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AJY MIRROR

A Quarterly Newsletter of
AMA JANGALA YOJANA

April - June 2019

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EDITORIAL



Forests contribute significantly to the life and livelihood of the people, more particularly in the forest rich districts of Odisha. Active participation of forest fringe communities in forest protection and conservation was conceived in the National Forest Policy (NFP), 1988 and since then the participation of communities in forest protection and management is being persuaded by most of the States of India.

All the schemes implemented by Odisha Forestry Sector Development Society (OFSDS) so far are being implemented in Joint Forest Management (JFM) mode following the Joint Forest Management Resolutions of the State in letter and spirit. Ama Jangala Yojana (AJY) is one such scheme which is under implementation since 2016-17. Under AJY it is the endeavor to protect the forests along with enhancing all livelihood opportunities for the forest fringe communities. As large number of programmes of line departments remains in operation, efforts are being made to converge these programmes and schemes in AJY implementing villages through the concerned VSSs.

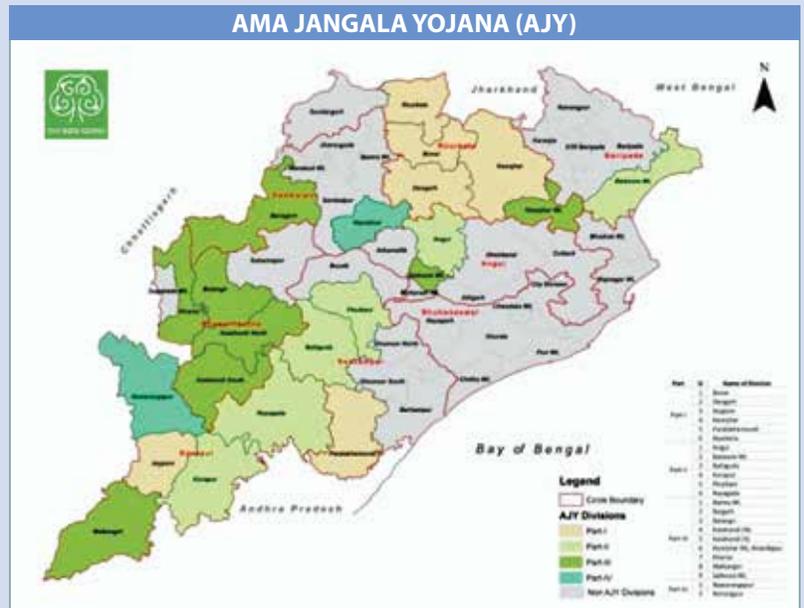
This issue of AJY Mirror contains a snapshot of some of the important activities and efforts accomplished under AJY during April-June, 2019. The issue also contains brief description of routine activities carried out during the quarter. Further, attempts have been made to cover some convergence related activities and voluntary activities undertaken by AJY VSSs of the State.

I wish that all AJY implementing Divisions will continue their innovative approach to work for the community to strengthen the very cause of forest and biodiversity conservation in the State along with livelihood improvement of forest fringe communities.

Lalit Kumar Tewari, IFS

The Ama Jangala Yojana is under implementation in 23 Forest and Wild life Divisions of Odisha. The scheme has a holistic approach encompassing many components of income generation and forest protection through training, capacity building, awareness and handholding support to the participating communities. The AJY has ensured the projects work in line with the community development and forest regenerations. Its implementation plan follows the Joint Forest Management principles and ensures that participation of all stakeholders is considered judiciously during the implementation of the program.

Up to 31st March-2019, a total number of 3180 VSSs have been brought under the fold of AJY. During the period April-June, 2019 most of the preparatory activities, prior to the onset of monsoon were completed in AJY Divisions. This included identification of 540 additional new VSSs that will implement AJY from 2019-20 onwards. There was a slight deviation in the usual progress of activities owing to the most devastating cyclone FANI



in coastal districts of the state. However, most of the targeted activities were accomplished.

The progresses of important activities of the quarter are highlighted in this edition along with snapshots of few convergence activities and successful case stories.

Highlight of the Major Activities during the Quarter

Micro Plan Preparation

Micro Plan is a Community Based empowerment process for preparation of road map for development and management of forest and to address the livelihood opportunities of the forest dependent communities in a village. Micro Plan has been perceived to be a guiding document for the communities and the facilitators in implementing the planned interventions for forest management and livelihood enhancement.

