

# TRANSCRIPT FOR "Leveraging Community-led Video for Nutrition"

<https://vimeo.com/111231089> -

**Binata Mahanta:** My child is two years old and when she was 7 months old I started seeing videos. I have seen the hand washing video and adopted the practice. I have also seen a video on a child's first 1,000 days. My child is growing well and is the right weight because of proper nutrition habits. This is information we are gaining from the videos.

**Peggy Koniz-Booher:** The burden of maternal and child undernutrition in India is far higher than in any other country in the world. In Keonjhar District, as in other districts throughout India, access to information about nutrition, about maternal-child health, is limited. SPRING is focused on improving the capacity of local health agents to understand the importance of nutrition and communicate the importance of nutrition. Funded by the U.S. Agency for International Development, the SPRING project has embraced community video as a game changer. SPRING partnered with Digital Green, an India- and U.S.-based non-profit, already working in Keonjhar with a local NGO, VARRAT, successfully changing agricultural practices using community video. We were interested in adapting their existing agricultural platform for the promotion of maternal, infant, and young child nutrition.

**Rikin Gandhi:** At Digital Green, we partner with existing development efforts that are already working with rural communities. We train 4-6 people from the community to produce short videos that are essentially by the community featuring their testimonials, their experiences, demonstrating practices to their peers and then have these videos shared amongst the community using video as a starting point for our conversation.

**Avinash Upadhyay:** Starting from identifying the content to liberty of production and editing everything is done at the community level. Though initially we started with agriculture, Digital Green model is a very flexible model and it has great potential it will wind up in other sectors.

**Peggy Koniz-Booher:** We saw a natural linkage between agriculture and nutrition and we thought this would be an amazing partnership. Here was a platform that was taking off and we wanted nutrition to be a part of it.

**Rikin Gandhi:** We already had an existing agricultural program that was taking place in Odisha but they didn't really have this nutrition component. And so the SPRING team with its technical expertise came in and actually trained these frontline workers on how to both produce content as well as to distribute content pertaining to these nutrition practices.

**Avinash Upadhyay:** We did formative research with the community to understand different facilitating factors and values among the community members.

**Naba Kishor Mishra:** That intervention really helped us to have insight on what communities are working on agriculture. But that gave us an insight to the social and additional problems for subsets of the community.

**Avinash Upadhyay:** The next important step for us was we know what are the contents we need to double up our interventions strategy but what about the capacity building. A training model was designed and we trained all the mediators working in these district villages.

**Vinay Kumar:** Producing videos for nutrition was a little bit more challenging. In agriculture, you can see the land, you can see the seedling. But as in nutrition, a lot of it is reasonably abstract.

**Peggy Koniz-Booher:** We introduced the field testing of the videos to better understand how they would be received. We understood some of the questions that the audience was going to have and we were able to prepare local agents to better facilitate the dialogue around those issues.

**Avinash Upadhyay:** Because this mediator is also from the community, he or she becomes a part of this whole discussion and that connection actually triggers the impact. During disseminations they collect feedback: the adoptions people do, the questions people ask, the suggestions people give, and we go back with the solutions to the community.

**Peggy Koniz-Booher:** The data collection tool helps us track the self-reported adoptions and promotions of the behaviors that the videos are highlighting. The community asks for additional viewings and new topics. They want to learn more about nutrition, they want to learn more about diet, they want to learn more about maternal-child health. We see that the demand for the videos is a huge indication of the success of the project.

**Rikin Gandhi:** A lot of the partners that we work with are very keen to try and see how can we leverage this platform, how can we introduce health and nutrition practices. And a lot of the learnings that we've developed through the work and the collaboration with SPRING are informing the work that we're doing.

**Peggy Koniz-Booher:** One of the major outcomes of this year-long collaboration was the development of the community video for nutrition guide that pulls all of the pieces of this approach together: the formative research tools, the training tools, the data collection tools. With the amazing changes in technology, we as nutritionists have to embrace these new communication tools and we have to figure out how to use them most effectively. We really believe that video is a powerful medium. Seeing a behavior demonstrated by someone from a similar community has impact. This approach has successfully promoted improved nutrition practices in Keonjhar and SPRING is excited to take what we've learned and expand it to other communities and countries around the world.

**Binata Mahanta:** These videos are improving the community. Now people know how to take care of children and about food diversity as well. If the videos can share more information about children, if they can raise even more awareness, then we will all learn and benefit.