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The Great Wall of Surajpura⁴



Rationale

Rationale: The villagers of Surajpura, Rajasthan, India have harnessed an innovative water conservation strategy to combat the impacts of climate change in their drought-prone region. Using funds from the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGA), they built a 15-foot mud wall stretching nearly a mile across barren land, accompanied by a trench to capture rainwater runoffs. This wall has revived local farms, recharged wells, and restored vitality to the area for the first time in over two decades. It is not just a physical structure but a symbol of climate resilience powered by a social welfare policy.

Farmer's Experience

(Village: Surajpura, Tehsil: Kekri)

In February 2024, the residents of Surajpura proudly stood atop the wall they had built in 2022, marveling at its ability to transform their village. Over 650 residents, many of whom relied on MGNREGA for work, toiled for six months to construct the wall. Their efforts have not only revived 40 of the village's 100 wells but also brought back migratory birds and rejuvenated agricultural activities. The wall passed its first major test when it successfully captured rainwater during a drought year, filling wells that had long run dry and rejuvenating farmlands that had lain barren for years.



³Srivastava, Roli. 2024. The Great Wall of Surajpura. The Migration Story blog. Shabdpayanam Pvt Ltd. <https://www.themigrationstory.com/post/the-great-wall-of-surajpura>