

Some Case Studies from the Tarasgaon Panchayat, North Bastar Kanker, Chhattisgarh

Tarasgaon, a Nirmal Gram Panchayat (efforts towards improved health)

The Tarasgaon panchayat before 2006-07 has been among the panchayat that was having problem of open defecation and hence of its health consequences. Though these conditions making the village environment unpleasant – the realization of the Total Sanitation Campaign (TSC) support came in handy to the local panchayat – and there had been felt need to make the village an open defecation free panchayat. Whereas there had been challenges before the Government – in other panchayat to pursue the idea of an open defecation free panchayats, the willingness from the members from the Gram Panchayat Tarasgaon – had created a favorable environment in the village.

One of the problem faced among various government programme, had been the ownership of the local community. The fact that unless there is a believe on the approach and concept –it's very difficult to achieve desired outcomes. The task had not been that easy to convince the local household for an open defecation free panchayat, as the villagers had been traditionally going out for open defecation from long back. The local departmental staff and panchayat members together- first understood the various aspects of TSC and made their strategy for the coverage of whole village under complete sanitation. The ward punch, sarpanch. Local departmental staff and other respected social leaders of the village – has taken the lead role in explaining the need to the household – about the benefits of adopting improved sanitation practices. Various method such as – personal contact, small consultation meeting, sanitation drives, school sanitation campaign, Rally & *Kala Jatha* was organized to explain the concepts, components etc to the rural people.



Believe of the local community in their leaders soon, transformed into a oment and in turn there had been a conducive environment around towards safe sanitation practices long with the construction of the toilets in the household, institutions etc. These efforts through local community and government together – prove that joint ownership of the problem may lead to expected local development. Tarasgaon Panchayat of Charama block, has a proud of being the First Nirmal Gram Panchayat of the block and getting the prize from the honorable president of India Ms. Smt. Pratibha Devisingh Patil. State Government of Chhattisgarh also realized the importance of these efforts and CM also recognized the efforts of the panchayat in a state level function. The local community of panchayat, thus now have a realization of the fact that they can achieve many development outcome through a joint effort. The village is still continuing efforts and social actions towards further realization of vision of improved health to each citizen of the panchayat.