



# Science & Technology Resource Centre Gondwana University, Gadchiroli

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## From CPO's Desk

### **STRC as an Entrepreneurial Support and a Rural Business Facilitation Centre**

Indian growth story is directly linked with the rural entrepreneurship development. Farming community is now quite aware about the value of their resources and their usefulness. Similarly, forest and agro based industries are emerging in the rural areas giving a powerful base for rural entrepreneurship. The potential is endless.

Knowing the importance of the role of small-scale rural enterprise in the growth and development of rural economy, Science and Technology Resource Centre (STRC) has incorporated a Revenue Stream '**STRC Rural Technology and Enterprise for Development Foundation (STRC-RuTED) Foundation**' within its fold.

STRC- RuTED Foundation is mandated to encourage and promote young entrepreneurs and facilitate establishment and growth of multiple rural enterprises centred around available natural resources such as non-timber forest produces (NTFPs), agri-allied farm produce, bamboo-based products and grow-out fish and value-added fish products etc., employing applicable R & D for low-cost rural technologies leading to livelihood enhancement of local communities in the region. **STRC-RuTED Foundation**, would provide seed funding for establishment, growth of small enterprises, establish linkages with financial institutions and also invest in periodic skill development of young entrepreneurs, while creating a mechanism to gain share in profit in the long run.

STRC's prime focus would be to develop Rural Enterprise such as; Primary Processing Centers for NTFPs/ Med Plants benefiting the primary collectors, Common Facility Centers for Bamboo artisans, Ornamental Fish Breeding & Rearing Units for women SHGs members and Farmer Producer Companies agri-allied farm produce for enterprising local farmers.

For market and value chain assessment, STRC would conduct surveys to generate demand and to establish sustained business linkages for young entrepreneurs. Action would be taken to impart knowledge and create facilities for post-harvest management, Good storage practices and supply chain management

STRC believes primary level processing of major NTFPs would fetch higher money while generating more demand, hence, efforts are being put to establish Primary Processing Units at Taluka level.

To facilitate the promotion and sale of products, STRC would create web portals in line with marketmirchi.com, run campaigns such as Mera Mobile Mera Market, and also establish strategically positioned product outlets, and showcase its products through various exhibitions and Kisan Melas.

*(The author heads the Science and Technology Resource Centre,  
Gondwana University, Gadchiroli)*





## **Innovative Projects ( through Mobile Demonstration Unit - MDU ) in the Pipeline:**

### **a) Forest and Environment Education for School Children; beyond classrooms, beyond textbooks !**

As they say, charity begins at home, or at school or wherever it is, it should start early! Similarly, the solution to many environmental problems lies in our attitude towards it. Be it awareness to on health and hygiene, cleanliness of our surroundings or the realization to sustainably conserve our natural resources by re-using and recycling wherever possible. In any case, this behavioral must be inculcated at an early stage and the best way to attempt to bring about a change in the society is through children.

Through this project STRC will execute specifically designed experiential modules customized to cater to the needs of this region with the aim to develop a locale specific environment education program in schools. This intervention is envisioned to enhance critical and creative thinking skills through experiential modules among young minds in the 12-14 age group. The issues that will be dealt with include linking concepts such as personal health and hygiene, biodiversity/forest conservation and sustainability, environment, renewable energy and local governance.

Initially, STRC would focus on 10 schools around Gadchiroli for this innovative initiative.

### **b) Farmers' Open School; enhanced knowledge for improved productivity**

Through a comprehensive need-based assessment to find out gaps in knowledge of modern agricultural tools/techniques/practices, optimum land utilization, factors of sustainability, productivity and post-harvest management, STRC has conceived the idea of Farmers' Open School (FOS) in Gadchiroli.

The concept of FOS will offer a knowledge enabled platform to local farmers to introduce and promote range of innovative, need-based methods and services including and not restricted to modern agriculture practices, Package of Practices (POP's), Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), low levels of farm mechanization/ low-cost tools, Integrated farm-based practices (Fishery and Backyard Poultry) and facilitate linkages with various agricultural scheme of the Govt.

Currently, STRC is engaged in developing the concept, identifying a focused geography and developing specific modules for FOS.

