



Synergos Consulting Services

Case Study: Corporate Food and Personal Care Products Sector

Country: *India*; Sector: *Health and Nutrition*

Synergos mobilized a powerful coalition of international and Indian partners to collectively address child undernutrition in India, beginning in the state of Maharashtra.

Business and Social Challenge

Despite significant economic growth in the past decades, India continues to grapple with deeply entrenched poverty. One of the country's most persistent challenges is to improve the nutritional status of children. According to UNICEF, 47% of Indian children – some two hundred million children – are undernourished. Each year insufficient nutrition is an indirect cause of about one million deaths among Indian children under five years old. For those who survive, the prospects of a healthy and productive life are greatly reduced as insufficient intake of calories and micronutrients can lead to irreversible physical and mental disabilities. The human cost to individual children and families is extreme, while the cumulative cost to India in terms of lost productivity is estimated at \$2 billion each year.

A global leader in the food and personal care products industry seeks to advance “vitality” through its brands and corporate social engagement efforts that include nutrition, water, sanitation and hygiene. Synergos was assigned to spearhead a major effort on child undernutrition in a key market, India, as part of this broader vitality strategy. The company sought to capitalize on its long-standing presence by leveraging the assets of other companies, donors, and international agencies.

Scope of Services

Synergos mobilized a powerful coalition of international and Indian partners to collectively address child undernutrition in India, beginning in the state of Maharashtra. Key partners included multi-lateral organizations, Indian government agencies, major Indian corporations and respected Indian non-governmental groups. Synergos enabled these partners to collaborate on specific interventions designed to reduce child undernutrition, and implemented the following stages of work:

- **Stakeholder Engagement:** Identifying and securing the participation of key partners willing to actively engage in a coalition to address child undernutrition. Representative organizations included UNICEF-India, Tata Group, and the Society of Nutrition, Education & Health (SNEHA), among others.

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- **Program Design:** Engaging partners to design a portfolio of specific interventions that would harmonize their knowledge, assets and capacity to reduce child undernutrition.
- **Program Implementation:** Supporting partners on the field implementation of eight integrated programs to reduce child undernutrition. These included efforts to: prevent undernutrition by training pregnant women and girls, provide nutritional services to children of migrant workers, improve sanitation, and increase the nutritional quality of food at government feeding programs, among others.
- **Sustainable Infrastructure Creation:** Establishing a formal Indian-registered organization to manage long-term program implementation, scaling and replication.

Results

To date, field projects have reached approximately 100,000 children across five districts of Maharashtra. Plans are in place to replicate and scale the program, across Maharashtra and in other states. The project has drawn attention in India as an outstanding model of cross-sector action. The corporation advanced a core brand and social engagement imperative, generated good will with customers, and gained a new network of partners open to pooling resources for the public good.

About Synergos Consulting Services

Synergos Consulting Services partners with global corporations to build sustainable businesses and create social impact in the emerging markets of Africa, Latin America, Asia, and the Middle East.



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