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“Every Effort to Help Recharge Underground Aquifers Needs to be Made”

Rajasthan is one of the most water deprived state with respect to rainfall and per capita water availability. The state faces acute water scarcity challenges as rainfall patterns are impacted by climate change. Increasing agricultural and industrial demand is placing additional pressure on the state's dwindling water resources. With its semi-arid and arid conditions, Rajasthan is at greater risk from decreasing water resources. In the absence of surface water sources in some areas of the state, drinking water is often physically transported over long distances. For such areas, water is not free, and may be even more precious than oil due to huge challenge in getting it and also the associated costs of developing infrastructure and long distance transmission facilities for supplying water. Water being a common resource is not properly regulated and hence subject to several market and system failures, both from the supply and user sides. With a target to provide access to sustainable water supply to all the people of the state, water utilities can consider important aspects like equitable water distribution, demand management and tariff reform, delivery efficiency and adoption of technology, proper groundwater management, water harvesting, capacity building and improving affordability. Water delivery mechanism should be accurate as a fully functional consumer metering system can limit drinking water wastage and enforce conservation. Bulk metering for all water sources should go with consumer metering for domestic, industrial, and agricultural use. Every effort to help recharge underground aquifers needs to be made, including micro watershed planning and restoration of traditional water bodies that lie scattered in disrepair across the state.

SPML Infra has contributed immensely in developing robust and sustainable water infrastructure in Rajasthan over the last three decades which has helped in providing clean drinking water facilities to millions of people across the state. The number of projects executed by SPML Infra has helped water utilities in saving on cost in terms of water loss management and better supply services and connecting new areas with piped water supply. To succeed in an increasingly complex water situation, the utilities need to focus on opportunities new technology is offering in maintaining municipal water systems, and find answers to major challenges if they are to thrive and remain competitive over the coming decades.