



AJY MIRROR

A Quarterly Newsletter of Ama Jangala Yojana



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From the Desk of Project Director



Ama Jangala Yojana (AJY) is being implemented since 2016-17 in Odisha with the twin objective of conserving the existing forest resources and regenerate degraded forests through community participation. Key features, that make Ama Jangala Yojana unique include meticulous identification of degraded forest through satellite imageries, forest conservation using time tested strategies that were adopted while implementing Odisha Forestry Sector Development Project Phase-I such as, ANR and block plantations in Joint Forest Management mode through Vana Suraksha Samities, input of alternative livelihoods to the forest fringe village communities etc. Besides, the accurate monitoring and evaluation through satellite imageries and with highest technological precisions are other significant attributes of the Ama Jangala Yojana.



The project has been devised with a concrete plan and is equipped with foolproof tools and techniques. The people of Odisha as well as other external stakeholders are waiting eagerly the outcomes of the Ama Jangala Yojana. Different Divisions in the state where AJY is being implemented deserves an opportunity to share what they have achieved and how their success can be translated into action elsewhere.

It is indeed a matter of pleasure to know that the AJY Cell is bringing out a Quarterly Newsletter to share achievements and progress of various components of the Project that would serve many project goals and fulfill aspiration of both internal and external stakeholders. I wish all success to the Divisions who have contributed their achievements to enrich the Newsletter and to the AJY Cell for this initiative.

Lalit Kumar Tewari, IFS
Addl. PCCF (Projects) & Project Director
AJY, OFSDS

What we are doing to the forests of the world is but a mirror reflection of what we are doing to ourselves and to one another. – Mahatma Gandhi

Community Mobilization and Institution Building

A step towards successful forest protection and VSS Management



'Prakruti Mitra' award to Katada Dhaurabani Koda Sahi VSS

Although Dhaurabani Koda VSS existed since 1992, it was reconstituted during 2015-16 as per the JFM resolution 2011 & 2015 of Government of Odisha. The village consists of 32 households residing in a small hamlet near Similipathara RF Compartment No. 4. The VSS has been assigned an area of 80 ha, out of which 50 ha is demarcated as the treatment area under AJY. The villagers mainly depend upon forest produce to augment their livelihood.

Before community mobilization was initiated, the forests were damaged due to illicit cutting and forest fire. But after constant motivation and regular interactions amongst the villagers and VSS members, they continued the process of protection. The villagers followed the 'thengapalli system' in which a 'thenga' or a stick / baton is carried by the members going on patrolling to the forest area.

Before the onset of summer, regular meetings and awareness camps were conducted on the devastating effects of forest fire and the mitigating measures like creating of fire-lines around the forest area, not carrying ignitable substances



E.C Meeting of Dhaurabani koda sahi VSS

About Ama Jangala Yojana

Ama Jangala Yojana (AJY) is a flagship programme of Government of Odisha, which is being implemented by Odisha Forestry Sector Development Society (OFSDS) in 24 Territorial and Wildlife Divisions of the State through 7000 VSSs and Eco Development Committees in Joint Forest Management Mode. All the intervention under this programme will be done as per the provisions of the Joint Forest Management (JFM) Resolution, 2011 and 2015, of Government of Odisha.

The main objectives of AJY is to conserve and restore degraded forests through mobilization of forest dependent communities by developing their skills through capacity building measures and developing alternatives for the livelihood opportunities for them, to arrest further degradation of forests thereby reducing their dependence on forests and improving the condition of forests which provide shelter and livelihood to the forest dependent communities.

Keeping in tandem with the objectives, the scheme has components like soil and moisture conservation measures, capacity building, micro-plan preparation, Block Plantation and ANR without gap along with livelihood initiatives under convergence.

The Ama Jangala Yojana was launched in 2016-17 and it is scheduled to continue till 2021-22



SSO Work at koda sahi assigned forest area

to the forests, etc.. A fire protection committee was formed with five number of villagers. These actions borne fruit and there was no incidence of forest fire during the summer of 2017. People have also stopped indulging in illicit felling. The domestic animals are being stall fed and are not let out in the forests for open grazing. The agricultural residues and grass cut from common land are being used for stall feeding. Further the dry firewood obtained as cleaning material and NTFPs collected from the assigned area are being equally divided among the members of the village.