Micro plans have been prepared in a participatory manner at VSS level which covers the development plan for Sustainable Forest Management and other livelihood needs for the communities. In order to ensure uniformity in micro planning processes, a comprehensive Micro Planning Guideline along with corresponding formats have been circulated



Barab VSS, Bamra (WL)



Sunapur VSS, Parlakhemundi DMU



Tirimunda VSS, Bargarh DMU



Dangargarh VSS, Kalahandi (M)

under AJY. Capacity building training programme were organised at PMU level for strengthening the skill and abilities of the officials / professionals including the members of partner NGOs of Ama Jangal Yojana on PRA Exercise. Further, the officials from 23 AJY Forest Divisions covered under AJY were exposed to the formats of micro planning along

with in-depth training on modalities of data collection and filling the corresponding formats.

During this quarter, 155 number of micro plans have been completed, out of which 110 numbers have been approved by respective Palli Sabha/ Gram Panchayats.

GB meetings of VSSs

The Annual General Body Meetings of VSSs was due in April, 2019. The older VSSs under AJY have completed their Annual General Body Meetings in this quarter as per the institutional guidelines. The annual activity review, plan and budget got approved in the AGB meetings.



Padiamunda VSS, Deogarh DMU



Sakosinga VSS of Angul DMU



Kantala VSS, Keonjhar (WL)



Baragaon VSS, Kalahndni (N)

Entry Point Activities

Many Entry Point Activities (EPA) were completed during the quarter. Among these the important ones were construction and renovation of ponds, distribution of boiling drums to VSSs and creation of water bodies in the VSS area.



Distribution Boiling Drum in Saria VSS, Kalahandi (N)



EPA in Khajuribahal VSS under Deogarh DMU



EPA in Brajmohanpur VSS under Deogarh DMU



Baragaon VSS, Kalahndni (N)

Survey, Demarcation and Pillar Postings:

Survey and demarcation is one of the preparatory activity under AJY Scheme following site selection by VSSs. Survey and demarcation is undertaken in the areas to be assigned to each VSS for coverage under the Scheme. Each VSS is assigned a treatment area of about 50 hectares of degraded forest, where Assisted Natural Regeneration (ANR) without gap is taken up. Guidelines for Survey of Assigned Area and Treatment Area of VSS under AJY has been prepared by the PMC and circulated, which aids the Divisions to undertake the Survey and Demarcation work under the Scheme with the assistance of their respective P-NGO and participation of the members of EC of VSS.

As of now, 11805 pillars have been posted in 12589 Ha of demarcated area of all 540 new VSSs under 23 DMUs those will implement AJY during 2019-20.



Barab VSS, Bamra (WL)



SSO by Tileimal VSS, Deogarh DMU



Pabala VSS uinder Angul DMU



Bhaliadal VSS in Keonjhar DMU



Naradpur VSS in Keonjhar DMU



Chilbans VSS, Bonai DMI



Araskupa VSS, Kalahandi North DMU



Haripada VSS Bamra (WL) DMU

VSS Office-cum-Meeting Place

There is a provision for construction of VSS Office-cum-Meeting Place in the villages under the AJY Scheme. The VSSs construct a low cost multipurpose building with meeting facility over a built-up area of around 400 sq. ft., consisting of an office room of around 150 sq. ft. with RCC (Reinforced Cement Concrete) roof, and a meeting space without walls of about 250 sq. ft. with RCC roof.

Guidelines for Construction of "VSS Office-Cum-Meeting Place" under AJY Scheme has been prepared and shared with DMUs to follow while processing for plan and estimate for construction of VSS Office-Cum-Meeting Place under the Scheme. In the reporting period, 90 VSS buildings have been constructed in 21 DMUs, each costing about Rs. 3,64,000/-.



