



ଆମ ଜଙ୍ଗଲ ଯୋଜନା

AJY MIRROR

A Quarterly Newsletter of
AMA JANGALA YOJANA

July - Sept. 2020

Volume - 4 ■ Issue - II

EDITORIAL



Ama Jangala Yojana has entered into its 5th year of successful implementation. In this year, we have a target of reaching out to 4605 numbers of VSSs in 23 Forest Divisions across the state. 885 new VSSs have been taken up under the fold of AJY during the year 2020-21. So far, AJY has been in the forefront to promote community based forest management and ensure sustainable livelihood options for the forest fringed communities in Odisha.

Despite many challenges to the life and livelihoods of the forest fringe communities, our committed team could achieve extra ordinary success in implementation of various community development activities through convergence. In addition to regular project activities, our team has put additional effort for providing emergency support and awareness generation in their respective project locations to address Covid 19 pandemic situation. Such initiative of the project has improved the livelihood, sanitation and community awareness under Ama Jangala Yojana. The protection and conservation of forest resources, awareness generation, capacity building and livelihood enhancement of forest dwellers are the priority areas, almost fully addressed during this period.

There are many examples of convergence with other Departments to mobilize external resources for community infrastructure building and livelihood improvement. All the activities and events completed under various livelihood initiatives have been placed in the present newsletter. Some of the commendable efforts and initiatives of VSSs have been documented and published in this edition to highlight the achievements.

I wish, all the stakeholders will continue their noble effort in guiding the communities and share their achievements to achieve the goal of Ama Jangala Yojana.

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

There are a number of success stories pertaining to livelihood enhancement and community development, which showcase our successful journey. There are also a number of extra ordinary VSS efforts and achievements in protection and conservation of resources . Some of them are highly appreciable and exemplary, regarded as milestones for holistic development of the community. A few of them have been placed here .

Soil & Moisture Conservation Works in forests increased tree cover as well as agricultural production in Balihudi village of Balasore Wildlife Division **STORY 01**

“SMC work carried out in the forest area benefits adjacent agricultural fields by increasing subsoil moisture and resulting in bumper crop yield. VSS members are happy to see the betterment of their household economy.”

Maa Tarini VSS has been formed in the village Balihudi (Kalamchua) under Soro WL Range of Balasore Wildlife Division with 750 members. About 50 ha of forest area from Balihudi UDFP has been assigned for protection and sustainable forest management. The area being a hilly terrain, about 60% of forest is found in steep slope and prone to soil erosion. Due to rampant reel and gully erosion, the soil profile is poor and its moisture content is very low. This has impacted negatively on forest growth. The re-generation was very slow and continued to remain in degraded condition.

After Maa Tarini VSS taken in to AJY fold, series of interaction were taken with the VSS members to improve the forest condition. It was noted that majority of villagers largely depend on agriculture for subsistence. However, due to steep slope and lack of irrigation facilities, the soil moisture condition in this village was the major deciding factor for low yield. Villagers in consultation with the officials and staff of AJY identified issues and proposed to take up soil moisture conservation interventions to check the flow of water, which can improve the soil moisture regimes. It was decided by the villagers to

treat the gullies and take up staggered trenches at strategic location to reduce flow of water and to improve the moisture condition across the forest area.

Accordingly, numbers of gullies in the forest area were treated and 563 numbers of staggered trenches were excavated in strategic locations to prevent soil erosion and to conserve the subsoil moisture. Above works were taken up in Joint Forest Management Mode, where the members of the VSS have actively participated in accomplishing the work during 2018-19. This initiative had also generated a good number of man-



SMC Activities in Balihudi VSS area

days for the poor households of MaaTarinini VSS.

The soil moisture conservation activities taken up under AJY had resulted in significant recharge of ground water during 2019-20. Improvement in forest coverage

has also been seen in the forest area assigned to the VSS. Most importantly, it has been reported by the villagers that crop (paddy) yield in this village has increased to the tune of 20% in comparison to last year. Moreover, due to improvement in moisture content,

villagers have also taken up summer crop such as black gram, green gram with considerable success. Small SMC initiatives taken up under Ama Jangala Yojana has benefitted the villagers both economically and in improving the forest resources assigned to them.

Community Nutri-gardens, a new concept to SHG members of Dandasingha VSS, enabled them to meet their household livelihood as well as nutritional security for which they are thankful to the convergence effort by forest staff, PNGO and PR department

STORY

02



Meeting with PR Dept.



