cadre under the Atal Bhujal Yojana.

Why This case study Matters

This initiative demonstrates that water resilience is cultivated—not delivered. When communities learn to measure water, discuss trade-offs, and govern use collectively, water security shifts from being a technical intervention to a shared social achievement.

As DSC completes 30 years of collaborative journey, its mission remains steadfast: to provide knowledge-based support to policies, programmes, and institutions working in participatory natural resource management and livelihoods. By bridging community wisdom, applied science, and enabling policy frameworks, DSC continues to contribute toward building water-wise societies capable of navigating climate uncertainty with confidence.

More about DSC's work and learning can be accessed at www.dscindia.org.



Water security remains a pressing need for vulnerable tribal communities in Alirajpur





From infinite use to informed use—communities learning groundwater is finite and shared in Mehsana.





Bhujal Jankars turning data into local water budget-based groundwater wisdom.



More crop per drop through low-cost, efficient irrigation









Water budgets guiding collective decisions in Gram Sabhas.





Nature-based greywater treatment restoring local water ecosystem: Palodara-Mahesna



Decentralized Knowledge Hub: Inauguration of Participatory Groundwater Information Centre at KVK, Kherva





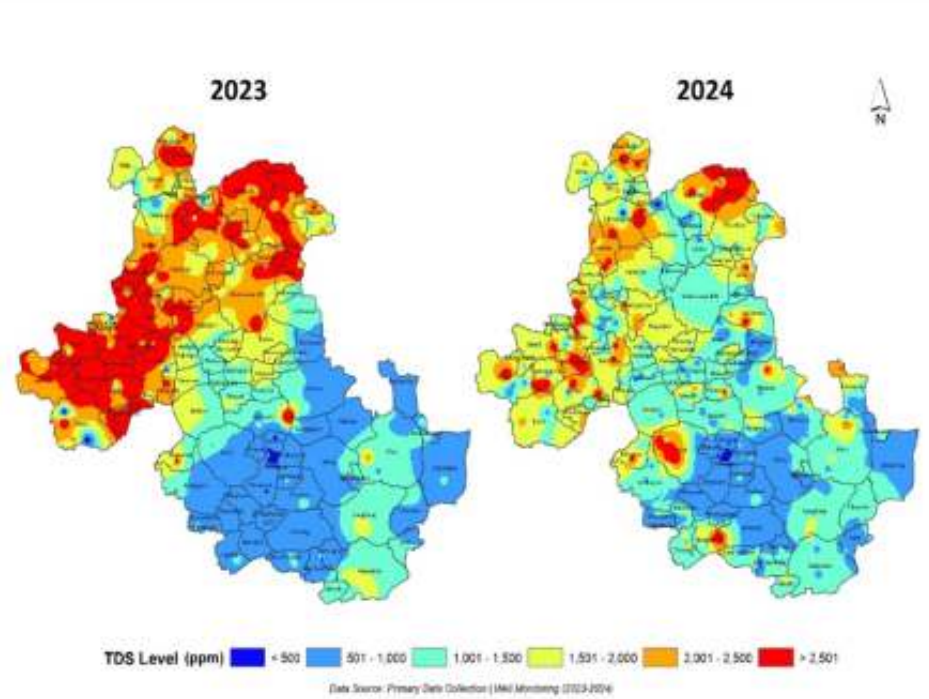
Recharging aquifers by restoring catchments and artificial recharge injection wells.

Women's Leadership



Community and government agencies joining hands for Environment Sustainability

Institutions Managing Water Beyond the Project



Map illustrating groundwater recharge and associated improvements in groundwater quality in Mehsana.

FICCI WATER MISSION

FICCI constituted a 'Water Mission' in 2011, to promote and provide thought leadership in the area of water efficiency and sustainable water management. It aims to facilitate the sharing and dissemination of best practices across industry sectors in order to encourage corporate and industry players to imbibe a culture of water conservation within their organizations. The Mission focuses on industrial water use efficiency, PPP in urban wastewater and corporate water stewardship.

The Mission is working to create awareness on the existing situation pertaining to water scarcity, quality and generate a discourse on sustainable use of water amongst various users. With growing and extensive depletion and pollution of our water resources, our current work is being restructured to bring this issue back in focus to provide a sense of urgency to the debate of water management.

The objectives of the Mission are:

- To advocate policy direction towards sustainable water management
- To document and disseminate best practices on water conservation, management, reuse and recycling across various sectors and create a forum to facilitate exchange of information and experiences in the country
- To promote through leadership and policy advocacy on sustainable water management including market for wastewater

FICCI Water Awards & India Industry Water Conclave

The FICCI Water Mission has instituted the India Industry Water Conclave and Awards on annual basis to recognize excellence in water conservation and sustainable water management practices. The Conclave and Awards brings together diverse stakeholders from the corporate sector, government, academia, non-governmental organizations, civil society, and financial institutions to showcase best practices, deliberate on policy issues, and propose solutions to surmount challenges in sustainable water management.

FICCI WATER MISSION SECRETARIAT



Hemant Seth
Assistant Secretary General and Head – Water
Food Processing, Agriculture and
Crop Protection, FICCI



Kirtika Arora
Senior Assistant Director
Water

Email: hemant.seth@ficci.com
kirtika.arora@ficci.com
watermission@ficci.com
T: +91-11-2373 8760-70



Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry
Industry's Voice for Policy Change
Federation House, Tansen Marg, New Delhi 110001
T: +91-11-23738760 - 70 | F: +91-11-23721504, 23320714
E-mail - watermission@ficci.com | Website - www.ficci.in

www.indiaindustrywaterconclave.com