Recently the Dhaurabani Koda VSS has been awarded the Prakruti Mitra award for the year 2017 as an acknowledgment towards their outstanding performance in forest conservation.

Conflict Resolution during Survey & Demarcation:



The Jarapada FMU is located at 25 Km from Angul Forest Division. It has the intervention of the AJY activities in 12 VSSs. All the VSSs are situated within 2 to 18KM radius from the FMU headquarter. Naupada & Putagadia VSS are part of the total 12 VSSs existing in the FMU. At the beginning of the program, Survey & demarcation of the treatment area being assigned to the VSS was taken up as per norms by Involving the Forest Department staffs, NGO representative and the community. The objective of Survey & demarcation was to identify the area of the VSS. Survey and demarcation of 10 VSS under Jarapada FMU could be completed without any difficulty with accurate GPS readings, but when it came to the Naupada and Putagadia VSSs, inspite of regular and frequent interaction and meetings with the people in these villages by the NGO Team, dispute with regard to the boundary of VSSs arose and could not be controlled initially. The conflict was basically for 12 Ha forest area demanded by both villages to include into their own VSS territory. Decision could not be taken easily as interest of both villages were at stake. So the NGO team got into action and called joint meetings of both the VSS including opinion leaders, local PRI Representatives, functionaries of Forest department and the community. After a series of meetings, with repeated



and In-depth discussions on various aspects of the Issue, a consensus could be arrived at. After initial round of mutual acceptance of the issue of VSS boundary, a group of key members of each of these VSS were called on to attend a meeting at the range office to finalize other details. The issue was unique for the teams involved in resolving them and so was the solution that came out from the community meetings. Members of both the villages suggested on their own to protect the 12 ha land jointly that they wanted to include into their respective VSS territory as none of them agreed to leave the area to the other VSS. This may be a small incident and an exercise that the teams got involved in but it earned great learning that would be helpful in future operations. For the Forest Department and for the facilitating NGO team, it seemed like success as in place of one VSS now both the VSS would be taking care of the disputed 12 ha forest. Forest Department agreed to initiate forest restoration and regeneration initiatives through the NGO team would be looked into by both villages and the VSSs jointly.

Debasis Mohapatra,
Team Leader, AJY
Angul Forest Division

Micro-Plan in Panabandha VSS: A holistic approach

Panabandha VSS under Nilgiri WL Range in Balasore Wildlife Division has been reconstituted during 2015-16 under AJY with assigned area of 40 ha. Prior to reconstitution, the VSS was protecting the forest somehow in an unscientific manner. The VSS was reconstituted and registered (Regd. No. 50) with Balasore Wildlife Division. Timely and proper capacity building and hand holding support was rendered by the FMU team. Protection, restoration of forest & livelihood improvement took center stage. There has been a visible change in the way of approaching various issues by the VSS as they took serious and composed effort in various planned activities as decided during the micro plan exercises prepared by the VSS members with facilitation of forest staff and P-NGO team members.

Prior to preparation of Micro plan, the Participatory Rural Appraisal exercises such as household survey, transect walk, social and financial report of the villagers with social map, resource map, forest dependency, well being ranking, livelihood analysis, forest resource report were taken up as some of the key activities with active participation of villagers and facilitation of Forest department staff. A thorough discussion was held regarding different issues which they have been suffering from. These issues were noted down,



prioritized and analyzed sequentially. Possible steps with respect to each of these problems are also discussed and recorded sequentially on the basis of feasibility and gravity. The aspects of convergence with line departments is also planned taking into account existing schemes and programs that work on such issues or its related aspects. The SHGs in the village were graded based on their previous performance with respect to regular meetings, regular lending, regular saving, planned investment in profitable ventures such as small business or agriculture, making successful business plan ensuring loan with convergence and more importantly promote unity among members. It was indeed a holistic approach of preparing of micro plan.

Use of PRA Tools in Microplanning Process



Resource Mapping at Jhatkiposi VSS,



Transact Walk at Jhatkiposi VSS

The Photographs showing Transact walk in Forest & Village to map the forest & village resources of VSS Jhatkiposi and Banjari, as an essential part of formulating of Micro Plan.

