

Inside Rural Uttar Pradesh's Water Revival: The Art of Living's Groundbreaking Efforts

Category: Business

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Farmers across Uttar Pradesh are reclaiming their fields, livelihoods, and dignity as The Art of Living's river rejuvenation projects breathe life back into once-depleted landscapes. Under the guidance of Gurudev Sri Sri Ravi Shankar, these initiatives are reviving rivers, recharging groundwater, and turning flood-prone villages into resilient, water-secure farming communities.



Building boulder checks, slowing the rush of water to help it soak deep into the earth

A Land of Extremes

For decades, farmers in western Uttar Pradesh endured a cruel paradox – weeks of flooding during the monsoon followed by parched fields in summer. In Ladaura Narayanpur of Chamraua block, persistent waterlogging once made it impossible to harvest crops without wading through flooded fields. Yet nearby, others struggled with the opposite crisis, as wells dug to depths of 130 to 140 feet yielded only scant water.



Constructing recharge wells that guide every drop of rain back to the earth

This cycle of scarcity and excess is what The Art of Living Social Projects set out to transform. Partnering with the Uttar Pradesh government and corporate collaborators, AOL combined modern hydro-engineering with grassroots mobilisation to restore balance – reducing flooding, replenishing aquifers, and strengthening farmer resilience.

“Rivers are not just bodies of water. They carry our culture, our economy, and our very life. To revive a river is to revive life itself,” says **Gurudev Sri Sri Ravi Shankar**, whose vision has inspired the rejuvenation of over 72 rivers and tributaries, benefiting 3.4 crore people across 20,000 villages in India.

Science Meets Tradition

In Rampur district, results are already visible. Over 100 villages have witnessed tangible change, with 300 recharge shafts dug across 132 ponds, supported by 15 injection wells and a pioneering sub-surface dyke – a feat once thought impossible in alluvial plains.

Engineers used geophysical surveys to locate underground clay layers beneath the Kosi tributaries and built a barrier of perforated PVC pipes, cement, and slurry to slow sub-surface water flow – allowing groundwater to recharge instead of draining away.

Sub-surface dykes were previously considered unfeasible in this terrain, but with careful planning and local collaboration, The Art of Living Social Projects was able to build them efficiently and cost-effectively.

The impact has been profound. Wells near the dyke now hold water longer, and fields that once stayed flooded for weeks dry out within 8 to 10 days, enabling timely harvests. Irrigation costs have dropped, as pumps now need to run fewer hours for the same yield.

Bundelkhand's Droughts and the Return of the Revati

In Bundelkhand's rocky terrain, where floods and droughts have alternated with devastating regularity, The Art of Living Social Projects has delivered a remarkable turnaround. In partnership with Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL), Ashirvad Pipes, and the local administration, teams constructed 238 recharge structures in Lalitpur district. According to government reports, groundwater levels have risen by 5 to 6

feet in parts of Birdha block.

The most symbolic success is the revival of the Revati river. Forgotten for decades, the Revati now flows through six gram panchayats. What began in 2022 with just two recharge shafts has expanded to 246, transforming both the hydrology and morale of the region. Local leaders have replaced water-intensive eucalyptus trees with native species like neem and jamun, enhancing soil stability and biodiversity.

Earlier, water stagnated for weeks and harvests were delayed. Now, recharge structures clear the water in days, allowing farmers to harvest rice on time.

Building Awareness and Ownership

Over 16,000 villagers have attended Jal Jagrukta Shivar (Water Awareness Camps), learning how daily choices affect long-term water security. This integration of science, sustainability, and community participation has earned recognition from the Ministry of Jal Shakti and the Ministry of Rural Development.

In Magermau, Rampur, a pond refilled by recharge shafts has eased long-standing worries about water availability for cattle, allowing farmers to plan their sowing without fear.

Water Wisdom in Action

For regions long resigned to drought and despair, these projects offer not just restored groundwater – but restored hope. The Art of Living Social Projects' water rejuvenation

initiative is emerging as a [solution for water crisis](#) in India. By combining scientific precision, community ownership, and spiritual leadership, it bridges the gap between ecological restoration and social transformation.

As rivers flow again and farmlands flourish, it reminds us that when human will works in harmony with nature, both the land and its people flourish.

About The Art of Living Social Projects

The Art of Living, a non-profit, educational, and humanitarian organisation founded in 1981 by world-renowned spiritual leader and humanitarian Gurudev Sri Sri Ravi Shankar, has been at the forefront of water conservation efforts in India. In collaboration with the Government of India and leading corporate entities, the organisation undertakes large-scale projects to address water scarcity and revive ecosystems across the country. Get involved, donate now: [NGO for Water Conservation in India, Top NGO in India for Social Projects](#)

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