Discussion with SHG



A model Nutri-garden

Dandasingha VSS under Barkote FMU of Deogarh Division was formed during the year 2018-19 under "Ama Jangala Yojana" with assigned area of 50ha. The total population of this village is 1760 consisting of 400 families. Majority of families depend upon farming for their subsistence. Besides farming, people of this village go for daily wage for their livelihood.

Women members of majority of households of Dandasingha VSS were organized in to 29 women SHGs, even before brought to the fold of Ama Jangala Yojana. In an average, each SHG had 12 members but were limited to only thrift and credit within the group. None of the SHG had any substantial involvement for any Income Generating Activities. After the VSS brought to AJY fold, the project staff including the members of partner NGO interacted with the SHG members and encouraged

them to take up small business through IGAs either in group or in individual mode.

Agriculture is the backbone of the villagers of Dandasingha VSS for their livelihood. In addition to agriculture, many of them go for daily wage for day to day subsistence. However, during the Covid 19 lock down situation, the villagers were deprived of from all sorts of income and had a tough time for survival of their families. The P-NGO Team realized the problem and discussed the same with the officials of Ama Jangala Yojana. With the guidance of Divisional Management Unit of Deogarh and the concerned Field Management Unit, the P-NGO Team coordinated with the officials of Odisha Livelihood Mission, Panchayatiraj Dept. to find some means of income for the people of different VSS, who are struggling for their day to day subsistence.

The officials of OLM, Panchayatiraj extended their hand and proposed to implement a scheme namely "Nutri-Garden" through SHGs. However, the scheme was meant for the families having pregnant mother/ lactating mother, old age people (above 60 years), children below 5 years etc. Based on the criteria, the P-NGO took lead role in identifying the potential members, who qualify for the criteria of the scheme in close association with the Executive Committee of Dandasingha VSS.

Finally, with continuous persuasion of the project staff, members from 18 SHGs were selected for the scheme. The officials from Odisha Livelihood Mission imparted initial orientation to all beneficiaries for establishment of Nutri-Garden and provided them all inputs such as vegetable seeds, compost, pesticides etc. to start the Nutri

garden. Vegetables such as ladies finger, bitter gourd, bottle gourd, pumpkin, cucumber, brinjal etc., were grown in the nutri-garden. Further, each beneficiary was provided with 39 man-days in the span of three months for maintaining the nutri-gardens established. The mandays, helped

them initially during the lockdown period to sustain the basic need of their families and supported other SHG members to extent possible means to mitigate the Covid Pandemic situation. The vegetable they grown were consumed and the surplus vegetables were sold in nearby local markets. This has

fetches them additional income to the tune of Rs. 1000/- per month to each beneficiary.

Such support from project not only motivated the SHG members of the village, but also inspired the entire villagers to be united to fight for their cause and to protect the forest assigned to them.

Revival of traditional occupation made possible through AJY Support; A success story of Terracotta Artisans in Tondaguda Village in Nabarangpur Division

STORY
03



Tondaguda is an interior village of Papdahandi block of Nabarangpur district, where more than 15 households are associated in Terracotta work for many generations. However, due to lack of market, majority of Terracotta artisans now prefer to give up their artisan skill & brilliance and to adopt daily wage as source of subsistence.

Tondaguda VSS brought to the AJY fold during 2017-18. The FMU staff and P-NGO team members interacted with the artisans to understand the challenges they face, which force them to do away with terracotta work and to earn their livelihood through daily wage. It emerged during the discussion, that the artisans possess outstanding skills to prepare different terracotta items, which are acceptable to market, but the limited market facility is the

only factor, why they are constrained to stop their age old traditional occupation and to adopt other source of income for sustenance.

Project officials coordinated with different District Administrations such as Kalahandi, Nawarangpur, Koraput, Rayagada etc., where the artisans can be given a platform to sell their product in their district level annual Mela every year. Now the SHGs associated in terracotta product participate in the district level Mela such as PARAB in Koraput, Mondai in Nawarangpur every year. Similarly they also attend the district level Mela in Sambalpur, Rayagada etc. to sell their product every year. In an average, these SHGs sell product of worth Rs. 1,00,000/- in each Mela, where the profit margin ranges about 40% and above.

Two women SHGs viz. Maa Ratneswari and Biswa were extended with financial assistance to participate in State level Adivasi Mela in February 2020 held at Bhubaneswar.