Totaguda VSS, Rayagada DMU



S. Rella VSS, Rayagada DMU



Rangadihi VSS, Keonjhar DMU



Mundapur VSS, Keonjhar DMU

Convergence Activities under Ama Jangala Yojana

Inter-sectoral Convergence is one of the important mandates of Ama Jungle Yojana. During the reporting period, many activities have been undertaken in convergence with various schemes and programs of line departments. Some of them are highlighted below:

- Renovation of ponds and drinking water facilities
- Construction of roads, bridges and check dams
- Convergence for construction of individual houses and other social security schemes
- Organizing animal and human health camps
- Construction of Swaccha Bharat Mission Toilets
- Distribution of LPG with Chullah and CFL Bulb under Ujjwala schemes in all AJY DMUs
- IGAs for individual members and groups such as poultry farm support
- Convergence for livelihoods activities such as NTFP processing and trading
- Convergence for skill building under DDU-GKY
- Support of solar lamps to the VSS members



Stitching Training supported by SBI-RSETI in Kalahandi (N) DMU



Promotion of LPG gas as Sandiaposi VSS under Keonjhar DMU



Capacity Building Training in Palunkia VSS of Baliguda DMU



P-NGO Review Meeting at Banabashi Sava Samiti, Baliguda DMU

It is obvious that the convergence activities are a major part in the AJY program. Some of the activities carried out through schematic convergences in various DMUs are given in a snapshot, as above.

Capacity Building Initiatives

As a major component of AJY, capacity building programs in various thematic areas have been organized for the FMU staff and VSS members in the project area. This includes capacity building of VSS members on livelihood promotion, VSS management and enhancement of employable skills. Following picture depicts some of the major initiatives.



Capacity Building Training in Hariharpur VSS, Angul DMU



Training in Jalangadiha VSS, Keonjhar DMU



Capacity Building Training Programme under Angul DMU



Drinking Water facility under MGNREGA at Katakoli VSS, Keonjhar DMU



Health Checkup camp at Bishnupur VSS, Deogarh DMU

Technological Interventions under Ama Jangala Yojana

Use of Drone Technology in Forestry Projects

Mr. Nitish Kumar Baliyan, IFS
DMU Chief, Kalahandi (N) Division



Drone is a self-propelled flying robot that can be remotely controlled and fly autonomously through software controlled pre-fixed flight plans in their highly advanced systems,

in accordance with on board sensors and Geographical Positioning Systems (GPS). Drones are commonly known as Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs) or Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UASs), which have been increasingly used in the last few years for land based planning, monitoring and evaluation of projects cutting across different sectors. Application of drone technology is attributable to the following benefits:-

- Low cost,
- Capability for timely provisioning of high-resolution data,
- High accuracy making the information reliable,
- Autonomy in execution,
- Flexibility of providing data that can be used in planning, implementation and monitoring of projects.

Application of Drone Technology in Forestry Projects

There has been a paradigm shift in planning and implementation of natural resource management projects in recent time. Use of alternate technologies in project planning, implementation and monitoring to ensure transparency and to achieve transformation within the project period is given due thrust. Forestry Projects now a days are being implemented in a participatory mode i.e., by active participation of the local community at planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation phases. In the

State of Odisha, the Odisha Forestry Sector Development Society (OFSDS) is implementing its schemes in Joint Forest Management (JFM) mode. The first step in implementation of schemes, in JFM mode, is preparation of the micro-plan by the community under the supervision of Forest Department personnel. This is an elaborate exercise, inter-alia, requiring huge quantity of land related data and its analysis. Use of drone technology can facilitate quick capture and analysis of temporal and spatial data of all the village resources which

is essential for the micro-planning. As the elevation of a given land can be easily measured through drone imageries, an appropriate planning can be made for different forestry components. The imageries obtained from drone can serve as a realistic information in the site selection for projects and to plan various envisaged interventions, such as Assisted Natural Regeneration (ANR), Artificial Regeneration (AR), creation of water bodies in forest areas, construction of different types of soil and moisture conservation structures, laying of fire-lines, etc.