Third General Body Meeting



Khuludhi VSS, Pallahara FMU, Deogarh



Talabahali VSS, Pallahara FMU



Raghunathpur VSS, Khamar FMU, Deogarh



Baliposi VSS, Khamar FMU, Deogarh

Capacity Building Inputs at VSS Level in Balasore (WL) Division



A Capacity building training programme on Community mobilization & institution building was held at Dalimpal High School on 25th May 2016 under Nilgiri WL Range. This has so far been one of the most successful training programmes under AJY organized in Balasore Wildlife Division. A total of 94 nos. of participants attended the training programme including Executive Committee members from 20 VSSs, some SHG members and forest department staff. H. B. Udgata, D.F.O. chaired the training programme and described vividly about the importance of VSS in protection and restoration of forest and wildlife. Resource person like Gopal Ch. Mohapatra, FLE, K. K. Panigrahi, ACF, M. R. Dey, FES & R. N. Mohanty, Range Officer, Nilgiri WL Range also took sessions on various aspects such as formation / reconstitution of VSS, roles and responsibility of VSS in JFM including the importance of forest & wildlife for maintaining the ecological balance. SELF, the P-NGO shared activities of some of the successful VSSs under



OFSDP Phase-I. The EC members from all VSSs shared their own opinion regarding protection of forest, formation of VSS and their role & responsibilities. A meaningful interactive session between the EC members of the VSSs & forest department staff could be held on formulation of future plans and programmes in the VSSs taken under AJY. The feedback on the Capacity building programme was also collected from the

EC members participated. Their feedbacks were analyzed and found to have high rate of positive feedback and suggestion.

Another one day VSS Level Capacity Building Training Programme on Micro Plan Implementation was held at the Division office campus on 28.04.2017. A total of 56 participants attended the training programme. The main theme of training programme was "Implementation of Micro Plan in the VSSs". H. B. Udgata, DFO-cum-DMU Chief, Balasore Wildlife Division narrated the aims & objectives of the training programme and use of Micro plan in the VSSs under AJY. Later during the session Mr. K. K. Panigrahi, ACF-cum-Asst. DMU Chief, Balasore Wildlife Division expressed his views on how this training could be useful for implementing Micro plan. M. R. Dey, FES elaborated all the sections of the Micro plan booklet before the participants and shared the process how these information have been collected through PRA exercise. He also convinced the participants about how these information could be useful making plan for the coming years. He made everybody aware of the process to be followed while making



any change in the future plan. The Team Leader of P-NGO presented how some problems of VSSs identified during PRA exercises and planned to be addressed through convergence under EPA.

The DFO-cum-DMU Chief, distributed the registration certificates to the Chairperson of each VSS attended the training programme.



AJY in Kalahandi South Division

Bhawanipatna

Out of all projects in Forest Department, **Ama Jangala Yojana** is a special Project in Odisha. Kalahandi South Forest Division is one of the Divisions in which Ama Jangala Yojana has made a mark covering 125nos of VSS for the first phase during the year 2016-17 spread over 3FMUs and 20nos. of VSS during the year 2017-18. The partner NGO working in the Division is IAET for community mobilization and formation of VSS.

Several works like capacity building, community mobilization and institution building, survey & demarcation, RCC pillars posting, SMC and ANR work are being done by the villagers with the assistance of P-NGO.

Yet another innovation is the use of Micro plan as a document for planning Convergence. Micro plan is the main document for VSS which speaks about the management of forests and scope for enhancing livelihood options of the people in the forest fringe villages to reduce their dependency on the forest. It is also proposed to be used for planning activities to be taken up under convergence with other line departments. The people have actively participated in the preparation of Micro plan in which resource mapping, wealth ranking, transect walk were conducted and the details of these exercises are duly incorporated in the Micro Plan for socio-economic planning of the village.



Pillar posting

Pillar posting has been done to delineate the treatment area as per the detailed guidelines issued by the PMU. Pillar indicates the pillar number, GPS reading and name of the VSS inscribed in one side. This is one of the innovative steps being undertaken in the AJY Project.

The GPS readings of each pillar is posted in GIS domain and the map has been prepared by the PMU and supplied to the DMU. The map shows different type of forest with pillars and the area available for treatment. This helps both the VSS and the Forest Officials for better management of JFM activities in the VSS.



Focus group discussion

Focus Group Discussion (FGD) is another important component of the AJY Micro plan preparation process. Focus



Preparation of Micro Plan



FMU Level Meeting



VSS Level Meeting

for *in-situ* conservation of soil and moisture thereby aiding in the nature regeneration of the area.