The SHG members were overwhelmed with the response and appreciation received in the Mela. Such state level platform also gave them the opportunity to interact with many buyers, who were willing to purchase their products at large scale directly from their village.

Further to meet the market demand, the villagers have sharpened their skills according to the market need and are now participating in all the exhibitions across Odisha. Now, the artisans are happy with the market linkage for sale of their products at remunerative price at regular intervals.

Pisciculture – A Boon to Women Self Help Groups of Kanokota VSS under Paralakhemundi Forest Division

STORY

04

The Self Help Group members of Kanokota VSS of Udayagiri Block of Paralakhemundi Forest Division were used to associate with NTFP collection and other agricultural activities for additional income of their respective households.

The Kanokota VSS was taken under AJY fold during 2016-17. Series of Soil and Moisture Conservation interventions were taken up under the project. This has resulted in increase in water table in the area. One pond, which was not being used for many years due to lack of water, got substantial water recharge during 2018-19. The P-NGO team members motivated the SHGs to take up pisciculture in the said pond, which is an assured source of additional income for the SHGs.

After couple of meetings, about 40 women members of 3 Self Help Groups (SHGs) of Kanokota VSS namely Jaya Jeesu, Esu Probhu and Prerana shown their

willingness to take up pisciculture in the village pond. The P-NGO members, with the help of Fisheries Department oriented the SHG members on modus operandi of fish farming in the pond.

During 2019, the members of the SHGs collected Rs. 2400/- from self contribution and bought 2000 fingerlings to take up pisciculture in the village pond. Fish feeds were bought from the nearby market and collectively managed the pond for six months. After six-months of intervention, the fingerlings were grown up to 1 kg.

During March, 2020, the SHG members decided to net the fish. They harvested about 1 quintal of fish from the pond and sold it in nearby Mahendragarh market at the rate Rs. 120-125 per Kg. It was a substantial return to the SHGs against very small amount invested. Instead of taking the entire return for their own expenses, the members decided to keep 25% of the net profit for continuing



pisciculture activity in the same pond.

Such profit not only motivated the SHG members to be associated with small entrepreneurship, but also to take leadership for sustainable management of forest area assigned to them.

Sal Leaf Plate Making Supported through Ama Jangala Yojana successfully revives Pari SHG in Sunapanga VSS under Phulbani Division

STORY

05

Sunapanga VSSs under Tikabali Range was included in Ama Jangala Yojana (AJY) during the financial year 2019-20. A Self Help Group namely PARI, with 10 women members was formed during October, 2017. The members of Pari SHG were limited only to thrift and credit for some time. Before Sunapanga VSS brought into the fold of AJY, Pari SHG was completely in defunct state.

After initial community mobilization in the village, the P-

NGO team interacted with the SHG members and motivated to start functioning. After couple of meetings, the members shown interest to revive their SHG. As Sal leaves are available in plenty in the nearby forest area, the P-NGO team motivated the SHG to take up leaf plate stitching business, which will ensure additional income to the SHG members.

The members agreed to the proposal and started Sal leaf stitching. Each member used to



collect about 1500 Sal leaves every alternate day from their nearby forest area. It takes about 3-4 hours to collect 1500 Sal leaves. After full day of sun drying, they stitch the leaves into plate. About 7-8 leaves are stitched to one plate and they pack 60 stitched plates into a bundle called as 'Chacki'. So, 1500 Sal leaves collected by the members are hand stitched to about 180 plates. The members of Pari SHG take this activity in their leisure time.

The P-NGO Team coordinated with the traders, who collect the leaf plates from the door steps of each VSS on daily basis at Rs. 40/- per chacki. In an average,

each SHG member comfortably manage to stitch about 25-30 Chaki every month and earn up to Rs.1,000/- to Rs. 1200.- as an additional income every month. This continued for more than a year. Now, the SHG members are being motivated by the P-NGO team to take a step forward and to move to machine stitching, which gives better price. The SHG members agreed to the proposal and project staff are coordinating with different agencies like OLM, Bank etc. for availing sewing machine for the purpose.

Additional income to the tune of Rs. 1,000/- per month for each member has boosted them to



expand their business. It has contributed significantly to manage their household better than before. Now, these members are also more careful for protection of the forest assigned to them so that they can continue Sal leaf collection and their business in a sustainable manner.

