



AJY MIRROR

A Quarterly Newsletter of
AMA JANGALA YOJANA

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EDITORIAL

Ama Jangala Yojana has successfully completed its 4th year of intervention, reaching out to about 1/3rd of the total VSSs in the state and has shaped many successful cases worth replication. Moving to the present quarter of the year has emanated with many challenges to the life and livelihoods of the forest fringe communities. Though the period was meant for planning and strategizing the forestry and community development activities and to take initiatives, the process has been delayed due to Covid 19 pandemic situation.

The situation during the peak period of the COVID 19 pandemic was the priority issue of all departments across the state. The forestry sector, as it involves active community participation, is hence, not immune to this global phenomenon. Implementing all components of Ama Jangala Yojana Programme with less number of man power, maintaining social distance and proper sanitation practices, yet balancing life with livelihoods of the poor rural and tribal community was a big challenge. The life threatening spread of the contagious disease in one part and the struggle for daily needs at the other has made the system to operate in a very critical manner. In addition to the usual forestry activities, this has laid additional responsibilities on the Forest Force for ensuring livelihood, sanitation and community awareness through Ama Jangala Yojana scheme. This has a holistic approach encompassing many components of income generation and forest protection activities to protect the forest dependent communities at this crucial juncture. However, our committed team including the field/community level workforce could be able to deliver the usual project works in synchronization with the community development and forest protection activities in 3720 VSSs under 23 Forest Divisions of Odisha, despite much difficulty and reduced mobility. The activity delivery also followed the mandates of Joint Forest Management and ensured that interests of all stakeholders are judiciously considered during the project implementation in this particular quarter. The protection, conservation, public awareness, capacity building and livelihood enhancement of forest dwellers are some of the priority areas, almost fully addressed during the above period.

A brief account of the activities and events accomplished under Ama Jangala Yojana in the last year has been placed in the beginning of the issue for acknowledgement of all stakeholders in the program. Apart from this, the snapshot of the events and activities performed successfully during this period also enrich the edition. Exemplary VSS efforts coming up as success stories of livelihood and convergence initiatives are also collated in this edition to highlight the progress.

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

Dr. Sudarsan Panda, IFS
PCCF & Project Director, OFSDS

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PROGRESS OF AMA JANGALA YOJANA BY THE END OF 4TH YEAR OF INTERVENTION

Ama Jangala Yojana (AJY) which is implemented through Odisha Forestry Sector Development Society with the objective to promote sustainable forest management in the State that lays emphasis on livelihood support for the communities living in the forest fringe villages in a participatory mode. The scheme is presently implemented in 23 Territorial and Wildlife Divisions of the State. By the end of FY 19-20, total 3720 numbers of VSSs have been covered under the scheme including 540 new VSSs during FY-2019-20 only. Apart from this, 7534 Women Self Help Groups are also linked with various income generation programs under convergence with various departments of the State Government. Partner NGOs (14 numbers) have been engaged as support organisations for community mobilization under the scheme.

Major Activities under AJY:

All the activities carried out through Ama Jangala Yojana can be broadly classified into 4 categories, namely forestry activities, livelihood promotion, institution building and entry point activities.

The forestry activities include conducting PRA and preparation of Microplan, Survey, demarcation and pillar posting in the assigned Forest area, ANR without Gap Plantation, Block Plantations and its maintenance, Forest protection activities (watch and ward, cleaning fire protection etc.), SMC Activities (Staggered trenches, Check dams, LBCEs etc.)

Whereas, the livelihood promotion activities include all such activities those are meant for livelihood enhancement through different Government sponsored schemes, Support of cooking gas through PM

Ujjwala Scheme, Skill building trainings through PMKVY, RUDSETTI and DDU-GKY, promotional activities for collective aggregation and marketing of tribal products etc.

