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Clean energy startups innovate on products to aid farmers, rural areas

Several startups across India have ventured into the clean energy sector, bringing new innovations to the agriculture sector and rural households.

MONGABAY . (https://www.moneycontrol.com/author/mongabay-9521/) | JANUARY 22, 2022 / 10:46 AM IST

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A three horse power solar panel installed in a village in Rajasthan by Agrivijay for irrigation works. Photo courtesy: AgriVijay.

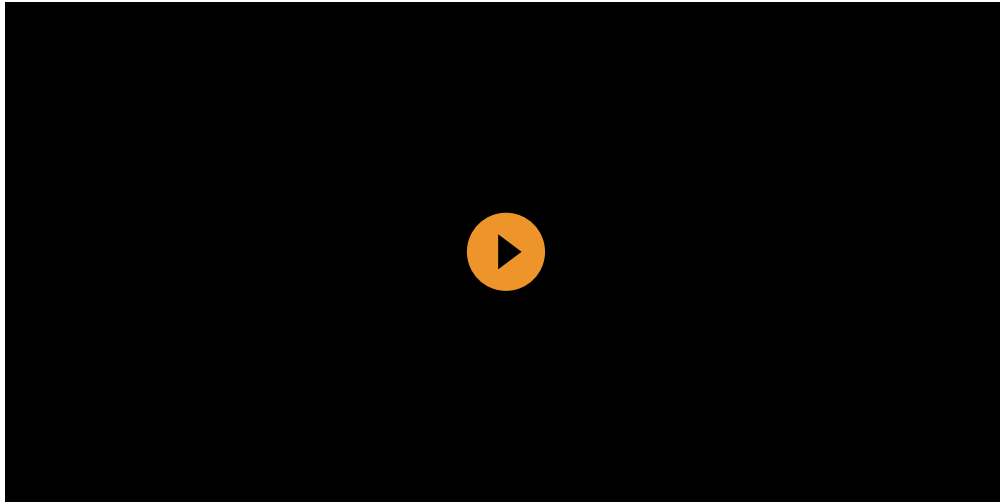
Yash Tarwadi, 25, is a chemical engineer based in Surat in India's western state of Gujarat. Four years ago, he along with three other like-minded engineers came together to develop a solar energy-based desalination plant that could be used to convert seawater into potable water, which could grow into a model for improving drinking water access in coastal states like Gujarat.

Like Tarwadi's enterprise, **Solnce Technologies** (<https://solnceenergy.in/>), many startup companies across India have ventured into the clean energy sector, developing innovations for the agricultural sector and rural households.

Solnce Technologies introduced its desalination plant, Sol-Evo, in 2018. It also started a pilot project and installed its standalone unit at Olpad, a coastal village, around 30 kilometres away from Surat, a city about 300 kilometres away from the state's capital Gandhinagar. "In Olpad, people used to bring water tankers to get drinking water. Their underground water was highly saline with TDS (Total Dissolved Solids) reaching around 800 mg/l. This is the reality of several rural and urban areas like Chennai, where despite a huge source of seawater, the people there are forced to buy water or depend on the government for the same," Tarwadi told Mongabay-India.

"One option is to use the conventional sources of electricity derived from polluting sources of energy like coal. Here people use thermal electricity and a Reverse Osmosis (RO)-based solution which is not a sustainable solution. Everybody knows that relying on RO filters can lead to usage of electricity and it would also eject several litres of waste high saline water which is harmful and can pose a threat to the environment too," he added.

He explained that as many rural coastal villages suffer from irregular electricity, solar-based solutions are suitable and clean. From the solar thermal plant, Tarwadi's startup has been able to convert 1500 litres of seawater to potable water, every day.



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The innovative technology was certified by the National Accreditation Board for Testing and Calibration (NABL). In 2020, the startup **won**