Vermiculture as IGA boosts family income in Raikakchhar VSS of Rourkela Division under AJY

STORY

06

SMC work carried out in the forest area benefits adjacent agricultural fields by increasing subsoil moisture and resulting in bumper crop yield. VSS members are happy to see the betterment of their household economy.

Raikakchhar (Fatakona) is a tribal village in Raikakchhar G.P under Rajgangpur FMU of Rourkela DMU. It is a hilly and forested village and comes under Sunakhan section and Kutunia beat of Rourkela Forest Division. A kachha road is the only means of commutation to this village. Altogether, the village consists of 47 households, out of which, 42 households belong to SC community and rest 5 families from other categories. The total population of the village is 269. All the families come under BPL categories as per 2011 census.

The villagers mostly depend upon agriculture and daily wages for their livelihood. There is no irrigation facility and hence villagers depend on monsoon for their farming activities and cultivate their land during rainy season only.

All the farmers were cultivating their land in conventional way and largely using chemical fertilizer and pesticides, but no organic manure. They have never used / oriented on simple technique like line sowing method, which has potential of better yield. In education front, 78% of people in this village are literate. However, most of the people stop educating their children at class five/six/seven.

The VSS was formed during the year 2016-17 with the intervention of Ama Jangle Yojana. The VSS was allotted 61 ha of forest area for protection & management. The P-NGO team organized regular meeting with the committee members to educate them on sustainable forest management and participatory community development processes. This

continuous effort evoked interest and willingness of people for attending and participating in the meetings of VSS. The appreciable fact was that most of women members were actively participating in the meeting. Gradually, the VSS members had started actively participating in forest patrolling, prevention of forest fire, theft etc. In order to improve their livelihood, the Partner-NGO team regularly interacted with the VSS members. During the interactions, VSS members had proposed to take up community development activities such as irrigation facility to their agricultural land, improved communication facilities etc.

On livelihood front, the P-NGO team and AJY coordinator put forth different short-term income

generation options such as NTFP collection, small scale business, poultry, preparation of vermin compost etc through SHG. Vivid discussion took place with VSS members on every aspects such as fund requirement, marketing, capacity building, follow up etc. Some SHGs proposed to take up poultry and other small scale business as a means of livelihood. But few VSS members also expressed their desire to take up the preparation of vermi-compost activity in their village.

The proposal to establish the vermi-compost unit was shared to FMU Chief and DMU Chief to find the ways to proceed ahead. DMU Chief, Rourkela approached Dalmia Bharat Foundation, Rajgangpur to extend possible support to materialize the desire of the villagers in establishing the vermiculture unit. The management of Dalmia Bharat Foundation, Rajgangpur assured their cooperation and assistance for the purpose and to provide financial assistance for capacity building of VSS members to establish the vermi-compost unit from their CSR fund.

Subsequently, training programmes on preparation of vermi-compost was organized at their village in March 2017. 12 members of the VSS expressed their interest to take up this activity and decided to construct vermi-compost units of 7'x3.5'x3' size, which costs about Rs. 4000/- per unit. Dalmia Bharat Foundation, Rajgangpur agreed to support Rs.2000/- for each unit and the rest was borne by the beneficiaries. With the overall supervision of the project staff and P-NGO team the vermi-compost pits were prepared in 90 days. Now, each beneficiary gets about 3-4 qntl of vermi-compost every year of worth Rs. 4500/- to Rs. 6000/-. As on date, 32 VSS members have established vermi-compost units in this VSS. They use this vermin compost in their own field for paddy cultivation and the balance quantities are being sold in local markets.

Apart from this, through the project, villagers are motivated and trained to adopt SRI method of cultivation, line sowing method, use of organic manure for cultivation. After seeing the



Vermiculture Training at Raikakchhar VSS

benefits derived out of vermi-compost and other improved methods of cultivation adopted by the beneficiaries, other members of the village are also interested to start these kind of activities. The success of establishing vermi-compost units has been an example for many nearby villages to adopt the similar practices not only as a source of additional income but also to promote agricultural activities with better yield.

**Community Development through convergence:
Success Story of Rajulkonda VSS of Malkangiri Division under Ama Jangala Yojana**

**STORY
07**

**Income generating activities help to reduce the dependency of the members of Rajulkonda VSS on the forest leading to better conservation of forest as well as the wildlife.
The community development and convergence activities successfully undertaken by the VSS in collaboration with Malkangiri Forest Division had led to the award of Best VSS in the Division.**

Rajulkonda (Maa Dalkhai VSS) was formed with the assignment of 50Ha. forest area to look after in the year of 2016 by the Forest Department and in the year 2017 the VSS was included in Ama jangala Yojana (AJY) with the commitment of the villagers to

ensure sustainable management of assigned area in a participatory mode.