The Entry Point Activities (EPAs) have been implemented in convergence mode with other departments. This include a wide range of activities including material support to VSSs (utensils, office materials etc), creation and renovation of village infrastructure such as water bodies, creation of drinking water facilities for the village, animal and human health camps, support of solar light equipment etc. Institution Building Activities include those initiatives which ensure community participation and collective action for a greater cause such as selection/constitution of Vana Suraksha Samities and their

empowerment, capacity building of VSS and SHG members, training of Forest Department staff, construction of multipurpose VSS buildings etc.

Apart from these, the AJY imparts special focus on capacity building of the stakeholders and convergence initiatives through inter-sectoral linkages. Several steps have been taken at various levels to mobilize resources through convergence under AJY at PMU, DMU and FMU levels. Many programmes have been taken up through convergence under MGNREGS, Swachha Bharat Mission, PMUY and other schemes.

Up to March 2020, a total 8862 no. of works involving 2,68,300 beneficiaries have been implemented through convergence under AJY. The estimated cost on this account is about Rs. 85.60 Crores.

Overall Achievements of AJY as on 31st March, 2020

- ❖ Area coverage under AJY- 23 Forest Divisions (DMUs), 129 Ranges (FMUs) and 3720 VSS, out of which 540 VSSs during FY-2019-20.
- ❖ No of women SHGs covered under AJY : 7534
- ❖ No of VSS where Micro Plan Prepared – 3199 out of which 319 in the year 2019-20
- ❖ No of VSS buildings constructed -384, out of which 98 in the year, 2019-20
- ❖ Survey and Demarcation completed in 3720 VSS
- ❖ Total area Demarcated- 254078.35 Ha
- ❖ GPS data & polygons received by GIS & MIS of PMU – 3355 Nos of VSS (175 in FY-19-20)
- ❖ Maps prepared by GIS Cell & provided to DMU – 2915 Nos. Maps
- ❖ Block Plantation (only during FY 2016-17)- 1010 Ha (87 sites)
- ❖ ANR without gap- 1,87,731 Ha
- ❖ EPA in convergence with MGNREGS in contributory mode- 401 VSSs
- ❖ Capacity Building Training programme have been conducted at PMU and DMU levels involving 1,01,774 participants, covering 3720 VSS and members of 4336 SHGs.

Photographs of AJY activities during the 4th year of intervention



ANR at Biru Purunasahi VSS, Angul Division



SMC Work at Mundinucha VSS, Keonjhar(WL) Division



Capacity Building Training at Jereng Dehurisahi VSS Under Angul DMU



SMC Work at Kamridhuti VSS, Kalahandi-S DMU



VSS Building at Makundpur VSS under Keonjhar Division



Convergence with Teri For Solar Lantern, Baragarh Division

UPDATE OF THE EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES UNDER AMA JANGALA YOJANA IN THE PRESENT QUARTER

A. Awards to best VSS :

An evaluation of VSS has been conducted in all AJY divisions on the basis of their performance during the last year. A committee was formed for this purpose, comprising of PMU and Division level experts to decide the

best performing VSSs under the project. The committee collected and compiled the information matrix from VSSs through respective DMUs. The ranking of VSS was made basing on an eleven point indicators. After

thorough verification and decision by the committee members the following VSSs were identified as the best performing VSSs for the year 2019-20.

Results of Evaluation/ Rank	Name of the VSS	Division Name	Range
First	Khangarguda VSS Talpada VSS	Kalahandi (N) Kalahandi (S)	Bhawanipatna Biswanathpur
Second	Dumberbahal VSS	Balangir	Titilagarh
Third	Gumundu VSS	Keonjhar (WL)	Brahmanipal

B. Observation of World Environment Day:

World Environment Day was celebrated on the 5th of June 2020 in all forest divisions under AJY as an annual event to highlight the importance of healthy and green environment in human life. The theme for the current year (2020) was 'Biodiversity; a concern that is both urgent and existential'. The theme was selected in view of current global disease pandemic and

locust infestation in most parts of African and Asian countries which demonstrates the interdependence of human and the webs of life in which they exist.

