

## From CPO's Desk

### STRC for Sustainable Education Program Development



Traditionally India has been a sustainable society. In order to promote the value of sustainable development in education, the Indian government directed its various education departments to actively work on an Environment Education (EE) component as part of the curriculum.

Education for sustainable development promotes the development of the knowledge, skills, understanding, values and actions required to create a sustainable world, which ensures environmental protection and conservation, promotes social equity and encourages economic sustainability.

For the Gadchiroli region, which is heavily forested, largely tribal and among the most underprivileged part of the state, Science and Technology Resource Centre (STRC) sees a realistic possibility of leveraging local resources, relevant knowledge and technology for capacity building of local youths at different layers such as Artisans, Students and Faculties to promote knowledge enabled development.

As part of the core mandate, STRC is striving to create a template for a sustainable education ecosystem. STRC, in collaboration with Gondwana University and other National/Regional institutes, will be introducing multiple diploma and certificate courses. Courses such as; under graduate Diploma in Bamboo Entrepreneurship and Design, Sustainable Harvesting Practices for important forest produce, post-harvest management and supply chain, Farmers' School, Web based Community Interaction Platform (WCIP) and Environment Education in schools among others to create a cadre of appropriately skilled youths. Aim is to go beyond the regular vocational slant and to develop a knowledge and technology enabled workforce.

For faculties, researchers and even NGOs with bona-fide inclination for applicable R & D, STRC has introduced Science and Technology Application Scheme.

Considering the existing realities, it is of paramount importance that we play the role of a Community Enabler and develop knowledge and skill driven communities which are self-reliant and progressive.

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

## **New employee Induction program at STRC**

STRC follows the best practices to have reasonably competent young professionals onboard. To acquaint them in to the job role, a two-day comprehensive induction program was organized for the newly joined employees this month. It was intended to help them to get smoothly inducted into the fold. This induction program also encompassed sessions on the code of conduct and standards of behavior expected of each staff member.

As per the program schedule, it all started with a formal welcome, followed by allocation of desks, distribution of the induction kit and a round of formal introduction. Following which, the CPO & Head, in his inaugural address to the new recruits, briefed about organization's history, mandate, values and various organizational policies, followed by an introduction to STRC's core program verticals and ongoing activities. Respective vertical/ domain leads presented detailed account of their vertical and current status of operation.

On the second day of the induction program, field visits to few on-going project sites were organised to apprise new staff on the respective project activities and to let them have a feel of the geography and communities.

## **Exposure visit to Anand Niketan, College and Anandwan, Warora**

### ***To understand relevant functioning and for possible collaboration***

STRC GUG team made an exploratory visit to Anand Niketan College and Anandwan Campus in Warora to explore, observe and understand the multidimensional and multi-functional approach of Anandwan towards supporting and enabling socially disadvantaged people to enhance their lives and livelihoods through self-discovery and empowering them to contribute to society.

Dr. Mrunal Kale, Principal Anand Niketan College, Warora led the visiting STRC team during exposure visit. There were discussions on linkages with government, national and international organizations, the need based approach, the process of organizing people and linking them with technology, skill upgradation training etc. The STRC team visited most of the multidimensional institution, including Apiculture site, *Atal Ghan-Van* project site, textile units, wood and handcrafting units, Agriculture college units, etc, engaged fruitfully in 49 divergent and productive traits and disciplines.

Team also interacted with various faculties regarding different social upliftment initiatives at Anandwan and possible collaboration opportunities with STRC. This field excursion has widened STRC team developed significant understanding about the organization, its functioning, challenges, organizational strategies, initiatives and most importantly the culture of organization that generates a sense of belongingness and creates progressive mindset at every level. One of the key understandings that participants mentioned and appreciated here is the self-sustainable and entrepreneurial approach of the organization. The tour helped us to evolve many ideas for possible collaboration in future. STRC appreciated Dr. Kale for his valuable time and support.



## 'Fishery for Rural Development': Head, STRC addresses the Students through a webinar as part of the NSS camp at College of Fishery Sciences, Nagpur

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Shri Ashis Gharai, CPO & Head STRC presented a detailed account of STRC's varied S & T based interventions including Aquaculture based livelihoods in Gadchiroli. At the outset, he apprised young fishery students on the vast scope of aquaculture in the Gadchiroli region and encouraged them to participate and contribute in Aquaculture based livelihood development efforts of STRC. He also emphasized that aquaculture can and does play an important role in rural development and the opportunities and challenges for effectively integrating aquaculture into rural development.. He expressed his concern saying, we must recognize that aquaculture's potential to contribute to rural development has not been fully realized in many parts of the world. On the other hand, the integration of aquaculture into rural development to date has been associated with both beneficial and inauspicious trends. He stated that effective rural development comes through sound governance and with participation at all levels, sustainable development will be people-oriented, integrated, and have a multi-sectoral agenda. Policy coherence must be a primary objective, developed through wide-ranging public involvement. Much greater emphasis on advocacy is required to raise awareness of the role of Aquaculture in Rural Development and to raise the stakes for institutional change. Special attention is required to empower and link stakeholders to policy decisions. Experience does not yield a universal model for integrating aquaculture into rural development. Thus, there are significant challenges in developing holistic, people-centered rural development plans where the role for aquaculture is determined by an understanding of rural livelihood scenario.