Earlier, the villagers were traditionally habituated with podu cultivation and collection and selling of NTFP produces like



Tamarind, Sal leaves with broom and dry firewood in nearby market as the livelihood options for survival. The per capita income of the families of this VSS is very low. The seasonal crop production from the degraded agriculture land due to soil erosion was very poor. Most of the time they were unemployed, the children were suffering from inadequate nutrition and poor hygiene.

After the VSS was adopted under AJY, the VSS members have started playing an important role in protection and regeneration of forests through participatory forest management in JFM mode. However, on livelihood front, the villagers were struggling to have assured source of income to meet their basic needs. The Project Authorities including the P-NGO team discussed with the VSS members on the possible fronts to improve the livelihoods of the people of the village. All villagers during preparation of their Micro Plan, indicated several community development activities and Income Generating Activities as well.

Based on the desire and willingness of the VSS members, the Forest Department took initiative to implement the Govt. Schemes like MGNREGS, OLM, Mo Pokhori Yojana, PM Ujjala Yojana, Job Cards issues, SBRSETI, PMAY, PMGSY & KVK schemes, CBJ education pvt. ltd. etc. to the village through convergence.

Many livelihood initiatives were successfully taken up by the VSS. 36 families are associated in vegetable cultivation with the assistance through convergence. The beneficiaries are earning to the

tune of Rs.5000 to Rs. 10000/- per family per month for the last 3 years. Stitching of Sal leaf plates and cups are also being taken up as income generation activity by some SHGs. Moreover, other activities such as hill broom plantation, mushroom cultivation etc. have been taken up by the VSS members as a sustainable source of income. Kendu leaves collection has increased to an extent of 10200 Kerries during 2017-18 and hence the village has been provided with a permanent Phadi house by the kendu leaves organization.

Further, not a single fire incidence has been detected in the VSS assigned area. In the forest management aspect, the VSS members along with the Forest Department undertook the Silvicultural operations as well as staggered trench works for improving regeneration status of the forests. A mixed plantation over 20Ha was also taken up. Under NFFWP plantation, Teak, Jafra and

other quick growing species were planted and successfully established. Silvicultural operations were taken-up under ANR (FDA scheme) successfully with full participation of VSS members.

Most of the schemes visualized by the VSS members during the Micro planning process have been successfully implemented. This has benefitted the villagers by providing sustainable livelihood opportunities to the villagers. Based on these development works carried out by the VSS members, in the year of 2019 Rajulkonda was selected as the best VSS of Malkangiri Forest Division.



Convergence Activities by Rajulkonda VSS under Malkangiri Forest Division

Successful Livelihood Initiatives by Kalahandi North Division under AJY Scheme

STORY

08

“The community initiatives by the Kalahandi North Forest Division through livelihood support to the VSSs and SHGs have resulted in un-breakable bond and high level of confidence building between the Forest Dependent and village communities. In return, the communities are sincerely and enthusiastically protecting their neighbourhood forests.”



Ama Jungala Yojana (AJY) is a flagship scheme of the Government of Odisha. This scheme is being implemented in JFM mode. Under this scheme, protection and management of forest and wildlife is being done with the active participation of communities. Livelihood improvement of the forest dependent communities is one of the most important aspect of this scheme.

In case of Kalahandi North Division, in order to ensure timely implementation of livelihood programs, initiative was taken by the Division to utilize the fund under the ‘Plantation Contingency’ for purchasing various machines for distribution to the different SHGs in the Division. Thanks to the PCCF (Projects) who had given timely approval for this initiative and thus following processing machines were purchased for the purpose.

- Paper plate making machine,
- Papad making machine
- Sewing machine
- Rice huller
- Mini Dal mill machine

During the Microplanning processes, the skill and need of the VSSs/ SHGs for undertaking various



Handing over of leaf plate making unit to the SHG members by PCCF, Odisha

Income Generating Schemes were identified. Based on availability of resources, the machines were distributed to the best performing VSSs and subsequently, the same were handed over to SHGs functioning under these VSSs. An agreement was made between VSS and SHGs and a monthly rent for the machines was fixed which SHGs deposit in the VSS account every month. 36 SHGs from 29 VSSs have received one or more such machines free of cost. Now all these VSSs and SHGs are utilizing these machines optimally and a good amount of income being generated. Income generated in the last 4-5 month is in lakhs and it has improved their standard of living. Now these SHGs have become financially independent.

