

Success story of Teranti Village

Together we achieved

Introduction

The water and sanitation scenario in Orissa is very grim and bleak, with 94% of rural villages in Orissa do not have access to safe and protected water sources and sanitation coverage is less than 1%. This has resulted in 80% of diseases affecting rural people of Orissa being caused by very dirty and heavily polluted water, coupled with improper sanitation. Teranti village was no exception and suffered from these same issues.

Teranti comes under Sankiri, Panchayat of Keonjhar district, state of Orissa. There are 65 households in the village, with a total population of 391; 195 male, and 196 female. 37 of the households are APL, and 34 are BPL. The households are made up of 3 Scheduled Caste, 24 Scheduled Tribes and 38 General. The primary source of income is agriculture, and daily wage labour.

Situation before

Villagers had to bathe in ponds, which dried up in summer. Drinking water was from a dug well and tube well, which also dried up in the summer. Open-air defecation was a common sight, including the ponds being used for this purpose. Ponds were also used for washing animals. This all resulted in severe health problems for the villagers. Water-borne diseases, such as Diarrhoea, scabies and vomiting were prevalent. Women particularly suffered due to a lack of privacy and therefore unable to wash properly, often resulting in gynaecological problems. Another serious issue affecting women, and in particular new brides was having to wait for dark before they were able to relieve themselves. Women also had the daily burden of water collection to contend with, often getting up at 3am to collect the water for the family, before going to the field for a full days work. Then on returning from the field, they must return to collect water again. The village school also had no running water or toilets, which again affected the girl children and female teachers particularly.

How the intervention started:

Initial discussions by GV workers with the villagers showed that poor sanitation and health were the major issues concerning villagers. Meetings were organised with every household in the village attending. The purpose was to create an understanding of the importance of sanitation, sensitise the villagers in order for the villagers to demand sanitation facilities themselves. Simultaneously, exercises and discussions were held to create a sense of disgust amongst the villagers.

Work started in October 2005, and was completed in February 2008.

A corpus fund was collected from every household, and the total currently stands at Rs. 75,000. The interest from this will be used to supply any extended families, as well as families moving to the village with the same facilities. This ensures 100% inclusion in the project.

The water tank's capacity is 40 000 litres and will supply water 24 hours a day to 3 taps in every house; one to the bathroom, toilet and kitchen.

The project received a grant of 6lakh, 65,000 for water supply from RSVY, and the people contributed 20% of the total water tank cost in the form of labour and the collection of locally available materials.

For sanitation, the project received 75,000 from MLA (LAD) and Gram Vikas gave an incentive of Rs3000/unit. The people also contributed in terms of labour and the collection of local materials.

The situation after completion of the project:

There is now a real sense of dignity amongst the villagers, as well as a big increase in sanitation and hygiene awareness and education. This includes hand washing with soap after defecation, and before eating, breast-feeding, cooking, and serving meals. Water-borne diseases have reduced dramatically, enabling people to be more productive and work more days. People now take genuine pride in their village, with household backyards and village roads being kept clean. Villager's whole approach is now with cleanliness and hygiene in mind.

Villagers, especially women now have privacy and can wash properly. They have also had the daily drudgery of water collection removed, enabling them to have more time for themselves or to take part in extra income-generating activities.

Brides' parents are even asking whether the same facilities exist in the groom's village. If not the groom is being told he must build a toilet and bathing room.

There has been a large increase in girl students enrolling at the school, as well as retention of girl students.

Jitunath Mohanta- A High school clerk

In 2008 he arranged a married for his daughter, to a man from Maheswarpur village, Champua block. This village had no sanitation facilities and he asked the groom's parents to construct toilets before he could marry his daughter. The parents agreed, they constructed the toilets and the marriage took place! The bride is now taking an interest in hygiene education and teaching school children about hygiene and sanitation.

Guests visiting the village are now very attracted by the scheme and they want the same for their village. They always want to see the water tanks, which the villagers proudly show them. The water tank has become a symbol of dignity and pride for their village.

Villagers have become motivated in another ways to improve their village life too:

- 3 SHG have been established involving 45 members
- 1 SHG has got involved with the mid day meal scheme
- 1 SHG is now dealing in kerosene distribution.

1 SHG has also successfully received a Rs.50 000 loan from UBI bank, Keonjhar.

Conclusion

Where there is a will there is a way.

This has been proven in Teranti village, with the whole community coming together and taking on the challenge of poor-health, improper sanitation and a lack of safe drinking water, and ultimately succeeding in their mission. This was only achieved through their sheer commitment, strong will power and determination. Teranti village is now a model and eye-opener for the neighbouring villages, with many approaching Gram Vikas to ask for support in achieving what Teranti village have achieved.