

Water scarcity shows how vulnerable we are

Insufficient water in many parts of the world is now the new topic of concern, causing sleepless nights. Water shortage problems, poor water quality and fast depletion of ground waters are now major concerns worldwide. And as long as populations continue to increase; the more we will have to worry about sustainable water supply. The problem might stick with us if we don't double our effort. We expect to face increased competition due to diminishing waters.

Agriculture is said to be one of the causes of water scarcity. Reports show that farming accounts for about 70 per cent water withdrawal from our world today. And yet about 80 per cent of rural farmers in the developing world practice rain-fed agriculture. It means that with continued unpredictable rainfall, farmers will become more vulnerable. Look at the cost of pumping, treating and regulating available water sources. It is prohibitive to the rural farmer.

We ought to plan better for the growing populations and for hard-to-access communities. Plan for available water sources not enough for people in dis-



placed settlements because vulnerable people also demand water. This will ensure readiness for drought emergencies and environmental migrants, which are real potential problems. Obviously, we must not run out of options. Among the things, cries to God to deliver rain should get louder – if science has eluded us. But we can't run out of innovations, appropriate technology and all, to come up with magical outcomes. Solution cannot exclude thorough effort to understand the causes and how to avert current climatic variability. And be able to build human capacity

to sustain small innovations in sustainable waters. Our moment of science must recognise; water demand, specific human needs, gender, and all. This will dig us from the pit of water scarcity. Invoke science to foretell climate variability and its impact on water availability. So we can derive useful parameters to enable us correlate water needs and adjust ourselves accordingly.

Develop mitigation measures to build our capacity to sustain water. Provide regular updates on water stress periods and how to overcome. Promote ways of optimising available waters in order to allow for efficient, sufficient waters. We can't wait for taps to run dry before we plan to provide alternate means. Or give up. It only postpones our right to enjoying ample water. A moment of scientific magic will reduce severity of long dry seasons where there is little or no water. And ensures there is no food shortage for both human and livestock. And the socio-economic graph of the poor societies will look healthy or is it wealthy?

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