It is not the first time Forest Department has taken-up such initiatives. Even in the past various such initiatives have been taken, which have yielded good results. Last year also various tent items like utensils, Dari, table and chair etc. were provided out of the ‘Plantation contingency fund’ to all the VSSs under AJY. Further, more than 50 Sewing machines have been distributed by Kalahandi North Division to various SHGs free of cost. During COVID-19 pandemic, these SHGs have prepared more than 5000 nos. of masks. Many of these SHGs sold these masks to either district administration or to



The DFO, Kalahandi (N) examining the quality of plates made by the VSS members



Staff and Members of Ulisirka during Sameeksha-2019

mask vendors. During shortage of the masks, SHGs of AJY played a vital role for supply of mask to various mask vendors of Kalahandi District.

These community facilitation / development measures are

helpful in building confidence among Forest Department and village communities, and in return the communities are dedicatedly protecting the forests and wildlife. Due to such initiatives taken by Kalahandi North Forest Division,

many VSSs in the Division are performing much better and one such high-performing VSS Uლისirka received “Best VSS of Odisha under Ama Jangala Yojana during the year 2019”.

Sanjiuli Tarini Women Farmers Services Producers' Company: A Success Story of Sal leaf plate trade by community members

STORY
09

Sanjiuli Tarini Women Farmers Services Producers' Company Ltd. is a transformation from subsistence level to commercial grade marketing of Sal leaf plates and economic empowerment of women from simple SHG members to share holders of a producer company.



Sanjiuli Tarini Women Farmers Services Producers' Company Ltd. is a registered producer company having its production unit at Sanjiuli village under Ghatgaon Range of Keonjhar Forest Division. The village is situated at a distance of 30 km from Keonjhar town, towards Harichandanpur.

Sanjiuli Sal Leaf Cluster was established during 2013-14, consisting of 9 VSSs and 23 women SHGs (266 members) from the locality. Out of the total members of the producer company, 143 members are actively participating in production and value addition activities in the cluster. The primary objective of the cluster is to enhance the economic condition of the member families through

promotion of uniform quality of Sal leaf plates. This involves a series of activities pertaining to collection, sorting and stitching of leaf plates/cups and selling in bulk to the trader. Initially, the SHG members were individually collecting Sal leaves from nearby forests, sun-drying it and selling it locally in hand stitched form, there by getting a very low price. There was a huge demand for machine stitched good quality leaf plates in nearby towns. Considering this demand, availability of raw materials and committed women power, by active involvement of Keonjhar Forest Division in collaboration with the VSS and SHG members formed 'Sanjiuli Laxminarayan Sal Leaf Cluster' with the leadership of Ms Taramani

Nayak, the President and the Secretary, Ms Jashoda Mansingh. All the members of 23 SHGs in 09 VSSs are actively involved in cluster development and product promotion activities.

Subsequently a RCC building was constructed with an estimated cost of Rs. 14.18 Lakh. Five numbers of Sal leaf pressing machines and 5 leaf stitching machines were provided to the cluster members to start manufacturing Sal leaf plates in bulk quantities. Electronic weighing machines were also provided from the project fund to encourage the members. With this cluster approach of trading and new infrastructure, they could be able to produce bulk quantities of Sal leaf plates in a common place and sell those to the fair-price-

traders with a uniform price, which is practically higher than the price they usually get. Now they are able to earn 40% more profit than the previous traditional approach. Meanwhile, ALC India Ltd is helping the members by preparing a feasible Business Development Plan (BDP) and implementing it at ground level for further strengthening of the cluster. Subsequently the product cluster was registered under FPO Act-2013 on 09.04.2016 with the name "Sanjiuli Tarini Women Farmers' Services Producers' Company Ltd" and got registered by the Dy. Register of Cooperative Affairs; Govt. of India.

In addition to the main bank account of the company, all

members are having their individual savings account in the local bank. The additional income earned through better price realization and dividends are saved in these accounts. The cluster money is often used to provide loan support to its members to meet emergency needs, such as health related expenses, daughter's marriage, children's education etc.

