



India



Demand-Driven Sanitation and Water Services

Seva Mandir  

Seva Mandir works closely with both communities and government to promote ecologically-friendly sanitation and water services in Rajasthan.

Launched in 1968, Not-for-profit , Drinking Water , Sanitation , Cross-sector , Cross-sector: Climate / Energy , South Asia: India

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Problem Addressed

In rural Udaipur, 54% of households drink from unhygienic open wells, and during the summer, many of these water sources dry up entirely. At the same time, a staggering 92% of rural households lack toilets, leading to the practice of open defecation, which poses both health risks and safety concerns.

Innovative Approach

Seva Mandir's program is innovative in its use of technology which is appropriate for the specific region's geography and culture. Their approach is demand-driven and requires community buy-in and continued support. The organization focuses on community mobilization, especially for sanitation. Seva Mandir motivates community members to use toilets, including promoting "toilet norms" to ensure that toilets are used and maintained.

Program Solution

Seva Mandir has helped 3,200 families - some 16,000 people - gain access to clean drinking water over the past eight years. Building better water sources not only makes people healthier, it eliminates hours of daily drudgery for women who must carry water to the home. Seva Mandir builds bespoke water systems including tanks, restored wells and household biosand filters.

In parallel with their work on water, Seva Mandir has built sanitation facilities for over 650 families (about 3,250 people). This includes 242 pioneering Ecosan toilets - zero-water toilets uniquely suited to Udaipur's desert climate - for which Seva Mandir is the Government's official Implementing Agency throughout the district. To ensure toilets are used - not just constructed - they build toilets on a purely demand-driven basis, conduct months of preliminary demonstration and discussion, and ask for a monetary and labor contribution from beneficiaries.