The forest blocks under Rehabilitation working area of Kalahandi South Forest Division requires silvicultural cleaning like climber cutting, high stump cutting, for aiding the Natural regeneration and AJY gives ample scope with financial support to the VSS for maintaining good health of the forest through ANR without gap works.

A Health camp was organized in Balisora VSS on 04.12.2016 and medicines were distributed to 200 people with support of P-NGO and Forest Department free of cost. The Live Stock Inspector who is also a member of the team was present in VSS meeting.

There is now a talk in the village that "AJY" is there to



AJY LBCD Jakespadar VSS, Th. Rampur South Range, Kalahandi South Division

save our lives & property.



SMC WORK



ANR Work

CAPACITY BUILDING ON

Micro Planning and Soil and Moisture Conservation Measures: a New Horizon



The AJY project intervention in Phulbani Forest Division includes capacity building as well as micro planning exercises with support from State CAMPA. Since capacity building in forestry subjects encompasses Soil Moisture Conservation (SMC) activities, forest growth treatment through Silviculture operation (SSO) and Micro-Planning themes, it was decided to take up both activities in a synchronized manner. The essential sequence followed to cover all these activities are as follows:

As a first step, master trainers were identified in the two most important subjects of forestry viz. SMC techniques and SSO methods. The team of master trainers constituted with retired forester and Rangers available in Kandhamal, Deputy Rangers and few Foresters having expertise. After enlisting all of them, 20 trainers were short listed. All the master trainers were given one day training at Phulbani on SMC and SSO by the PMU.

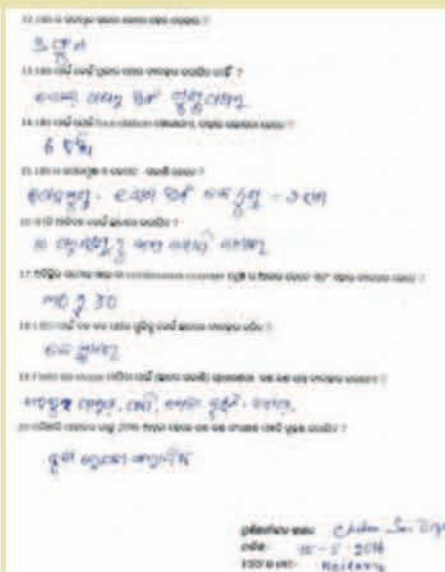
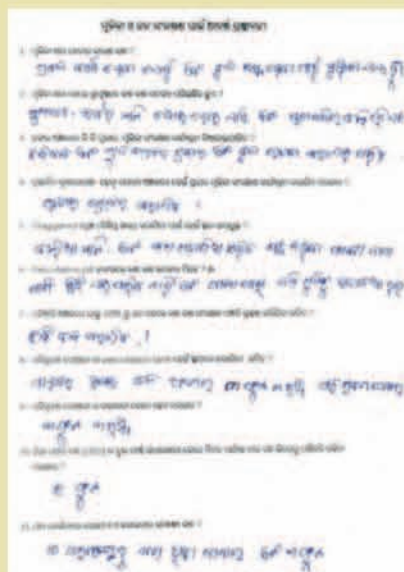
Secondly, cluster level training for each cluster in the FMU were conducted. DFO and ACF along with master trainers supervised these training thoroughly. This training was basically planned as model training which shall then be carried on at the VSS level by the master trainers. The programme was for 3 to 4 days depending on the area of the VSS. Mostly 3 VSS members were combined into one module, ten members from each VSS makes it to 30 members in a particular training.

On the first day, capacity building on SMC works was taken up in the village in which, theoretical aspects of SMC works was discussed as per the module given by PMU. An important component introduced by Phulbani Forest Division was a questionnaire given to all participants at the end of the training to understand the effectiveness of the training. The post evaluation sheets are then compared with the Pre-training evaluation sheets. The participants answered preset questions on SMC in Odia. PNGO staff helped the illiterate participants to fill the questionnaire.

The master trainers visited the VSS assigned area along with the VSS member sub-committee on Micro-Planning, P-NGO staff and member secretary. During this visit, the following information was generated:

- Assigned forest area treatment map which included the existing vegetation cover, quality, critical recommendations on plantable areas or gaps etc.
- SMC structure planning at different location with GPS reading.

