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AJY MIRROR

A Quarterly Newsletter of
AMA JANGALA YOJANA

October - December 2020

Volume - 4 ■ Issue - III

EDITORIAL



Ama Jangala Yojana has been designed in a sustainable development approach by integrating the components of forest conservation and sustainable livelihood of the local community. AJY is an endeavour for sustainable forest management and livelihood up-liftment of forest fringed community through Vana Suraksha Samities.

The project has stepped into 5th year of its intervention. 885 new VSSs have been brought under the fold of AJY during this year to mobilize communities for protection of natural resources in JFM mode. There are also continuous efforts for convergences with other departments to mobilize communities in management of joint resources and sustainable livelihoods. In spite of Covid-19 pandemic situation during most parts of the year, our committed team effort could bring visible changes to the life and livelihoods of the forest fringed communities and fetch substantial income through forestry and community development activities. In this issue of AJY mirror, a brief description of the progress and achievements of the year has been placed for reference of all our stakeholders.

I wish all AJY Divisions will continue their innovative works for the benefit of the community and share their achievements so as to secure the overall goal of AJY.

Dr. S. Panda, IFS

PCCF & Project Director, OFSDP



Block Plantation Chahakapada, Bolangir



Block Plantation- Balda Range of Koraput Division

Ama Jangala Yojana (AJY) has been implemented through Odisha Forestry Sector Development Society (OFSDS) since the year 2016-17. By December 2020, The project has reached out to 4605 VSSs of 23 Divisions, out of which 885 VSSs of 22 Division brought under the fold of AJY during the current year. In addition to this, about 14,025 women SHGs have been linked to various income generating activities under AJY. In spite of Covid 19 pandemic situation, we could be able to mobilize INR 7429.1 Lakhs through convergence with other Departments under different Schemes, benefitting about 4,65,597 persons during this year.

Survey, Demarcation and pillar postings during 2020-21 is complete in 42,051 Ha in 885 VSSs. Preparatory works for ANR (with gap plantation) such as nursery raising and site selection in 20,000 ha of land belonging to 621 VSSs under 18 Forest Divisions have already been started. Similarly, ANR (without gap plantation) is complete in 19,145 Ha of assigned forest land in 617 VSSs belonging to 22 AJY Divisions in the current year only. Apart from these, construction of all 165 VSS buildings, which were proposed in the last year have been completed.

PROGRESS OF AJY ACTIVITIES

■ Community Mobilization and Micro-planning:

Community mobilization, as an essential component of Ama Jangala Yojana has been completed in 885 new VSSs brought under the fold of Ama Jangala Yojana during the current year. Out of the total VSSs, micro-planning is complete in 642 numbers of VSSs, whereas the process is under progress in other VSSs.



EC meeting at Malibramhani VSS, Angul Division



EC meeting at Tamanguda VSS, Bamra (WL) Division



PRA exercise for preparation of Microplan, Baliposi VSS under Deogarh Division



PRA Exercise Bhagiachuan VSS, Bamra (WL) Division



PRA Exercise at Bardangua VSS in Patna FMU, Keonjhar Division



Venn diagram during PRA at Siraguda VSS of Umerkote Range, Nabarangpur Division

■ Survey, Demarcation & Pillar Posting:

Regular forestry activities such as survey, demarcation and pillar postings have been carried out in all new AJY VSSs. Survey and demarcation are the preparatory activities under AJY Scheme following site selection, especially where new VSSs have been taken up. Each VSS is assigned a treatment area where Assisted Natural Regeneration (ANR) activities are taken up. As on 31st December 2020, survey, demarcation and pillar posting works are complete in 42,051 ha of assigned area under 22 AJY Forest Divisions.



Pillar posting at Muniguda VSS, Boipariguda FMU of Jeypore Division



Pillar Posting at Khutiguda VSS, Dabugam Range of Nabarangpur Division



Pillar posting at Gauranga VSS, Angul Division



Pillar posting at Padarguda VSS, Jeypore Division

■ Assisted Natural Regeneration:

ANR (without gap plantation) has been proposed in 22,887 ha. under 522 VSSs belonging to 22 AJY Divisions during 2020-21. By December 2020, ANR (without gap plantation) is complete in 19,145 ha. of assigned forest land in all 522 VSSs

in the current year. However, the work is under progress on war footing basis in rest of the areas. In addition to this, preparatory works such as nursery raising and site selection for ANR (with gap plantation) in 20,000 ha of land belonging to 453 VSSs (under 18 Forest Divisions) have already been started.



