

Strengthening Community action for nutrition process of Junnar block of Pune District

(Backed by Finolex Industries)

Supported by Finolex Industries Ltd. (FIL) and Mukul Madhav Foundation (MMF), the 'Strengthening Community Action for Nutrition (S-CAN)' project was implemented in ten tribal-predominant habitations/villages within the Junnar block of Pune District. The project aimed to enhance child well-being by improving nutritional services, nutrition-related health services and dietary practices at the household level, with a particular focus on revitalizing and promoting a diverse range of food options in the selected habitations.

Executed over a relatively concise timeframe, from July 2022 to October 2022, the project employed a strategic intervention that amalgamated a systems-strengthening approach with an enhanced household nutrition practices approach. Specifically, the initiative focused on addressing the needs of undernourished children through weekly follow-up, counseling sessions, and the promotion of food diversity.

Through active participation from the community, the project achieved notable outcomes. Among the 11 children initially classified as Severe Acute Malnutrition (SAM), seven children progressed to a lower classification (four to Moderate Acute Malnutrition [MAM] and three to Normal). Similarly, out of the 41 children classified as MAM, seven children transitioned to a normal nutritional status. Concurrently, the percentage of children classified as 'normal' increased from 71.3% (129 children in July 2022) to 76.8% (139 children in September 2022) over the same period.

Encompassing ten habitations/villages in the Junnar block, this project catered to a population of over 5000 individuals, with a specific focus on the ST segment, which constituted approximately 90% of the intervention area. This segment primarily comprised the *Mahadeo Koli* and *Katkari* tribes. The project engaged 371 children under the age of six, as well as approximately 50 pregnant and lactating mothers. The successful outcomes underscore the effectiveness of the strategic approach, which fostered synergy between strengthening nutrition services, improving household nutrition practices, and actively involving the community in promoting food diversity.