### 17-year-old develops an Incubator!

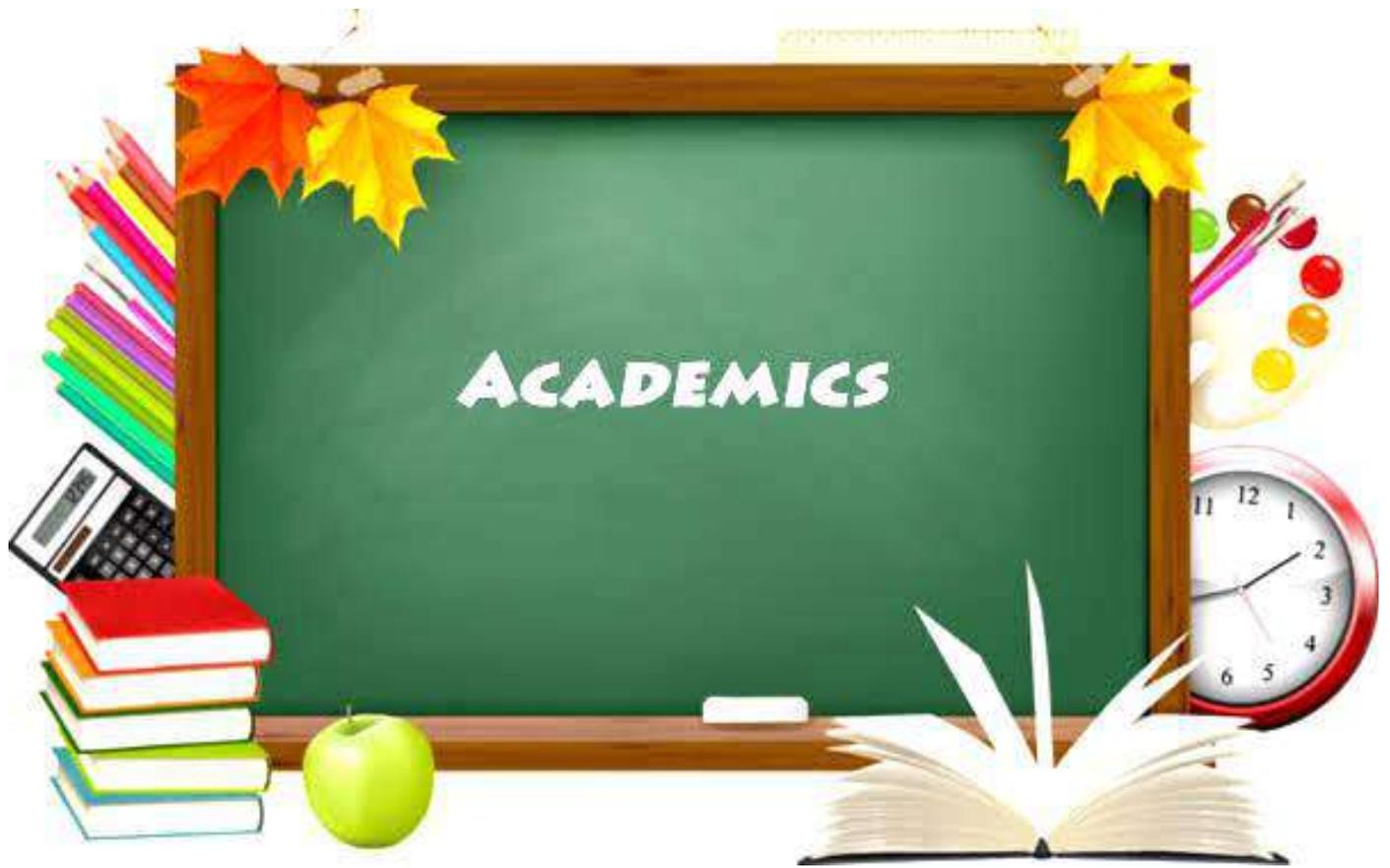
"I felt sad looking at those eggs lying unattended, unhatched and wanted to do something about it" says Vishal Thakre, a young 17-year-old from a remote village in Armori block (Gadchiroli). Vishal, who is **the son of an STRC beneficiary** (under the Integrated Fish Farming initiative) is in his 11th standard.

Vishal took his interest in gadgets and technology to another level and tried to experiment with the available resources as he observed failed hatching in his father's poultry shed due to absence of tools for controlled temperature needed for successful hatching. Hence, he set out to develop an incubator using paper cartons and a temperature indicator machine. It took him about two weeks to develop the tool with a total cost of about thousand rupees only while the incubators available in the market generally cost in the range of 6-8 thousand rupees.

"He has always been a curious child more inclined towards tech, tools and gadgets, I am happy that he managed to develop something so useful, hatching has become easier since" says his proud father. The father-son duo has successfully facilitated 100 hatchings so far.

STRC in its efforts to develop and popularize low-cost rural technologies, would encourage such young minds to be on board and provide them with necessary inputs and support.





## The Scope of Academic Programs for Tribal Youth

The development of underprivileged communities is a dynamic process especially for the youths which has been overlooked more often specifically in context of tribal communities. The key component in developmental process is the creation of interactive platforms, channels of interaction and communication among diverse local groups that are otherwise directed more towards their individual interests. We at STRC, understand the role of youth in the community development process and have taken a step forward to facilitate such interactions and grooming relationships through the development of academic programs including certificate courses, diploma courses and capacity building workshops which are solely application oriented and experiential skill enhancement modules. Through these academic programs local youths will interact among themselves and would begin to mutually understand common needs and develop required knowledge and expertise in relevant subject leading to entrepreneurial mindset. An understanding of tribal youth motivations and efficacy to this kind of engagement are important so that we can maximize these valuable resources. A well designed and holistic approach has been taken into consideration as a tool to motivate, mobilize and enable local youth to have informed choices of livelihoods in this knowledge era.

*The author is a Scientific Officer at STRC-GUG*

