



PLAY & PUMP

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PUMPING water has never been this fun. Last year Pune-based Span Pumps Private Limited came up with the FUNFLOW model. “These pumps are designed as see-saw and merry-go-round models that will utilize the energy of children at play to lift clean water into an overhead tank for drinking and sanitation purposes,” says Nitin Muthiyan, one of the company directors. The first pump was installed in the tribal district of Jhabua in Madhya Pradesh and since then Span has installed about 100 such pumps and exported 30. “We’ll be installing about 2000 pumps in Madhya Pradesh,” says Ajit Bhandari, another director company director. This particular model, according to the company’s development consultant Narendra Purankar, can pump 1,000-3,000 liter water per hour without using any fuel. The cost of a sea saw pump is Rs 75,000 while the merry-go-round model comes for Rs 2 lakh.

“These pumps work up to depth of 100 meter. The maintenance cost is zero for this integrated model. Now we are coming up with low cost solution model for small farmers, which will cost them Rs 14,000-20,000 to water about two acres of land,” says Muthiyan. Africa is the company’s next destination—it is identifying schools there as its potential customers. “We are in discussions with various venture capitalists. What we want is want strategic partners since we are in the process of modifying the model which could double up as play equipment, pump and an electricity manufacturing unit which could at least produce power to run computers in areas where electricity is a problem,” says Bhandari.

Radheshyam Jadhav