The event has been observed on 5th June, 2020 in all Divisions under Ama Jangala Yojana across the state amid the peak period of COVID 19. Awareness building activities were

mainly conducted maintaining social distance among the participants. Protection of forests and wildlife through natural and artificial regeneration measures was the major theme during this year. All the activities were carried out maintaining social distance among the members. Glimpses of the program have been given in the following photographic presentation.



Observation of World Environment Day at Kundra Range, Jeypore Division



Observation of World Environment Day at Angul Division

C. State level review meeting of AJY Activities through Video Conferencing:

A video conferencing meeting was held on 10th June, 2020 under the Chairpersonship of PCCF and Project Director, OFSDS Bhubaneswar to review the progress of work in AJY Divisions. The Additional Project Director (A&F), Dy. Project Director (A&F), SPM (LLI) and SMS (IME) along with CF/CCFs in charge of Angul,

Sambalpur, Rourkela, Berhampur, Koraput Circles and the Divisional Forest Officers of 23 AJY Divisions of the State participated in the conference through their respective district NICs.

The matters related to progress of Micro Plan preparation in the target VSS for the year 2019-20, ANR

without gap plantation, Block Plantation (3rd year maintenance), construction of VSS Buildings, progress of convergence activities, submission of monthly statement of a/c counts, conducting regular VSS meetings, Partnership Ecosystems, proposals for 2020-21 were discussed in the meeting.

D. Collective Singing of 'Vande Utkal Janani':

In the peak period of Covid 19 pandemic situation, the state has requested all its Departments, private establishments and general public of Odisha for collective singing of the state song 'Vande Utkal Janani' at 5.30 pm of 30th May, 2020 for paying honour and obligations to the 'Covid Warriors' who are rendering round the clock selfless service to the mankind. The staff of OFSDS (PMU) assembled in front of the PMU office on the date and time as per the state advisory and sung the state song, by maintaining optimum social distance, to encourage and energize the Covid Warriors.



HIGHLIGHTS OF THE ACTIVITIES UNDER AMA JANGALA YOJANA

A. Forestry Activities:

Despite prevalence of global pandemic of COVID 19 in the entire quarter, our committed workforces have worked with their fullest effort in implementing the program. The regular activities like fire protection, silvicultural operations, SMC works, survey and demarcation and construction of VSS buildings were given priority in this quarter. One of the major objective was to provide wage employment to the tribal community who are facing a huge economic crisis during Covid 19 Pandemic, in addition to usual forestry activities. Priority was given on regular VSS interactions among the community members in all 3720 VSSs under AJY across the state. This also helped in easy dissemination of the message pertaining to personal hygiene and community sanitation measures to restrict the spread of Covid 19 in the community.

B. Some of the activities accomplished during this quarter are given below:

1. Survey, Demarcation and Pillar Posting:

Survey and demarcation is undertaken in the forest areas assigned to new VSSs for coverage under the scheme during Fy 2020-21. During the year, all targetted VSSs were assigned with a treatment area of about 50 hectares where Assisted Natural Regeneration (ANR) without gap plantation is taken up. The pillar posting work has been accomplished successfully in all target VSSs with accurate GIS mapping.



Pillar Posting at Kantapali VSS, Deogarh Division



Pillar Posting at Kukudakatta VSS Jeypore Division

2. ANR Activities:

It is a low-cost restoration method that can effectively convert degraded vegetation to more productive forests. Additionally, it has been decided to take up ANR with gap from the current year. ANR without gap plantation was the

only major operation under AJY during the present quarter as there was no target for block plantation during year. This involves thinning, high stump cuttings, climber cutting and cleaning activities for which Summer is the best suitable time.