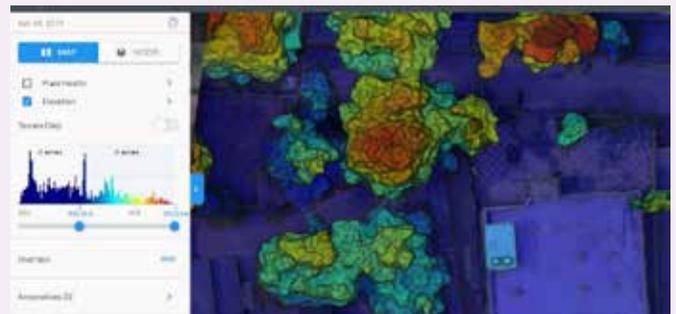
Drones can be used effectively in survey and demarcation of the assigned and treatment areas of a JFM Committee (VSS in the context of Odisha). Two Dimension (2D) Maps generated by using drone imageries can be used to identify suitable patches for different envisaged interventions like ANR without gap, AR, Soil Moisture Conservation (SMC) works, creation of water-bodies etc. A high resolution map can be used while finalizing appropriate treatment for the area. Drone data can also be used for Normalized Difference Vegetation Index (NDVI) mapping which can help in assessing the impact of project interventions periodically.

Use of Three Dimensional (3D) maps obtained through drone imageries can be made for analysis of structures created under forestry projects, more particularly the soil and moisture conservation structures like staggered trenches, water bodies etc. Volume of the earth removed

while constructing these structures can also be very well quantified using 3D models created by Drone imageries.

The NDVI analysis using drone imagery can be useful in canopy cover analysis of vegetation in the treatment area. Apart from the analysis of data in 2D & 3D models, drones can be very well used for documentation purpose, film making and capturing various efforts and activities in the intervention area.

Drones installed with spectral sensors can serve as a powerful tool in identification of various species available in the intervention area as many of the spectral sensors are available in the market which can provide high resolution images up to 1.2 inch/pixel. Information obtained through such sensors is helpful in the study of biodiversity more particularly in detection of endangered species.



Elevation Mapping of 2D Model



Pitting and Planting in AR Plantation



Staggered Trenches



Forest Analysis using Drone Imageries (NDVI)



Landscape planning using Drone Technology

Use of Drone Technology in AJY Project

Use of drone technology was made from planning stage in many VSSs along with the Ulisirka VSS of the Narla Range which is in the Kalahandi North Forest Division, where Ama Jangala Yojana (AJY) is under implementation. After conducting elevation mapping in 2D model, the survey and demarcation of the assigned and treatment area of VSS was carried out and identification of areas within the treatment area for interventions pertaining to ANR without gap plantation and soil and moisture conservation were carried out. The information so obtained was used in preparation of the micro-plan. The survey of the assigned and treatment area was carried out by using this technology and during the course of implementation of the envisaged interventions, periodic monitoring is being carried out through drone technology. It is worth-mentioning that the cost as well as time taken in monitoring has reduced considerably since

the real time data is accessible easily by using the drone technology. The documentation of various activities taken up in the VSS under the project is also being carried out by using drone cameras.

Conclusion

The UAVs are low cost machines which can be easily operated to capture the data even in harsh environment, with better integration of GIS, remote sensing, image capture using different sensors, auto-mosaic king and auto-image analysis.

The use of the technology is described to yield real-time data with much accuracy. The UAVs are, therefore, a better choice in the field of forestry and therefore, a very relevant technology for effective management of forestry projects. The technology can also be used in land planning for farm forestry and urban plantations by the Forest Department.

Collective effort made the VSS a big achiever; success story of Ulisirka VSS under Kalahandi-(N) Forest Division

Ulisirka is a big village under Narla FMU of Kalahandi North DMU. There are 215 families residing in the village having population over 715, out of which 126 families are ST, 45 SC and 44 other categories. Agriculture and MFP collection are the primary source of income for the residents of the village.

Ulisirka VSS was formed in the year 1999 as per JFM Resolution of Government of Odisha. All total of 50 Ha. Forest Land has been assigned to the VSS within Narla RF under Narla FMU of this Division. The VSS was included under AJY Scheme during 2016-17 with State VSS Code No. AJY-Y15-P03-KHN05-2034. This VSS has been reconstituted during 2016-17. The P-NGO team is in regular interaction with the villagers and conducting regular meetings with VSS Members. Due to inclusion under AJY program, the villagers



The VSS "Ulisirka" under Narla FMU of Kalahandi North Forest Division has been awarded the 1st prize in Sameekshya-2019 held on 14.03.2019 at Bhubaneswar.

get engagement in forestry activities undertaken in the scheme and earn a good amount for their livelihood.

