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AJY MIRROR

A Quarterly Newsletter of
AMA JANGALA YOJANA

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EDITORIAL



The Ama Jangala Yojana (AJY) scheme is being implemented by the Odisha Forestry Sector Development Society (OFSDS) since 2016-17. So far, the scheme has been implemented in 3180 villages of Odisha. This scheme is being implemented in Joint Forest Management (JFM) mode with active participation of forest fringe communities. Over the period of time, the forest fringe communities staying in the AJY implementing villages have shown their keen interest in Forest Protection and Wildlife Conservation not only in the areas assigned to them, but also in the forest located in the periphery of AJY scheme. The incidence of forest fire has reduced drastically in AJY areas.

In this Quarterly Issue of AJY Mirror, some of the convergence activities undertaken by different VSSs implementing AJY in their respective villages have been covered. The efforts VSS community in these VSSs will serve in spreading the message of undertaking various activities of line Departments in convergence mode for rural development. Needless to say, this will also enhance the forest protection and biodiversity conservation in the forest areas adjoining to the VSSs.

Lalit Kumar Tewari, IFS

PCCF-cum-Project Director
Ama Jangala Yojana, OFSDS



The livelihood and community development activities undertaken in Ama Jangala Yojana have a holistic approach encompassing many components of Income Generation and forest protection through training, capacity building, awareness and handholding support. The AJY program has ensured the projects work in sync with the community development and forest regenerations. The AJY implementation plan follows the Joint Forest Management principle and ensures that interests of all stakeholders are considered judiciously during the project implementation.

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1. Highlight of the Major Events during the quarter (Adivasi Mela & Sameekshya-2019).
2. Highlights of the convergent activities under Ama Jangala Yojana
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1. Highlight of the Major Events During the Quarter

Participation in the state level Adivasi Mela-2019

The annual tribal fair, i.e. Adivasi Mela- 2019 was organized by the ST & SC Development, Minority and Backward Classes Welfare Department, Government of Odisha at Bhubaneswar from 26th January to 9th March, 2019. It is a unique event for socio-cultural integration between tribal and urban people in Odisha. This is also one of the oldest and colorful festivals of all 62 tribes and 13 PVTs in Odisha which showcases art, culture, music, tradition, artifacts, crafts and economic exchange among rural and urban people. This apart, there is an exhibition for about 15 days starting from 26th of January every year that provides a platform for display, publicity and selling of a range of rural, tribal and forest products those are made through the self help groups, cottage industries and rural micro enterprises across the state.

OFSDS being one of the major stakeholders in the livelihood improvement of the forest fringe tribal people had represented the event through its DMUs. The VSSs, EDCs, Self Help Groups (SHGs) from within the project areas of Odisha Forestry Sector Development Society showcased their achievements and used this platform to promote their products, brands and conveyed messages to the public through display of exhibits in stalls.



Glimpses of Adivasi Mela 2019

SAMEEKSHYA-2018-19

'Sameekshya', the annual review of Odisha Forestry Sector Development Society (OFSDS) was held on 14th & 15th March, 2019 at Bhubaneswar.

Dr. Sandeep Tripathy, IFS, Principal Chief Conservator of Forest & Head of Forest Force (HoFF), Odisha graced the occasion as the Chief Guest. Dr. Sudarshan Panda, IFS, Special Secretary to Govt., F&E Department, Govt. of Odisha participated in the Conference as Guest of Honour. Members of the High Power Committee (HPC), Governing Body (GB) of OFSDS along with representatives from line departments, Circle Offices, Divisional Management Units (DMUs), Field Management Units (FMUs), Partner NGOs, Vana Surakshya Samitis (VSSs) and Senior Officers associated with OFSDS in project implementation in the past had attended the conference.

The stakeholders from different levels of project implementation were invited to the event to share their experiences and learning during implementation of various projects under OFSDS. Moreover, this platform was also envisaged to function as a learning centre for all stakeholders attending the Conference. Many innovations, opinions and suggestions came out in the conference by the dignitaries and participants which will add value to our programs.