Before and After ANR-Silvicultural operations at Karadapal VSS, Deogarh Division, Year-2020



Before and After SSO Work Mankadachua VSS, Deogarh Division, Year - 2020

3. Prevention and Control of Forest Fire:

The summer season is the crucial time to take protective measures against forest fire. Fireline tracing, cleaning and trenching are being carried out during this quarter in all VSSs. Timely creation of fire lines, engaging fire protection



Latitude: 18.820455
Longitude: 82.589632
Elevation: 889.31m

Fire Line Cleaning at Dhoudapadara and Lalmunda VSSs under Jeypore Division

watchers, fire awareness measures are various activities that have taken during the fire season under vigilant observation by the Forest Divisions under AJY. As a result, the VSSs have shown exemplary work in forest fire prevention and control.



Latitude: 19.117882
Longitude: 82.434023

4. Maintenance of Block Plantation:

Block plantations were made in 1010 Hectors of area during initial 3 years of project intervention under Ama Jangala Yojana with suitable forest tree species. Regular care and

maintenance activities of plantation patches has been carried out in subsequent years for which more than 70% survival is observed in many patches.



DFO Malkangiri Division visiting the Block Plantation site at Datunguda under Chitrakonda FMU and reviewing the records



Latitude: 18.119417

5. Soil & Moisture Conservation (SMC) Activities:

Soil moisture conservation activities are the important component under AJY in the degraded forest areas. The SMC measures help in conserving fertile top soil, enhancing soil moisture regime and

arresting surface run off for reducing erosion. Staggered trenches within the forest area, DLTs, LBCDs are some of the major SMC activities completed during this period.



LBCD at Siriguda VSS, Bonai Division



LBCD at Sadangabali VSS, Keonjhar Division



LBCD at Gauranga VSS, Angul Division



LBCD at Kundagola VSS, Deogarh

6. Completion of VSS Building:

The VSS buildings are multipurpose community buildings of about 400 square feet with RCC roof, meant for conducting meetings, keeping records, carrying out income generating activities for the SHGs and shelter during climatic

exigencies. Completion of 98 numbers of VSS buildings has been reported during the quarter. Some of the buildings are architecturally excellent and used by the community for multiple purposes.



VSS Office cum Meeting Hall at Kilukumpa VSS, Phulbani Division



Building of Pravasuni VSS, Deogarh Division

7. Community Mobilization:

Formation and strengthening of VSS, preparation of village micro plan using participatory rural appraisal tools and capacity building are some of the essential activities under community mobilization. Micro plans have been prepared in a participatory manner in all 540 VSSs involved in AJY.

However, the reporting work has been delayed due to unavoidable reasons during shut down period. All the micro plan at VSS level covers the development plan for sustainable forest management and other livelihood needs for the communities.



Preparation of Village Microplan in Singhavahini and Jhatikiposi VSS, Deogarh Division



SPECIAL INITIATIVES TAKEN FOR COVID-19 RESPONSE

The forestry Sector, especially Ama Jangala Yojana faced a major setback during Covid-19 pandemic followed by national lockdown. The livelihood and economic activities have come to a halt mainly due to restrictions in mobility and transportation. In the other hand, this was the crucial period for protection against forest fire, regeneration and other silvicultural operations, SMC activities, human animal conflict and thefts. The forestry sector in Odisha comprise of high levels of rural and tribal population and migrants, particularly for young men and women. However, COVID-19 was leading to reverse migration (migration returnees), which has the potential to spread the disease to remote and unprepared areas. The outbreak of the disease and the panic also disrupted the value chains to towns and cities for goods and services, on which members of forest and the producer-organizations (including our production clusters) depend to meet their financial needs. Restrictions on physical activities and mobility have affected all aspects of forest production. The producers, aggregators and transport agents in the VSS areas were implementing government guidelines, but there was considerable risk that informal producers and processors continue activities in order to ensure some economic returns. Those involved in such enterprises risk both spreading COVID-19 and, in

some jurisdictions, heavy financial consequences for breaking the law. At the operations level, it was also important to provide practical and simple information for both workers and supervisors on how to mitigate and prevent further spread of the coronavirus, or indeed any other agent causing contagious disease (such as Dengue, Malaria and Tuberculosis). The VSSs as the grassroots organization and the community as well as the project staff have played a pivotal role in mitigating the community crisis by providing all possible support and service at the doorstep of the villagers through wage based activities and convergence initiatives.