## **Plenary talk on “Post-Harvest Management of Agriculture & Allied Commodities” Webinar Address to Vocational Students at National E-Conference at Tuljaram Chaturchand College Baramati**

Program Coordinator STRC participated in a plenary talk on opportunities in the Post-Harvest Management of agriculture and allied commodities. He shared his experiences on different state and central government projects completed focusing on the effective planning of how to sustainably manage the natural resources for the future. He introduced few of the Non Timber Forest Produce (NTFP) commodities to the students which has an opportunity to form enterprises in this sector. He focused on amount of agri. and allied produced is lost due to improper post-harvest handling operations resulting the gap between the gross production and net availability with mentioning the reasons losses at farm gate. He explained the significant importance of market linkages with production planning with its efficient distribution to gain the maximum returns with the use of technical methods. Interventions with its proper implementations of scientific and technological methods of post-harvest operations has gained lots of attentions in the present scenario, so he urged vocational students to use scientific and technological tools to add significant value to agri. and allied commodities at farm gate so as the enterprises to be formed in rural as well as in tribal areas for up liftment of livelihoods.

## **STRC Address Tribal Youth on Opportunities in Forest Resources (especially bamboo)**

### **Gram Sabha Level Volleyball and Kabaddi Competition**

Recently during 22nd to 26th Jan 2021, Kondawahi, Gramsabha arranged a five-day Youth Competition of Volleyball and Kabaddi for tribal youth from where STRC was invited to address the Tribal youth on opportunities in Forest resources, especially in Bamboo. A four-member team attended and addressed the youths in the audience who had gathered in numbers.

Tribal youths of Gadchiroli region, especially school/ college dropout choose to migrate to secure their livelihood to the adjacent districts/states despite abundance of natural resources around. STRC would strive to give technical knowhow and capacity building support on optimum resource utilization, be it land, water or forest. STRC has trained a group of youth as Master Artisans at Kondawahi and focusing on developing it as a 'Model Bamboo Craft Village'. To provide an entrepreneurial platform to young artisans, a Bamboo Gotul (Common Facility Centre) has been established.

## **STRC Premise 1st Anniversary**

On 20th February 2021, Science and Technology Resource Centre (STRC) completed one year of operation from its new premise within Gondwana University Gadchiroli. To mark the occasion, an event was organized at STRC in presence of STRC team and University officials.

Padma Vibhushan Dr. Anil Kakodkar, Chairman, RGSTC, graced the occasion with his august presence and addressed the gathered audience through an online platform. Dr. Kakodkar congratulated STRC for its efforts so far and urged STRC strive for excellence in the S & T based and knowledge enabled development of the region with effective collaboration at University level.

Dr. C. D Mayee, Chairman, GB-STRC and Prof. Srinivasa Varkhedi Hon'ble Vice Chancellor, GUG wished well for STRC and urged to create sustainable impact on ground.





# Program Team's Corner

## Creating Business Opportunities through STRC RuTED

Structured value chain system brings more efficiency, productivity and earnings at the farm gate/ source, resulting into adequate importance on the growth and development. Strengthening the agriculture and allied including the Non-Timber Forest Produce value chain structure would be achieved through interventions of post-harvest operations to convert the raw produce into consumable form with market attention. From beginning to end, in the process of development of modern value chains at national and regional-levels, raw producers can gain from dissemination of technologies and market potential with its linkages. Growth and development of agricultural value chains for local and external markets are considered as powerful tools to change the socio-economic template of rural areas.

Post-harvest operations of agriculture & allied such as aquaculture, bamboo cultivations, NTFP and Medicinal Plants includes a series of scientific and technological procedures of handling, storing, preserving and transporting the commodities, leading to enhanced efficiency, productivity and minimization of losses. The post-harvest operations of these commodities fundamentally determine the final quality acceptable for further consumptions / processing purposes to serve as food or feed. It also allows the effective planning of how to sustainably manage finite resources for the future so that the environment can be sustained for future generations. The scientific post-harvest process at the source of production and improved supply chain help reduce the losses of raw produce till it reaches the market resulting conservation of commodities.

STRC Rural Technology and Enterprise for Development (STRC RuTED) Foundation will primarily address the need for effective utilization of resources (land, water, forest, human resource etc.) of local communities of Gadchiroli and help them understand the commercial aspects of available natural resources. STRC RuTED would encourage the commodity specific farmers for business promotions providing all the technical and financial support for the setting up basic infrastructures like primary processing centers, common facility centers, storage structure, pack houses, driers, packaging machines, honey collection boxes etc. for identified commodities. STRC RuTED will ensure the utilization of commodities through market linkages to connect the region to Global market. Creations of common platform for the external and internal stakeholders to promote the business activities with the help of scientific and technological tools. STRC RuTED would encourage and promote young entrepreneurs, facilitate technology and business platforms, make provisions for seed funding for establishment, growth of enterprise such as FPOs, SHGs etc, and would invest in skill development of local youth especially women.

*The author is a Program Coordinator at STRC-GUG*

### Business Opportunities for Rural Livelihoods