Visit of Dignitaries to Photo Exhibition Gallery



Interaction of dignitaries with the SHG Members



Dignitaries on the dais unveiling the latest issue of AJY Mirror and other publications of OFSDS



Address by Dr. Sandeep Tripathy, IFS, PCCF and HoFF, Odisha, Chief Guest



Address by Shri L. K. Tewari, IFS, PCCF (Projects)-cum -Project Director, OFSDS



Registrations of participants at the Annual Conference



PD, OFSDS briefing the media at the Conference



Awards to the best performing VSSs of AJY Divisions



DMU Chief of AJY and Project Functionaries of AJY sharing the best practices with the audience



Display of products by SHGs, VSSs and Partnership Eco-system members during Sameekshya 2018-19



Stakeholders from the DMU, FMU and VSSs of OFSDS

2. Convergence Activities under Ama Jangal Yojana

Cross sector convergence is one of the important activity being pursued by VSSs implementing the Ama Jungle Yojana. During the reporting period, many activities have been undertaken in convergence with various departmental schemes and programs, 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 Ujjala 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

Some of the activities carried out through schematic convergences in various DMUs during the quarter are given in a snapshot.

Convergence with Animal Resources Development Department

Animal health camps have been organized in Paralakhemundi, Keonjhar and Bamra-WL DMUs to provide better animal health care facilities at the doorstep of the VSS members. These camps were organized in convergence with the Veterinary Department of the respective DMUs.



Human and Animal Health Camps by Deogarh and Keonjhar DMUs

In the health and vaccination camps as many as 400 cows, 850 goats were immunized and treated. The camps were followed by a community awareness meeting of VSS members on preventive measures and traditional healing practices.

Convergence for LPG connection



Convergence Activities under AJY for LPG gas distribution

Divisional Managed Units of OFSDS in collaboration with Government of India under PMUY (Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana) have been a key coordinating and facilitating agency for ensuring supply of cooking gas and lighting equipments to households in AJY implementing VSSs.

The AJY teams have accomplished many activities pertaining to forest protection and livelihood improvement. Some major initiatives take during the last quarter have been described in brief.

Effective prevention and Control of forest fire:

Effective fire protection measures are being carried out by the Forest Department staff with the help of community during fire season. For the last 3 years, not a single fire incidence has been detected in the AJY- VSS area. Timely creation of fire lines, engaging fire protection watchers, fire awareness measures etc are various activities that have been taken during the fire season under the guidance of Forest Divisions in AJY VSSs. The AJY - VSSs have shown exemplary work in forest fire prevention and control.



Fireline detection and control measures in Patna FMU

SUCCESS STORY

Capacity Building Initiatives:

As a major component of AJY, capacity building programs on 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. The following picture depicts some of the major initiatives with name of the program, date, venue and participants etc.



Capacity Building initiatives under AJY

VANA SURAKHYA SAMITI

The Ambassador of Village Development

A success story from Ghatagaon FMU, Keonjhar Division

Banachakulia village is situated around 6.00K.M from N.H. 20 in Mukundpur Patna G.P of Ghatgaon FMU. The total 197 household belong to ST category.

Prior to VSS formation, people were not at all sensitive to natural ecology and the need of forest protection. The mindset of the residents was individualistic and lacking unity and integrity among the community people, leading to lack of interest in common development issues. They have no unity at village level, so the neighbour villagers forcible enter into the forest and cut away the trees from the very proximity of their village, thereby decreasing the density of forest vegetation. The village was undiscovered in availing schematic benefits from many government programs. This made the villagers silent observers without the courage to protest against this devastating act.

Some of the elderly people reacted, but their voices were unheard by the populist community. The traditional thinking that the 'Forest is not any one's paternal property' have been incorporated in their mind for years. This was reacting in the mind of the villagers.

In this backdrop, some youths decided to restrict tree cutting in and around the village, but they were wandering for suitable direction and back force to ground their ideas and motivate the village peoples. At this juncture, AMA JANGALA YOJANA project was launched in Keonjhar DMU. The villagers meet the Forest Dept. & P-NGO Team and shared their problems. The Range Officer agreed to take up AJY in this village project.

After a series of awareness meetings, formation of Vana Surakhya Samiti in Banachakulia village was taking up. The villagers realized that all-round village development is possible through formation of VSS in their village. They conducted regular VSS meetings, put forth their local issues in the VSS meeting and take decisions on common interest including forest protection and conservation under AJY project. The internal cohesion developed among the village people and many development programs were routed to their doorstep in convergence mode.



