



India



## Movement and Action Network for Transformation of Rural Areas (MANTRA) Framework

Gram Vikas  

Gram Vikas mobilizes, educates and trains communities on how to construct, manage and maintain their own sanitation facilities.

Launched in 1995, Not-for-profit , Drinking Water , Sanitation , South Asia: India

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### Problem Addressed

The state of Odisha has a population of 38 million people, 86% of whom reside in rural areas. Access to protected water is limited to less than 20% of the rural population, while less than 25% of the population has access to piped water supply and less than 50% has access to hygienic sanitation facilities. Water, Sanitation & Health (WASH) are inextricably linked; water-borne diseases like diarrhea are the leading cause of death in children under the age of 5. The results of using the same water sources for defecation and for personal use such as drinking, cleaning, cooking and bathing, have been disastrous. Ill health and lost days of work contribute to chronic poverty and underdevelopment in rural India and can trap people in an endless cycle of poverty.

### Innovative Approach

**MANTRA:** Gram Vikas's approach is innovative in that it treats water and sanitation as a package. Their approach, titled "MANTRA", is modeled as a comprehensive package of installing household sanitation units and piped water systems. This ensures both that toilets remain functional due to availability of water and that people are motivated to use the facilities. Gram Vikas also integrates technological solutions into the system for better effectiveness (e.g. water meters at household level to enable volumetric measurement and "pay per use"). Similarly, electro-chlorinators are installed to ensure volumetric chlorination in the water.

**100% Inclusion:** Gram Vikas also believes that 100% inclusion in the WASH program of intervention is crucial to reducing the incidence of water borne diseases. Therefore, it is not until every family in a community comes on board that the process of construction and mobilization of resources begins.

**Community Mobilization, Ownership & Cost Sharing:** The community contributes in the form of labor and through locally manufactured construction materials. The entire process is driven by a democratically elected Water and Sanitation Committee with equal participation of men and women. The creation of a village corpus fund with contribution from every household in the community takes care of maintenance and operation requirements as well as inclusion of new households into the WASH program in the future.

**Mobilization of Resources:** Gram Vikas has been successful in integrating the project approach of MANTRA with schemes available at local, regional and national levels. Gram Vikas facilitates communities to leverage funds from multiple government schemes which are available but exist independently of one another, and are largely unknown to

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the rural population. By converging with multiple government schemes, Gram Vikas facilitates these villages to leverage funding towards new areas of need, thereby propagating an integrated development initiative.

### Program Solution

Gram Vikas, through its award-winning flagship MANTRA model of development, uses water and sanitation as an entry point into tribal, marginalized communities to reduce incidences of water borne disease and ensure access to 24/7 piped drinking water and a toilet and bathroom unit for every household through a 100% inclusion approach.

Gram Vikas mobilizes, educates and trains communities on how to construct, manage and maintain their own sanitation facilities. As part of the programme, community members pool resources to construct identical toilets and bathing rooms for each household, with clean piped water from a community-constructed water tank. The programme awakens the community's ability to independently sustain their own sanitation network through cooperative contribution and management systems such as financial training, construction skill building, and hygiene education workshops.

Equitable financial and institutional mechanisms ensure that all families have access to sanitation facilities. A core fund (also called corpus) is established that plans for the future growth of the community by collecting an average of Rs. 1000/- per household, which is invested for future expansion of the sanitation system to deliver water and sanitation services to new households in the village.

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