Although the forest sector is traditionally seen as more resilient, the inhabitants are mostly unaware of the consequences of the infectious disease. Hence maintaining hygiene, self protection and continuing livelihood and income generating activity with social distance was a challenge during the peak infection periods. However, our committed and dedicated workforce could be able to maintain the implementation of all the scheduled activities with utmost care and protection. Not only the forestry activities, they were also involved in social and humanitarian activities across the state, some of them are put here in a snapshot.

CONVERGENCE ACTIVITIES UNDER AJY

Inter-sectoral convergence approaches have been adopted to optimise the resource use for village infrastructure development, livelihoods and income enhancement of the rural communities under AJY. Efforts have been made at various levels for convergence of AJY activities with different schemes and programmes carried out by other departments such as MGNREGS, Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana, National Horticulture Mission, Odisha Livelihood Mission etc to benefit the forest dependent community across AJY Divisions.

Further, convergence has been with NRLM on livelihood and income generation activities by involving Self Help Groups of villages under AJY, despite Covid-19 restrictions.



Anganawadi Center constructed under convergence with WoCD at Gauranga VSS, Angul Division



Seed Treatment Campaign for Kharif Crops at Matalgarh VSS, Bonai Division



Animal Vaccination through convergence with OLM at Tikiraposh VSS, Bonai Division



Bitter gourd Cultivation through ITDA at Majurdima VSS, Deogarh Division



Latitude: 21.576545
Longitude: 85.122325

Backyard Poultry Farming- Chicks Support to the members of Balidehi VSS, Deogarh Division



Latitude: 21.576561



Latitude: 18.857528
Longitude: 82.591352
Elevation: 710.4 m
Accuracy: 4 m
Time: 02-10-2020 13:27
Note: Convergence with line departments



Latitude: 18.857505
Longitude: 82.591162
Elevation: 724.84 m
Accuracy: 4 m
Time: 02-10-2020 13:30
Note: Convergence with line departments

Convergence meeting with line departments in Jeypore Division during May,2020



Latitude: 18.531704
Longitude: 82.72952



Support of LPG Connection through PMUY and Sewing Machine/ Honey bee box through convergence under Semiliguda Range of Koraput Division under AJY

In spite of much upwells in the quarter, there are also a number of success stories pertaining to forestry activities and community development initiatives under AJY. There are a number of extra ordinary VSS efforts and achievements in this period. Some of them are highly appreciable and exemplary, regarded as milestones of our selfless service towards the holistic development of the community. A few of them have been placed here for others to follow.....

TRANSFORMATION TOWARDS TRIUMPH; UNITY AND INTEGRITY HAS BROUGHT AN EXEMPLARY CHANGE IN THE LIVES OF RURAL COMMUNITY

– Story of Mantriput Village under Malkangiri Forest Division

Chitrakonda, commonly in news as the free zone of Maoists activities and Naxalite movements for last few decades, usually brings fear among the public across the country. The natural geo morphological features and other development indicators such as dense forest, high hills, extended reservoir of Chitrakonda river, very poor road and other sorts of communication infrastructures and a large number of population living inside the reservoir as a cut off community has boosted the Naxalite activities and heinous crimes claiming many lives in past. Over the years, many development initiatives have been undertaken by government and nongovernment agencies which have a visible impact on the lives and livelihoods of the community. Here is an excellent example of a community action through Saheed Laxman Nayak VSS along and the Department of Forest and Environment which has changed the entire rural scenario within a short period. The cooperation and coordination among the stakeholders has successfully implemented many convergence activities to benefit the inhabitants of the village by which the entire scenario of the village has been changed .

