

The Water Guardian of Bhunav: Payal's Resilience for Sustainable Future

My journey into water conservation began with a simple motivation. I wanted to ensure that my village, Bhunav, would never face water scarcity. But my ambitions didn't stop there. I dreamed of becoming a "water teacher," someone who could pass on my knowledge to others and make a tangible difference in my community. Although the opportunity to earn an additional income for my family was a practical incentive, what really drove me to take this up was my passion for water security.

I started my journey as a Bhujal Jankar by raising awareness about the critical state of water availability and demand in Bhunav. Recognizing the importance of existing water bodies and structures, I identified their issues and the maintenance they required. I collected primary data from households and farmers, monitored wells, gathered daily rainfall data, and conducted soil and water quality tests. These efforts laid the foundation for a comprehensive understanding of the village's water resources.

My initiatives have led to a notable increase in water literacy within the community. I developed a water balance or budget for the village, which has empowered everyone to adopt water-saving techniques on their farms. My own family has embraced practices like alternate furrow irrigation, intercropping and the use of vermicompost. We have thus also set an example for others.

By explaining complex water-related concepts in a simplified manner, I have been able to bridge the gap between knowledge and action, enabling even those with minimal education to understand and contribute.

This journey has not been without challenges. Initially, I faced skepticism from the village elders, who doubted my knowledge and even mocked my efforts. Then I sought assistance from the Development Support Centre (DSC) Project Team, which gave me the needed support to overcome these obstacles.