



India



Self-Sustaining WASH

Sambandh   

Sambandh combines an integrated watershed approach to nutritional and food security with WASH strategies in an effort to address both the direct and underlying causes of malnutrition in India.

Launched in 2012, Not-for-profit , Agricultural Water Management , Drinking Water , Hygiene , Sanitation , Cross-sector , Cross-sector: Agriculture / Nutrition , Cross-sector: Health , South Asia: India

 <http://www.sambandh.org>  sambandhindia@gmail.com

Problem Addressed

Vulnerable groups living in poverty often cannot access sufficient nutritious foods, education and health and hygiene services. Shocks that lead to severe food shortages and/or high food prices can quickly plunge already struggling families into destitution and cause high rates of malnutrition. In this context, access to and use of safe water, sanitation facilities, and good hygiene have the potential to positively impact and safeguard nutritional outcomes by addressing both the direct and underlying causes of malnutrition.

Essential WASH behaviors, including hand washing with soap, treatment and safe storage of drinking water, and sanitary disposal of human feces, have been shown to effectively reduce the prevalence of diarrhea, a major contributor to child malnutrition. Lack of sanitation in particular is strongly correlated with stunting, and even in the absence of diarrhea, a fecal-contaminated environment is linked to environmental enteropathy. Adequate sanitation and hygiene can reduce the severe impact of agricultural and climate-based shocks to health and nutrition to a significant degree.

Innovative Approach

Sambandh develops unified programmatic approaches which combine aspects of food security, WASH and environmental protection. WASH aspects of the programs address the large percentage of malnutrition caused by WASH-related diseases, while food security aspects look at the treatment and caloric intake side of the equation.

In addition to linking food security with access to clean water, sanitation also has the potential for a more integrated link with food and the environment through making use of human waste as compost through eco-sanitation or as bio-gas through bio-digestion technologies.

Program Solution

Sambandh strives for improved access to clean water and sanitation, the basic right of any individual. The primary objective is to foster integrated behavior among community members in which safe use of water, healthy hygiene practices and regular use of improved sanitation facilities are used routine in daily life. Sambandh's integrated watershed approach for nutritional and food security has been dovetailed with WASH strategies for better health and hygiene. This

has been implemented among extremely marginalized tribal people living in forested fringes of Similipal sanctuary, a biosphere reserve in the state of Odisha in India.

Key WASH activities include:

- 1) Promote and facilitate increased access to and use of safe water supply and sanitation and key hygiene practices, in partnership with government;
- 2) Promote essential WASH, food, environmental hygiene and nutrition actions in community with education;
- 3) Promote increased availability and affordability of essential commodities to facilitate hygiene practices (e.g., soap, hand washing stations, sanitation options);
- 4) Develop multiple-use water systems that provide water for both domestic (e.g., drinking water) and productive uses (e.g., to support crops and livestock for income generation).

Sambandh looks for four key outcomes:

- 1) Increased equitable provision and utilization of high-quality WASH services, facilitated with government through relevant schemes;
- 2) Increased organization/local government capacity and commitment to WASH and thereby, better health, hygiene and nutrition;
- 3) Increased multi-sectoral programming (health and livelihoods, among others) and coordination for improved WASH outcomes;
- 4) Increased local leadership on entrepreneurship basis for better delivery.