Activities carried out by VSS

Since inception, the VSS members are working sincerely for conservation of forest resources assigned to them for protection. They are protecting the forest area assigned to them, both day and night in a planned manner at their

level. When any sort of biotic interference in their assigned area is noticed, they immediately inform the matter to the notice of local Forest Department Staff/ Range officer and other related officials. During the fire season, they show



AGB Meeting at Ulirsika VSS under Kalahandi (N) DMU

tremendous courage to tackle the situation with the help of Forest Department Staff for which the incidence of forest fire has been reduced to a great extent over years.

Visible Impact of Ama Jangala Yojana Program

Through the implementation of AJY program in the village, visible change in the income of the community members has been observed. They are also earning additional income through labour intensive activities through AJY, such as survey and demarcation, pillar posting, silvicultural operation, SMC works etc. The awareness level of the VSS members has been increased a lot due to the positive impact of various training and awareness programme organized through the scheme. The villagers have become proactive in forest and environment protection by the collective effort of VSS, Forest Department and P-NGO.

Major Initiatives of the VSS for alternative Livelihoods

The VSS has put its fullest effort in ensuring alternative livelihoods for their members, both forest and non-forest based. Among these, collection and primary level value addition of Kenduleaf, Sal Leaf, Sal seeds, Mahua Flowers, Mahua Seeds, Char seeds, Tamarind etc. are major MFPs from their assigned area. By selling Kenduleaf to the Forest

Department, they used to earn a good amount of cash every year. They also used to make good quality Sal-leaf plates and sell it in the nearby market. Due to their sincere effort, the Department has decided to support them with multiple plate making machines to the VSS, which will help them to improve their income. The P-NGO Gramya Vikash Sangathan has played a catalytic role and put its fullest effort in organizing members for improving their livelihoods and collective marketing. The P-NGO team frequently meets the villagers of Ulirsirka and helps them in availing benefits under various schemes of Government, such as PM Ujjwala Yojana, Swachha Bharat Mission, old age pension scheme, KALIA Yojana etc.

Secured Livelihood Earning through Demand Driven Activities

Initiative of Bishnupriya women self help group of Sandiaposi Village under Keonjhar DMU

Sandiaposi is a tribal village consisting 125 households, 25 KM away from the district Headquarters (Keonjhar) and 8 km from N.H-215. The Sandiaposi VSS, formed in the year 2016-17, is one of the active VSSs of Keonjhar FMU and Keonjhar DMU.

Under Ama Jangal Yojana Scheme, 13 no's of women SHGs under the VSS have been strengthened through handholding by the PNGO and other livelihood support through convergence. Bishnupriya woman SHG is one

of active SHGs under this VSS to mentor the livelihoods enhancement activities in the village through extra ordinary effort. Unlike the traditional income generating activities undertaken by many SHGs in the district, they preferred to enhance the income of their group members through a demand driven, women friendly and aesthetically pleasant activity, i. e. Appliqué (Chandua) making. Their activeness



Preparation of appliques by the SHG members

and eagerness has resulted in a handsome income for the group members. With the continuous support and handholding by the P-NGO, the Bishnupriya SHG members are preparing beautiful art work through appliqué making and marketing the same.

As a result, they could be able to raise a net profit of Rs. 75000.00 during last year (2018-19). The attractive design, shape and sizes of Chandua could be able to draw the attention of majority of the visitors and customers in the district and state level exhibitions like Pallishree Mela due to which they could mobilize such a big amount within a year. The SHG members are now feeling secured as far as their livelihood is concerned by this off-traditional activity which encouraged them to proceed with a new ray of hope.

Promotion of Community Sanitation through Schematic Inclusion

A success story of Semelpadara VSS in Kalahandi (South) Forest Division

Kalahandi South Forest DMU is spread over 125 villages under 3 FMUs including 20 production based clusters for promotion of income generation activities for the local tribal. The VSSs work under Ama jangala Yojana program which basically focuses on restoration of the degraded forests, sustainable forest management and improvement of livelihoods of the community by harnessing alternative livelihood options. IAEET is the partner NGO working as the grass root facilitating agency for communities in this Division.