SSO work at Balibahal VSS, Pallahara FMU of Deogarh Division



After Silvicultural Operation, Raidiha VSS, Keonjhar Division

■ Nursery raising for ANR with Gap Plantation during 2021-22



Nursery preparation at Balibahal VSS, Deogarh Division



Nursery work at Padarguda VSS under Gupteswar FMU, Jeypore Division

■ SMC Activities:

Within this quarter, SMC activities such as Loose Boulder Check Dams (LBCD) and staggered trenches have been undertaken in the assigned areas of all 22 DMUs in 885 new VSSs.



LBCD at Balibahal VSS, Deogarh Division



LBCD at Kankarimal VSS, Kalahandi (S) Division



Staggered trench work at Pallam VSS, Malkangiri



LBCD work at Raidiha VSS in Keonjhar Division

■ VSS Buildings:

There was provision for construction of 165 numbers of multipurpose VSS buildings in the villages under AJY during the last year. Construction of 98 numbers of VSS buildings was completed in 1st phase of the last year. During the period under report, 67 new VSS buildings have been completed and handed over to the communities.



Thakurpali VSS Building, Barkote FMU of Deogarh Division



Kasili VSS Building, Rayagada Division

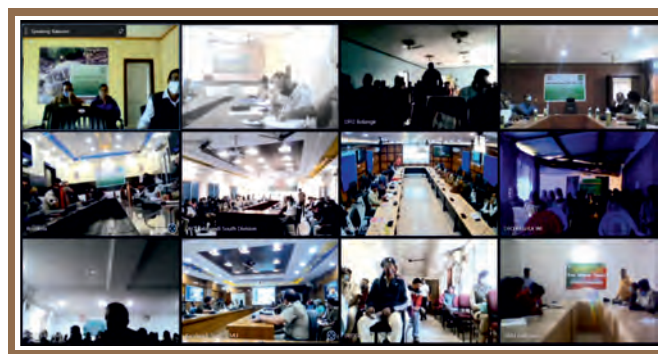
■ Capacity Building Initiatives:

Capacity Building Training programs have been carried out under AJY for implementation of AJY, Survey and Demarcation, Community Mobilization, PRA tools and Micro Plan preparation, GIS Mobile Application and Soil Moisture Conservation Measures. Capacity Building Training programmes, both under project components and convergence have been conducted at PMU and field levels involving 98,520 participants, covering 4,605 VSS and members of 4,336 SHGs.

Apart from this, a two-day virtual capacity building training for the FMU and DMU level staff has been organized by the PMU, OFSDS on 29th and 30th December, 2020 where participants from 22 AJY Divisions have participated.



Capacity Building Training (CBT) for DMU and FMU level staff, organized by PMU of OFSDS on 29-30th December, 2020



Participation of AJY Divisions in the CBT for DMU and FMU level staff, organized by PMU of OFSDS

■ Convergence Initiatives:

Inter-sectoral convergence to ensure the livelihood opportunities for the forest dependent communities so as to reduce their dependence on forests is one of the core objectives of Ama Jangala Yojana. There are 14,025 women SHGs those have been linked to various income generating activities through convergence under AJY. In spite of Covid 19 pandemic situation, the AJY team could be able to mobilize INR 7429.1 Lakhs through convergence with other Departments under different Schemes, benefitting about 4,65,597 persons during this year. Additionally, AJY team has accomplished many activities pertaining to community infrastructure development and livelihood improvement for the benefit of the local communities. Some major initiatives taken during this quarter are presented in brief.



Solar operated drinking water supply point through convergence at Balidhi VSS, Barkote FMU of Deogarh Division



Convergence with PKVY for pot manure preparation by SHG members, Palam VSS of Malkangir Division



Animal Vaccination Camp at Remala Sahi VSS, Barkote FMU of Deogarh Division



Red Chilli cultivation through convergence with ITDA at Mendhiakani VSS, Deogarh Division

One of the mandates of the project is to assist in energy conservation so as to reduce the dependency of local communities on forest for their energy needs. Provisioning of LPG to the households and refilling has been made through Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana (PMUY). OFSDS is playing a pivotal role, as a facilitator, in implementation of this scheme.

■ Review of Income Generation Activities (IGAs) by ACS, Forest & Environment Department

The Addl. Chief Secretary, F&E Department reviewed the IGAs under AJY on 16th November, 2020 through Video Conferencing. She elaborately discussed about the livelihood opportunities provided under AJY through convergence. It was informed to ACS that convergence activities worth Rs. 62.42 crores have been done up to October, 2020 (2020-21) benefitting 4.02 lakh persons. The performance of existing product clusters was also discussed in the meeting. The ACS also discussed in detail about the formulation of the proposal for livelihood promotion in five Forest & Wildlife Divisions under AJY with financial assistance from OMBADC.