For this information to be generated, the team was supplied with maps of the assigned area as well as formats to



enter the SMC information. The information generated was submitted to the Range Office, who in turn prepared the estimates for SMC works and submitted to the DMU for funding. The funding was accordingly released for implementation. By this way the capacity building on SMC works, SSO works as well as the planning for the above works executed vis-a-vis micro plans in a synchronized way.

In 2015-16 only 41 VSS completed the works and the other VSS were taken up in 2016-17 in a phased manner. The entire planning for 140 VSS could be completed in 02 months time which are being followed up regularly at DMU level. The information generated helped in quick preparation of micro plan.

Phulbani Division, Odisha



A new facelift to tribals of Balliguda

Ama Jangala Yajana is one of the pilot schemes being implemented by the Odisha Forestry Sector Development Society in JFM mode in Balliguda Forest Division covering 100VSSs/ EDCs for the 1st Phase during the year 2016-17 spread over 7 FMUs and 20 nos of VSSs during the year 2017-18. NGO Banabasi Seba Samiti is acting as Partner NGO for community mobilization and formation of VSS.

Preparatory works like capacity building, community mobilization and institution building, survey demarcation viz. boundary clearance, RCC pillars construction, carriage loading and un-loading, digging of pits and posting to mark the tradition boundary of the villages with the help of the villagers are done with the assistance from the NGO.



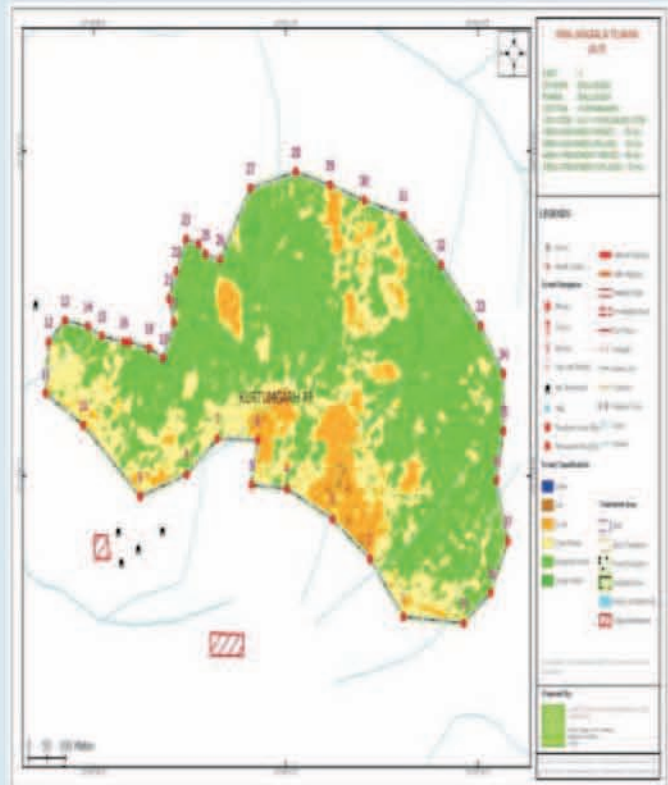
VSS Pillars of Jhirsipata VSS, Khadagabali VSS

Pillar posting has been done as per the detail guidelines issued by the PMU. Pillars indicate the pillar no., GPS reading and Name of the VSS inscribed on one side of it.

Community mobilization plays a bigger role in success of JFM activities and it is well grounded in Balliguda Forest Division with the help of Banabasi Seba NGO, the Activities of the NGO are closely monitored by the DMU for better results. This community mobilization involves study of resources in the

villages through PRA, Preparation of Microplan and plan for further development and Convergence in the Village.

The survey readings are entered in GIS domain and the Map has been prepared by the PMU and supplied to the DMU. The map shows different types of forest with pillars and the area available for treatment. This helps both the VSS and the Forest officials for better management of JFM activities in the VSS. Care is also taken to avoid the traditional area of VSS clearly demarcated without any conflict from the nearby villages.



Micro plan is the main document for the VSS which speaks about the management of forests and scope for enhancing the livelihood of the people in the forests to reduce the dependency on the forest. The people have actively participated in the process of preparation of Micro plan. Resource mapping, wealth ranking, transect walk has been conducted and the details are well incorporated in the Micro plan for socio-economic planning of the village. Then the VSS resisters the copy sending it to the gram sabha.