"Unless we had formed VSS in right time, we would have been in the darkness for years and our succeeding generations might have suffered from the same for another decades"- opined a woman member of the VSS.

It is contextual to express that, through the vibrant action of VSS, they not only act as a forest protection force for their community, but a catalyst for all round village development including better livelihood, income, generation drinking water facility, rain water harvesting, all weather road connectivity, electrification facility and many schematic benefits.





Convergence for Connectivity

A Successful journey of Saisurni VSS under Thuamul Rampur North Range

Saisurni is a small forest fringe village located in the Gunupur Gram Panchayat of Th. Rampur Tahasil of Kalahandi District. As per the recent report prepared on the micro plan process, the total population of the village is 110, constituting 45 families. Most of them belong to Scheduled Tribe community. The livelihoods of almost all families are interwoven around agriculture and wage earnings (65% family on daily wages and 20% families on other works).

Under the AJY scheme the Saisurni village as a unit have been covered under Van Suraksha Samiti with active participation of women work force since 2016. The VSS had worked proactively for restoration of degraded forest area. The VSS has been assigned with 300 hectares of degraded Forest area out of which 50 Ha has been covered under AJY scheme. This forest fall under the jurisdiction of Kadokhaman Reserve Forest of Th.Rampur North Range of Kalahandi South Forest Division.

From the initiation of AJY in this Village, the villagers expressed their keen interest in protection of forest and other natural resources with active involvement of women members. On 25th July 2016 the villagers of Saisurni accomplished a general meeting of VSS successfully in presence of the Divisional Forest Officer. In that meeting, the villagers had taken Bajra Sapath (oath) to protect the forest area in and around their assigned area. Later



on, the AJY team was instrumental in encouraging their spirit and extended hand holding support. Thereafter the VSS is carrying out different activities for restoration and conservation of forest resources.



With the support from community mobilization team of AJY, a meeting was convened in the village proposing a road repairing work which was requested to the Divisional Forest Officer, Kalahandi-S. This work was approved with the precondition that the work need to be accomplished before onset of monsoon (rainy season). Accordingly, a proposal was submitted at the Project Director, DRDA, Kalahandi for road repairing work clubbed up with plantation of fruit bearing trees in and around the forest area under MGNREGS. The contribution of Saisurni VSS in road repairing, nursery raising and preparatory activities for plantation work was highly appreciated by the district administration. About 394 person-days were generated which helped a lot to the villagers during the lean income period.

After completion of the road repairing work, the villagers expressed their willingness to do other forest development works in collaboration with the line departments. The village has now upgraded their road connectivity to nearby villages, GP office, PHC, CHC and Block Office. The villages are spirited to do other community development works after the road repair work was accomplished.

Mushroom that converted waste into wealth: A Success Story of Singhamila VSS under Baliguda DMU

Singhamila VSS falls under Baliguda DMU of Kandhamal district. The village constitute of many wards and have many active women self help groups. The Jeevan Jyoti self-help group of the village have taken initiative for income generation activities through mushroom cultivation,

owing to availability of vast volume of left out post harvest stubbles in the paddy lands. The group eagerly started mushroom cultivation by getting training from Odisha Livelihood Mission (OLM) under Panchayati Raj department with initial investment of Rs. 20000/- only. Keeping in view the demand of local market, they have executed all sorts of sanitation practices as per food standards. Several training programmes have been conducted to develop the capacity of the SHG members and to improve their socio-economic status. The member families of the SHG are getting an income of Rs. 5,000/- per month and the people are very happy and have set an example for others. The stubbles after harvest of paddy crop, which are usually burnt or left for open grazing, have been converted to wealth through a small but judicious investment and women involvement.



Mushroom Production by SHG members of Singhamila village

Koilipari VSS: A Role Model In Livelihood Promotion In Malkangiri District

Background:

Koilipari VSS was formed in the year of 1998 as per JFM resolution of Govt. of Odisha. In the year 2016, the VSS was included in the scheme Ama Jangala Yojana (AJY) with the state VSS code AJY-Y15-P03-MKG04-2068 Malkangiri.