■ Review of AJY Activities:

The review meeting on various activities taken up under AJY in 22 Divisions was held through Video-conferencing on 16th December, 2020. The physical and financial progress of each component of work was reviewed by the PCCF & Project Director, OFSDP. The Addl. Project Director (A&F), Dy. Project Director, SPM (GIS), SMS (IME), RCCFs and DFOs of AJY Divisions participated in the review meeting.

Many innovative models and success stories have been created by the continuous effort of the project personnel and VSSs during this period. Some of them are worth replication in other areas and put here to encourage other VSSs.

Village Ambagaon Shows the way; Success story of Uttei Milk Cooperative Society in Kalahandi North Division

STORY : 01

Village Ambagaon of Pandkamal Gram Panchayat is a beautiful village of Kalahandi district. It is located within the jurisdiction of M Rampur Range of Kalahandi (N) Forest Division. Agriculture is the main source of earning for the villagers of Ambagaon. They also keep animals like cows and goats to supplement their household income. But all their dreams and efforts were ending in fiasco as they were not ionized to encash their resources due to lack of opportunities and proper guidance.

To protect the adjoining dwindling forest, a Vana Suraksha Samiti was constituted in the village by the Forest Department in the year 2005 and the villagers were assigned with an area of 50 ha of the Pandkamal Forest Block. Time passed on. During implementation of AJY in the state, the VSS was reconstituted and included in Ama Jangala Yojana.

During preparation of Microplan, socio economic profile of the community as well as the resource available was mapped by the P-NGO team and Forest Officials. It was observed that almost all households keep cows and most of them sell milk. But, due to poor market linkage, they do not get fair price as middle men were taking advantage of their helplessness.

The matter was discussed at length in the VSS

meeting. It was resolved to constitute a milk cooperative society in the village to mitigate the crisis. Local OMFED officials were consulted for this purpose by the PNGO team and officials. With all sorts of cooperation by the OMFED officials, Uttei Milk Cooperative Society was formed and the dream of the villagers could be materialized.

Presently, 70-80 households from the village Ambagaon and Dharvamal are selling about 100 litres of milk per day through the society and are getting Rs.35/- per litre in place of Rs.25/- per litre. The milk producers, who are the VSS members are getting an additional income of Rs. 21000/- per month which comes around 2,52,000/- per year. In addition to this, milk producers from the nearby villages are also selling their milk through the cooperative and earning substantial additional income due to active involvement of Forest Field Staff, P-NGO, OMFED and executive members of VSS.

The achievement has been made possible only due to committed and responsive attitude of the P-NGO team and Forest Department Officials of Kalahandi (N) Division. Such sort of initiatives has augmented credibility of Forest Department in the public.



Eliminating middlemen from the value chain of NTFP trading could fetch the VSS a better price; an exemplary work by Khamgada VSS under Bolangir Forest Division.

STORY : 02


Khamgada a fringe village of Kiribandji Reserved Forest belongs to Jurabandh Gram Panchayat, Saintala CD Block of Bolangir District. It comes under Patnagarh Forest Range of Bolangir Forest Division. Most of the inhabitants of the village belong to Scheduled Castes. There are 96 households in the village. The total population of the village is 512 having 253 nos of male and 259 nos. of females. As per the latest census, most of the households come under BPL category. Due to poverty and lack of agricultural land, Mahua flower collection has been adopted as the only dependable income source by the villagers. Due to lack of marketing facilities, they do not get appropriate price of the produce.

The local traders usually purchase the produce from the Mahua collectors as per their



sweet will. As there was no other alternative, the collectors were bound to sell the produce @ Rs.25 per kg before intervention of AJY in the village (till 2018-19).

Vana Surakshya Samiti was constituted in the village and was included under AJY on 28.10.2019. During intervention with the villagers, it was noticed by the PNGO team and Forest Officials that the local traders have been purchasing Mahua flowers from the Mahua collectors in a very low rate which needs to be regulated.

In the VSS meeting, it was resolved to create a marketing committee to combat the age old practice of the middlemen in purchasing NTFP items from the village. For the purpose, Mahua flower wholesaler



of Patnagarh was consulted and 1005 Qtls of Mahua flowers, which was collected in the village were sold to the wholesaler at a much better price, i.e. @ Rs. 40/- per kg in place of Rs.25/- per kg offered by the middle men. The villagers got additional benefit of Rs. 1,57,500/- which contributes to augment their income.

After intervention of AJY in the year 2019-20, the villagers practically rejected the offer of the middlemen from the value chain of Mahua flower trading, which fetch them additional income for a better livelihood.

Please send your comments and inputs to:

Ama Jangala Yojana Cell
Odisha Forestry Sector Development Society
SFTRI Campus, Bhubaneswar, Odisha, India
Phone: 0674-238 6084, 238 6016
E-mail: webmail@ofsd.org

Editorial Board

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