Focus group discussion is one of the important component used in the process of the Micro plan preparation. Focus groups like unemployed youth, women and farmers, have been selected, the problems have been discussed in depth and possible solutions were found which are then



Preparation microplan at Kurtamgarh Deulasahi AJY VSS of Balliguda FMU

Ama Jangala Yojana, a New Face Lift to Tribals of Balliguda

inserted in the convergence plan of the Micro plan. In the initial phase of implementation, Capacity building programme, ANR and SMC works are carried out in the VSS of Balliguda Forest Division under AJY.

regeneration. AJY provides financial support to the VSS for maintaining the good health of the forest through ANR without gap activities.



Focus Group discussion at Jirispata AJY VSS of Balliguda FMU

Existing modules of capacity building training programme prescribed by AJY like Nursery training, Accounts maintenance, SMC and ANR training are followed while conducting training before actual implementation in the field. The modules are implemented in different phases with cluster approach, but at times also conducted at individual VSS level to ensure better understanding of the subject on case to case basis. P-NGO usually plays a lead role in arranging capacity building training programme in different VSS.



ANR with high stump cutting at Bandaka AJY VSS of Kotagarh FMU to encourage good growth of trees

Soil moisture conservation works has direct impact on livelihood of the people and it also play a major role in maintaining the good health of the forest. Staggered trenches and loose boulder check dams were constructed in the treatment area of the VSS for conservation of soil and moisture to support nature regeneration of the area. One can easily observe the Impact of SMC structures doing soil and moisture conservation before and after rain.



Capacity Building training at FMU Level of Simonbad FMU

ANR without Gap, more than 60% of the working plan area in the Balliguda forest division under Rehabilitation working circle requires silvicultural cleaning like climber cutting, high stump cutting, for aiding the Natural



Patch showing Staggered Trench at Jirispata AJY VSS of Balliguda FMU

Ama Jangala Yojana, a New Face Lift to Tribals of Balliguda



Staggered Trench at Kadgabali AJY VSS of Simonbadi FMU photo before monsoon.



Staggered Trench at Kadgabali AJY VSS of Simonbadi FMU photo taken on 25/07/2017



SMC work at Bandaka AJY VSS of Kotagarh FMU, showing the siltation and moisture conservation.



SMC work at Bandaka AJY VSS of Kotagarh FMU, showing the siltation and moisture conservation during monsoon.

Apart from this, VSS buildings are under construction for 15 VSS which will be used as multipurpose building for other community activities in the village. The systematic planning

and implementation with inclusion of forest fringe community under AJY initiatives will go long way in conserving the forest and enhancing the livelihood of the people.

Soil and Moisture Conservation Measures

a bird's eye view



Dahanimara VSS under Nilgiri WL Range In Balasore Wildlife division has been reconstituted during 2015-16 under AJY with assigned area of 32 ha consisting two hamlets i.e. Dahanimara & Nuasahi under revenue village Raigaon. The VSS has been registered on 20.12.2016 in Balasore DMU with allotted Regd. No. 49 of Balasore Wildlife Division. The total VSS members in these two hamlets are 698, who belong to Scheduled Tribe category. The assigned area has been surveyed and demarcated with 33 nos. of pillars in the month of June-2016. Soil Moisture Conservation work like loose boulder check dam & staggered trenches have been prepared with participation of villagers of these two hamlets. 5 nos. of loose boulder check dam have been constructed to slow down the runoff of flowing water during rain and to prevent soil erosion from the assigned forest area and 165 nos. of

staggered trenches have also been dug out to conserve moisture during rain which will help the trees to grow as well as provide sufficient moisture for better growth of crop at downhill. The entire work was done by the villagers of Dahanimara & Nuasahi during the month of June and December 2016. However, 1397 nos. of person days have been created for execution of all these work, which has added to their livelihood improvement. More such initiatives have been planned to be taken up under AJY in the days to come to provide alternative livelihood options at the same time developing the area with greater productivity and fertility through SMC inputs and shall get the benefits for a longer period to ensure sustainable livelihood for the community members. Thanks to AJY for its support for the genuine cause.

Balasore Division, Odisha

Publications



AJY MIRROR

The quarterly newsletter of Ama Jangala Yojana provides timely information on different project activities, achievements, best practices, documented processes and future plans to showcase the existing knowledge base of AJY which can be replicated in other areas of need.

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