

SJVN's CSR initiative towards Water Conservation: Multi-Purpose Medium Height Check Dam at Gount Khad, District Nahan, HP

Water, the most important resource of nature is required for the survival of living being on earth. Safe available water is important as it caters to various needs such as drinking, daily domestic, agriculture and other purposes.

A considerable part of rural areas in the vicinity of district headquarters of Nahan in district Sirmour, Himachal Pradesh, is considered water stressed as a result of rapid industrial growth in surrounding area and receding water table situation. The issue of proper drinking water supply and irrigation facilities made local people aware of the fact that there is great need to embrace water conservation measures. The local populace brought this issue into the notice of SJVN management and urged them to extend help.

SJVN, being a socially responsible organization focusing on inclusive development of the society especially the rural communities, stepped forward with a new initiative. Under Corporate Social Responsibility Environment Sustainability Program, a new initiative of constructing Multi-Purpose Medium Height Check Dam at Gount Khad was undertaken by SJVN at a cost of Rs 57 Lakh.

Gount Khad is a small tributary of Jalal river which is rain fed water resource with heavy flow in monsoon and considerably reduced water level in summer. 3.25-meter-high and 30-meter-long Gount Khad Dam has storage capacity of approximately 50 lakh litres and was executed through HP Jal Shakti Vibhag, Nahan, GoHP.

There are at least six existing drinking water supply schemes on the downstream of the dam that are also being reenergised by the Dam. It is helping in recharging ground water reserves and increasing the water availability for domestic and agricultural uses thus leading to great improvement in the living standards of the locals. The residents of surrounding villages of Nihog, Dhirath, Shiharad, Gasani, Gussan, Shathari, Chakliu, Gount, Banama & Dadoga are being benefitted by this Water Conservation Project which is among the first in the region.

The Check Dam was constructed with an objective of enhancement in agricultural productivity resulting in improved economic situation for the farmers. This sense of security from access to water year around is translating into better income chances for the farmers who were totally depended on rainfall. Construction of the Dam has proved to be boon to us", says Tulsi Ram, a resident of Gount village. "Water from Gount Khad Dam has made it possible for water availability on regular basis that has tremendously improved our live," he added.

In the longer run, the Check Dam will facilitate in optimum water conservation and will also help in raising vegetation cover which will be of environmental and ecological benefit. For Sagar Singh, a resident farmer from Gount village and many other like him, the Check dam has given hope that the prospect of local area development in near future is shining bright.

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