In the mean while, NABARD has agreed to support the cluster for boosting the production capacity and other developmental activities. Several trainings were conducted to develop the capacity of the members in stitching of Sal leaf plates by using mechanized technology. Further, 22 numbers of sewing machines, 02 numbers of

molding and packaging machines were procured from the funds received from ITDA through convergence initiative under Ama Jangala Yojana. The cluster building was also electrified with a separate 15 KVA transformer with the company ownership. It has been estimated that, the upgraded version of mechanized infrastructure would provide a regular employment to nearly 20 persons throughout the year and 60 persons as part time wage earners. With the new technology and effort, it is expected to generate a net profit of Rs. 15-20 lakhs per annum, which will ultimately benefit the stakeholders of the Company.

Success story of Bandapai Vana Surakshya Samiti under Kashipur Forest Range, Rayagada Forest Division **STORY 10**

The villagers are now fully cooperating with Forest Department in protecting forests from illegal felling, detecting forest offences, extinguishing forest fires and arresting Podu cultivation. Distress migration of labourers from the village have almost been stopped.

Bandapai, a small village under Kashipur range of Rayagada Forest Division consists of 60 families and a population of 245. All the families of the village belong to OBC and Scheduled Caste categories. Prior to intervention of Ama Jangala Yojana, the villagers were mainly dependant on subsistence agriculture, either cultivating their own land or doing Podu cultivation in encroached hill slopes. A very few were also doing dairy farming. The land ownership of the inhabitants is very low. Very often migration of people to outside was noticed in search of livelihood due to lack of job opportunity in and around the village.

Bandapai VSS was formed and registered in October 1999 with



assigned forest of 50 ha for protection and management under JFM. However, till the VSS came under AJY in 2015-16, the pressure

on the forest was acute due to collection of timber & firewood. People were using the forest as pasture and they used to set fire in

the forest in every summer with a belief to get good grass after a shower. The villagers were not at all aware of the need for forest conservation. After implementation of AJY, a series of meetings & trainings were conducted to create awareness among the VSS members on forest protection, conservation and sustainable management. They were also explained the long-term

benefit of forest protection. Activities like AR Plantation over 10 ha and ANR without Gap plantation over 50 ha brought greenery back in the forest and it also gave ample opportunity to provide livelihood in the village. Till date, about 5653 man-days have already been generated in the VSS to provide employment to the native migrants. Due to availability of wage earning avenues within the

village, the inter & intra state migration of labourers has been reduced to a great extent. Now the people of the VSS are fully motivated to protect their assigned forest. The villagers are also helping forest staff in protection and detection of forest offence and also in extinguishing forest fires as and when required. Podu cultivation has become a history in the village at present time.

Women-initiated Gariakhaman VSS shows the way towards sustainable forest management and protection of Forest Eco-system; a success story.

STORY
11

Gariakhaman, a small village in Panimura Grampanchayat of Naktideul Block of Sambalpur District exists under the lap of Landakote Reserve Forest. A Vana Surakhya Samiti was formed in the village during the year 2019. Since then, the VSS has steadily gained prosperity by protecting the forest and contributing in conservation of Landakote Forest ecosystem. The disciplined and determined community has also managed to work in harmony with available forest resources. Most interestingly, the women of the villages came forward to form the VSS for conserving their natural

habitat. In this small tribal village, the female members from each family protects their assigned forest every day in a systematic manner. Besides, many income generation activities have been carried out by the women members through Ama Jangala Yojana, which have helped them to increase the economic status of the villagers. The successful VSS efforts are prominently visible through their fire protection measures for which the fire incidence declines drastically. Apart from this, poaching has been arrested completely inside the Reserve Forest area in the VSS. Soil and

moisture conservation measures and forestry activities are ideally implemented through AJY, the impact of which is clearly visible in the assigned area through profuse vegetative growth of the forest plants and increased water table in the water bodies in and around the VSS assigned area. Apart from these, illicit felling has been completely stopped in the entire forest area. Sustainable usage of the forest produces among the villagers has been promoted through AJY for which the entire assigned area is a model in implementation of joint forest management in the state.



Forestry and SMC interventions by Gariakhaman VSS members

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

Editorial Board

Editor-in-Chief: **Dr. Sudarsan Panda, IFS**
PCCF & Project Director, OFSDP
Editor: **Shri Prem Kumar Jha, IFS**
Addl. Project Director (A&F)
Co-Editor: **Shri Bijay Ram Senapati**
SMS (T&P), Ama Jangala Yojana