Mantriput is a revenue village within the protected forest area under Tunnelcamp Gram Panchayat of Chitrakonda Block, situated at a distance of 3 kms from the GP road and surrounded by hills, dense forest and the Chitrakonda reservoir. Saheed Laxman Nayak VSS is recognized as the village level institution for protection and regeneration of the forest resources under Ama Jangala Yojana since the part 2 of Ama Jangala Yojana, which comes under Malkangiri Forest Division.



VSS Members Participating in the Microplanning Process

The hard working ability and nature loving attribute of the villagers combined with unity and integrity has attracted the attention of project personnel to include and implement the Ama Jangala Yojana Program with active participation of the VSS members. The process was



Social Map of Mantriput Village

initiated through several rounds of village level meetings and trainings. As mandated, a comprehensive PRA and village development microplan was prepared with the help of the PNGO- and Forest Department staff. Their continuous efforts to protect the natural forest and cooperation with the department have helped in grounding many development and livelihood improvement programs in the village. Many forest protection activities and development projects have been undertaken by the department through AJY. Apart from these, many socio-economic and community development activities are also successfully grounded in the village through convergence with other agencies. The credits of the development initiatives go to the members of the VSS who are very hard working and accountable.

A brief description of their achievements in last few years has been presented in precise manner.



Fire Protection Activities by the Volunteers from Saheed Laxam Nayak VSS, Mantriput

The VSS members are involved in various forest and community development activities in and around the village. Voluntary fire protection, plantation activities, SMC and ANR activities and construction of village common infrastructure such as roads and water bodies are most common.



Plantation Activities by the members of Saheed Laxam Nayak VSS

The most commendable step towards improving livelihoods of the households is through vegetable cultivation and NTFP collection/processing. About 30 Households of the village are doing vegetable cultivation adopting organic practices by which they are able to earn an average monthly income of Rs.1000/- to 15000/- per household. Apart from this, they also collect NTFPs like tamarind, cane, honey, wax, Kenduleaf, broom sticks, brushwood, stumps and medicinal plants and fetch good price by collective marketing through SHGs. The Kendu leaf collection and Sal leaf plate making is another household income opportunity for the members which also add economic benefit to the families. Promotion of alternative livelihood opportunities such as vegetable cultivation and training for youths on employable skills has reduced their dependency on traditional forest products. This ultimately

helped in conservation and management of forest resources in a better way.

The convergence initiatives by the VSS members are at the peak at present days. Some of the major convergence activities implemented through various schemes are wage based activities such as Mo Pokhari Yojana through MGNREGS/OLM, youth skill building program on pisciculture and computer application through SBRSETI , other schemes such as PMUY and PMAY etc. The cohesion among VSS members and coordination with government departments could fetch them many valuable community assets and infrastructure such as a community Hall worth Rs. 3,00,000/-, a solar drinking water project, one VSS building and a mini market complex. Apart from this, a Kenduleaf Fadi has been sanctioned in the village, which will be constructed in the near future.



Latitude: 18.352635
Longitude: 81.891913
Accuracy: 1700.0m
Azimuth: 236° (SW)



Azimuth: 181° (S)



SHG members got Pisciculture Training for IGA at Mantriput by SBRSETI, Malkangiri



Certificate distribution to the college students of Mantriput village who have successfully completed 3 Months Computer Training organized at Neheru Yuva Kendra, Malkangiri



Latitude: 18.140430
Longitude: 82.097711
Elevation: 456.99m
Azimuth: 161°

Mini Market Complex is under construction through the assistance from 14th CFC in convergence with DRDA



Community Hall under construction at Mantriput through GP Development Fund



VSS Building of Sahid Lakhman Naik VSS is under construction



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@ofsdp.org

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