

Formation of an Area Water Partnership to rejuvenate Shivana River

Background:

Originating from a place known as Shavan-Salamgarh in Rajasthan, the east flowing river Shivana is a tributary of river Chambal of Yamuna river system. Considered as lifeline of Mandsaur district of Madhya Pradesh, it requires projects and programmes to rejuvenate it to fulfill developmental needs of the area which has, on one hand, prosperous agricultural land with major crops grown like wheat, sorghum, corn, tuwar, groundnut etc. and fast growing industrial belt, on the other; facing acute water shortage mainly due to indiscriminate extraction of ground water and non-implementation of projects to conserve river water. In summer, people of the Mandsaur district face acute shortage of drinking water. Apart from the water shortage, the Shivana river has suffered with severe pollution in the past.

Initiative of India Water Partnership (IWP) and Central Zone Water Partnership for formation of an Area Water Partnership (AWP):

Keeping in view the water scarcity and plight of the people for having safe water for drinking and water for agriculture, it was realized by NAVADEEP, the Coordinating Agency of Central Zone Water Partnership to sensitize the people to adopt innovative approaches and find solutions for the area specific water related issues. It took about four months to reach on a common consensus to form an Area Water Partnership and to mobilize people and policy makers to do away with the "business as usual" for resolving the local water issues. IWP had earlier formed Kshipra AWP, Betwa Jamini AWP, Datia AWP and Dudhi Tawa AWP in Madhya Pradesh. With the view to meet the basic requirement of water for drinking and agriculture for the people living in and around Shivana river, the IWP facilitated NAVADEEP to work towards establishment of a new AWP and to play a role of promoting agency on behalf of IWP.

With the concerted efforts of IWP and NAVADEEP, an AWP was formed on 18th June, 2012 in the name of "Shivana Area Water Partnership" with its Headquarters located at 8, Housing Colony, Naii Aabaadi, Mandsaur District, Madhya Pradesh. The office bearers of Shivana AWP include; Mr. Narendra Sipani, President, Mr. Yogesh Gupta, Vice-President, Mr. Vikram Vidyarthi, Secretary, Mr. Rao Vijay Singh as Treasurer and Er. Sunil Vyas, Special Project Coordinator. Representatives of 12 State Government Departments/institutions are the members of Shivana AWP.

Prior to the formation, many rounds of informal consultations and brainstorming sessions among water sector professionals, government and non-government stakeholders were held. During the initial consultations, Mr. Ravindra Shukla, Coordinator of Central Zone Water Partnership felt that neither local community nor even District Administrators/policy makers/PRI members have much knowledge about the Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) as IWRM is not publicized or practiced in the area. Therefore it was also felt that Shivana AWP will help in dissemination of IWRM at the local level.

The inaugural function of Shivana Area Water Partnership was organized in the conference room of Municipal Council of Mandsaur on 18th June 2012. Addressing as Chief Guest on the occasion, Municipal Council, President Mrs. Kusum Gupta and Patron of Shivana AWP told that Shivana River is lifeline of Mandsaur. The City gets its drinking water supply from a reservoir of one of the stop dams on it. Every summer, water level reduces in reservoir creating water crisis. Hence increasing its capacity or finding a new source for supply is necessary. She expressed concern that river pollution, over the years, has been on increase.

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Mrs. Gupta lauded the formation of Shivana AWP and hoped that its work, particularly the proposed integrated long term work plan will not only help to solve drinking water problem of urban area but also provide relief to agriculture and industrial sectors thus paving the way for faster overall development of the district. She thanked India Water Partnership (GWP-India) to have selected Mandsaur for forming an AWP. Shivana AWP President Mr. Narendra Sipani, told that some voluntary organizations are working to revive the river which normally dries up in summer season. Each of them has its own limitations as for expertise or resources are concerned. Bringing them together on one single platform through Shivana AWP can provide better results. During the inaugural function, it was decided that Shivana AWP would (i) build an environment by mobilizing people and policy makers to follow the theory and practice of IWRM to mitigate water scarcity in Shivana basin area; (ii) would honor farmers and villagers who came forward and motivated others to contribute "Shramdaan" (Voluntary labour) for construction of stop dams on Shivana river; (iii) would provide "Jal Puraskar" (Water Award) to an individual or organization for exemplary contribution in environmental sector, particularly pollution control in Shivana river.

The first meeting of stakeholders of Shivana AWP was convened on **29th April, 2013 at Mandsaur district Panchayat Conference Hall**. Executive Secretary, India Water Partnership and office bearers of Shivana AWP visited the Shivana river. The meeting was addressed by President of Madhya Pradesh Kisan Sangathan, Superintendent of Police, Mandsaur district; Mr. Yashpal Singh Shisodia, Member of Legislative Assembly (MLA), Senior Scientists from Agriculture College, Mr. Narendra Sipani, President, Shivana AWP, Mr. Yogesh Gupta, Vice-President, Shivana AWP, Mr. Vikram Vidyarthi, Secretary, Shivana AWP, Mr. Rao Vijay Singh, Treasurer, Shivana AWP, Er, Sunil Vyas, Special Project Coordinator, Shivana AWP, Mr. J K Jain from District Planning Office, Mr. Ashok Agrawal, Member, Shivana AWP, Mr Brijesh Joshi, Member, Shivana AWP, Mr. Ravindra Shukla, Coordinator, Central Zone Water Partnership and Executive Secretary, IWP. The meeting was attended by the representatives of District officials, rural and urban civic bodies; NGOs and farmers' association.



Shivana AWP Stakeholders meeting on 29th April, 2013 at Mandsaur District Panchayat Conference Hall

Er. Sunil Vyas, Special Project Coordinator, Shivana AWP made a presentation about community participation of farmers for construction of 24 stop dams on River Shivana. To highlight the farmers' contribution to save river Shivana, Mr Yashpal Singh Shisodia, MLA presented awards to the farmers who contributed their voluntary labour for construction of stop dams on Shivana river.

The second meeting of Shivana AWP was organized in a remote village **Bhavgarh in Mandsaur district on 6th September, 2013**. The meeting was organized with the aim to promote use of appropriate water saving technologies by the farmers. It was attended by more than 100 farmers of the district. Experts from different departments of district administration, e.g., water resources, public health engineering (PHE), rural development department, women and child welfare department and the district panchayat addressed the gathering. The meeting was remarkable in the sense that it brought together stakeholders from various sectors on one platform to exchange views on various issues pertaining to water and food security. The farmers present in the meeting agreed to cooperate in all activities to rejuvenate river Shivana in such a way that it flows throughout the year. In the meeting the farmers were advised to sow seeds of such crop varieties which require less water to grow. Measures to conserve water, increase ground water level and taking 'more crop per drop' were also suggested. Construction of farm ponds and earthen bunds around the farmers' fields were also recommended in the meeting.

For further information, please contact :

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