Recently in the year of 2018-19 Koilipari VSS has selected for best VSS under Malkangiri Forest Range. There are 75 families in the village with a population of 503 majority of the people are from Paraja Tribe, Harijana caste, Koya Tribe & Gouda (OBC). Their common occupation includes agriculture, cattle rearing, NTFP collection, Fire wood collection. People also earn income as laborers from various works implementing in the village area by Government agencies. Majority of the people are dependent on agriculture.

Participatory forest management in JFM mode is an evolving concept encompassing ecological socio-cultural and economic dimensions. People have played an important role in protection and regeneration of forests all over the state of Odisha. Villagers have either formed VSS as per JFM Resolution or community forest management groups outside the existing JFM framework. It is desirable that associations of people, whether formed under Government resolution or by peoples own initiative with the forest conservation as the principal and core objective are allowed to function smoothly. Since inception of the VSS, the villagers



are sincerely working for the conservation of the forest resources assigned to them for protection. Inclusion of the VSS in AJY Scheme brought more benefits to them in terms of income generation and in improving their socio economic status. The VSS members have participated in various activities of the forest development. Many achievements have been made which are the mile stone of the holistic community development of the VSS of which 32 families are getting benefitted from goat rearing vocation. People earned a net benefit of about 8000 to 10,000/- quarterly per family in last 3 consecutive years. Not a single case of fire has been detected in the VSS area.

Kendu leaves collection has increase to an extent of 12500 kerries in the year 2017-18 and hence the village has been provided with a permanent Phadi house by the Kendu Leaves Organization. Stitching of Siali leaf plates and leaf bowls are also being carried out as value addition activity under the guidance of VSS, which helps to reduce dependency on the forest, ensure conservation of forest and wildlife.



Livelihood initiatives of Koilipari VSS





Livelihood initiatives of Kolipari VSS

Major Achievement:

Alternative livelihoods and reduced dependency on forest resources:

Since inception, the VSS members are sincerely working for the conservation of the forest resources assigned to them for protection, conservation, inclusion of the VSS in AJY

scheme brought more benefits to them in terms of income generation, and in improving their socio-economic status.

In order to reduce the dependency on the forest resources, alternate employment opportunities have been created by the VSS initiative and provided to the villagers through various measures such as goat rearing with the support of MODE and financial assistance from ITDA and AJY project. One of the fair rated SHG (MAA KALI SHG) of the village has been strengthened by providing the opportunity of getting livelihood through poultry farming and vegetable cultivation. 36 families are getting benefitted from this project. It is expected to have a benefit of Rs. 8000/- to 10000/- quarterly per family.

Effective prevention and Control of forest fire:

Effective fire protection measures are being carried out during fire season in the last 3 years not a single fire incidence have been detected in the VSS area. Timely creation of fire lines, engaging fire protection watchers, fire awareness measures etc are various activities performed during fire season

News & Events:

- Under Bonai DMU a training cum skill upgration programme was organised for the VSS members on Siali leaf plate preparation at Jamudhara cluster of Tamra FMU, Bonai range. The training programme was part of livelihood support programme of AJY under Bonai DMU.
- AS part of convergence programme, LPG Gas distribution was organised under PMUY scheme at Hatibadi VSS of Gunapur FMU under Rayagada DMU on 10th July 2018. Total 12 VSS members were given new LPG connection which was facilitated by the AJY team.
- A FMU level training and review meeting was organised at Junagarh Range of Kalahandi South Division on 12th August 2018
- Pillar posting in AJY scheme was completed in Sikerkupa VSS of Sikerkupa section of Biswanathpur FMU under Kalahandi north DMU on 12th July 2018.
- A training programme was organised at Raniamarabati VSS of Tamra FMU, under Bonai DMU for Siali leaf collection and plate making on 12th July 2018.
- A training programme was organised at Raniamarabati VSS of Tamra FMU, under Bonai DMU for Forest protection & Poultry Farming on 13th July 2018
- A training program organised at Gaduan under Keonjhar WL Division on 12th September 2018. The training was imparted by experts of IBRAD, Kolkata in Anandapur Range on different themes of community forestry and forest protection.
- SHG meeting on credit linkages with Bank was organised by P-NGO SGUP in Kuliposh FMU under Bonai DMU on 10th September 2018.
- Renovation of staggered trench at Gurujang VSS of Barkote Rangewas initiated on 22 September 2018.

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