Semelpadara is a small village located in the Birikote Gram Panchayat of Th. Rampur block, Kalahandi District. The total population of the village is 145 constituting 41 families; most of them are Scheduled Tribe. It is a forest fringe village depending on the forest for their day to day needs. Almost

all families depend upon agriculture, subsidiary activities and wage earnings for their livelihoods.



View of Semelpadara village



ANR activities undertaken by Semelpadara VSS

Semelpadar village is situated in the proximity of Singari Reserve Forest which adds beauty to the natural geography. Semelpadar VSS is covered under Ama Jangala Yojana since 2016. On date 02.10.2017, Semelpadar VSS was reconstituted and approved by Pallisabha. According to the Joint

The Beginning

On 10th August 2016 the villagers of Semelpadar convened a common meeting and invited the then Divisional Forest Officer, Sri Viswanath Neelanavar, IFS. In the meeting, the villagers took collective oath to protect the natural forest in and around the village. Later on, Forest Department, AJY and of P-NGO officials have hastened the process by extending hand holding support to the VSS. Thereafter various activities for restoration of degraded forest i.e. Soil and Moisture Conservation measure, Forest Protection by Joint patrolling, Road repairing, Nursery raising works have been undertaken by the VSS under close supervision of FMU and P.NGO staff.

During the field inspection by the DFO, Kahahandi (s) in the month of August 2018, the villagers expressed their keenness in protection and management of forest through Ama Jungla Yojana program. It was also expressed that the Entry Point Activity needs to be taken up to make the villagers engaged throughout the lean period, apart from forest protection work. Accordingly, it was decided to prepare and submit proposals for road repairing, plantation of fruit bearing and multi-purpose trees under MGNREGS to the Project Director, DRDA, Kalahandi. The proposal got approval and the activities were implemented in Semelpadar Village. The contribution of the VSS in implementing the road repairing,

Forest Management Resolution-2011(Revised 2015), the VSS has been assigned with 150 hectares of degraded forest area which fall under the jurisdiction of Singari Reserve Forest under Th. Rampur South Range of Kalahandi South Forest Division.



Convergence activities under MGNREGS in Semelpadar VSS

Nursery raising & plantation activities are highly appreciable. They also looked forward for various alternative activities for livelihood enhancement, which was undertaken by the Kalahandi South DMU with great cooperation.

The process followed for promotion of Swachh Bharat Mission

The AJY and P-NGO staff makes repeated visit to Semilipadara VSS and during community meetings & discuss regarding the benefits and entitlements under various schemes of central and state Government. During one such meeting, the team came to know about the open defecation practice of the villagers due to absence of toilets and age old practice. This was also opined that the major health problem in the village come from the ill sanitary practices. After a series of discussions with the community members, they agreed to cooperate in toilet construction to cover all households in the village under Swachh Bharat Mission Scheme. The AJY staffs in coordination with Rural Water Supply and Sanitation

Department initiated the construction process which was targeted to be complete within few weeks.

As of today, 12 numbers of sanitary toilets have been constructed under Swachh Bharat Mission & 20 are under construction. All the VSS members who are also the community members expressed their gratitude to AJY staffs for their convergence initiative, guidance and encouragement for use of toilets. Those who have completed the construction promised for regular use the toilets there by ensuring their contribution toward community sanitation & cleanliness.



Community Sanitation & Use of Toilets

Community and household level sanitary practices are the major components of healthy rural life that need to be looked into very sensibly. Open defecation practice and waste disposal are major problems in rural areas that not only leave an unpleasant impression on the visitors, also are the root cause of many communicable diseases. It brings many hazards including water pollution and disease out breaks. Most of the inhabitants of Semelpadar Village had open defecation practice which led to health problems, particularly to the vulnerable section of the community such as children, women and adolescents. In the above backdrop, the VSS was linked to Swachh Bharat Mission for promoting sanitary practices among community members. The main objectives of the Swachh Bharat Mission is to bring about an improvement in the general quality of life in the rural household by promoting cleanliness, hygiene and eliminating open defecation. The villagers of Semelpadar started realising the importance of cleanliness of their village and implemented the Swachh Bharat Mission scheme with their active involvement.



Sanitary Toilets constructed through Swachh Bharat Mission



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