

STRC NEWSLETTER

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Technology | Enterprise | Development



**Science & Technology Resource Centre
Gondwana University, Gadchiroli**

A centre of excellence for sustainable value creation, conceived and funded by Rajiv Gandhi Science and Technology Commission (RGSTC), Mumbai, Govt. of Maharashtra.

STRC is a registered society,
'Science & Technology Resource
Centre Foundation Gadchiroli',
under the Societies Registration
Act, 1860 (XXI of 1860).

Organizational Sustainability : Strategies and Challenges Ahead !

The term sustainability is broadly used to indicate programs, initiatives and actions aimed at the preservation of a particular resource. However, it actually refers to four distinct areas: human, social, economic and environmental - known as the four pillars of sustainability.

According to Forbes, if an organization or a business entity intends to become sustainable, the leadership group must have a clearly defined methodology for achieving this goal. There are not enough resources for starting down a path of sustainability that doesn't produce a viable result and then starting all over again.

Knowing what sustainability means to the organization, followed by a structured assessment as the starting point, the best way to ensure an organization is on the right track is to get feedback and more feedback and never stop getting feedback. Nurturing the right collaborations with the right people and inculcating the fundamentals of sustainability into the roles and responsibilities of the team is vital. Creating a vision to anchor the team and the organization helps in devising strategies to achieve the desired goal.

In the last 6 years or so that Science & Technology Resource Centre (STRC) expended, building on the core mandate of science and technology-based development in the Gadchiroli region, a very specific vertical based approach was adopted. Efforts in the last few years have reaped benefits as a result of the replicable implementation models in bamboo craft, scientific fisheries, medicinal plant initiatives and human capacity development across the board. This has led us to believe that having an integrated approach towards building capacities through leveraging knowledge, skill and low-cost technologies, is the key to sustain the impact of the program. STRC also believes that implementation of specific initiatives must be centred around having a core facility as the 'driver' on one end and a cadre of knowledge driven community level workforce as 'change agents' on the other. The challenge lies in its collective understanding and persistent efforts to drive that change. We must understand that credibility of an organization is based on the tangible impact it

manages to create through its past and on-going programs. It also helps in building the trust and ownership among beneficiaries, government, policy makers and potential funding sources.

Hence, STRC must drive home the fact that best practices of sustainable value creation, and its wider adoption, commercialization of products and services, establishment of a progressively sustainable revenue model through social entrepreneurship are important to attain sustainability.



Shri Ashis Gharai

Chief Program Officer & Head,
Science & Technology Resource Centre
Gondwana University, Gadchiroli



Bridging the Educational Divide

Exploring ICT Integration in Rural Schools

Education is a powerful catalyst for social and economic development, yet a persistent digital divide exists between urban and rural schools. Information and Communication Technology (ICT) has the potential to bridge this gap, offering rural students access to a world of knowledge and opportunities. While urban schools have embraced this shift, rural schools often lag behind due to various challenges. This article delves into the significance of ICT integration in rural schools, the barriers hindering its implementation, and potential solutions.

However, the implementation of ICT in rural schools is not devoid of challenges.

Barriers and Solutions of ICT Use:

a. Infrastructure Challenges:

Rural areas often lack the necessary infrastructure, including reliable electricity and internet connectivity. This poses a significant hurdle for the effective use of ICT tools in education. Where mobile-based solutions (Mobile Demonstration Unit) can also be explored in regions where traditional internet infrastructure is not feasible.

b. Limited Resources:

Rural schools often face lack of financial resources obstruct the adoption of modern technology. However, employing cost effective and sustainable ICT solutions specifically designed for rural schools (Off-line/on-line A-V Modules) could be a viable approach to address this challenge.

c. Teacher Training:

Many teachers in rural areas are not familiar with the effective integration of ICT into their teaching methodologies also they have lack of clear goals for ICT use in schools. Therefore, comprehensive training programs should be implemented to equip teachers with the skills and confidence to integrate ICT seamlessly into their teaching practices (innovative TLMs). Workshops, online courses, and peer-to-peer learning can contribute to building educators' capacity.



Priyanka Durge

Jr. Scientific Officer
(Communication for Development
through ICT), STRC-GUG

Through our uniquely designed 'Environment Education Program for Tribal Schools' initiative, STRC dwells on the fundamentals of biodiversity using ICT platform. This highly effective module based curriculum engages the students proactively and provides an interactive learning experience. By visualizing the different species and their role in the ecosystem, students are able to develop a better understanding of the importance of biodiversity conservation.

ICT integration in rural schools is not only a necessity but also a transformative opportunity for enhancing the quality of education. Overcoming barriers and addressing teachers' attitudes are crucial steps in ensuring that no student is left behind in the digital age. By investing in infrastructure, providing financial support, and fostering a positive mindset among educators, we can pave the way for a more inclusive and technologically empowered future in rural education.

Source : <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1182651.pdf>

One Day Workshop cum Round Table Discussion on **'BAMBOO FOR GREEN ECONOMY'**



“Bamboo by the way of its multifarious applications and relatively faster growth is indeed a good case to promote socio-economic activity in areas where it is being cultivated on scale. Since Gadchiroli is one such area and STRC is already active there with bamboo constituting one of the active verticals, I feel we should consider hosting further programs on bamboo there”, urged Padma Vibhushan Dr. Anil Kakodkar, Chairman, RGSTC, Mumbai, Govt. of Maharashtra.

Accordingly, STRC organized a consultative deliberation among stakeholders through a one day workshop cum round table discussion on **Bamboo for Green Economy** at Gondwana University, Gadchiroli, on 25th January 2024.

This workshop was planned to bring together subject experts, practitioners, Industry experts and social entrepreneurs from various fields of bamboo to share their knowledge, exchange ideas, and collaboratively explore the immense potential of bamboo for building a green economy.



Shri Ashis Gharai, Chief Program Officer & Head, STRC in consultation with Dr. Prashant Bokare, Hon'ble Vice Chancellor, Gondwana University Gadchiroli, Shri

Girish Sohani, renowned development expert and Principal Advisor, BAIF and Dr. C. D. Mayee, Chairman, Governing Body, STRC, ensured that the objectives of the round table discussion were aligned on the lines of incorporating bamboo cultivation into existing agricultural systems, identifying bamboo species suitable for diverse climates, evaluating the economic and ecological benefits of different bamboo varieties, methods for large-scale bamboo propagation, cost-effective techniques to ensure consistent growth, Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for harvesting, efficient treatment methods for enhancing durability, standardized production of bamboo components for construction, opportunities for mass production of prefabricated bamboo elements and industry linkage for livelihood enhancement within the sector etc.

During the workshop, constructive deliberations on various aspects of Bamboo such as identification of suitable species, cultivation and propagation techniques, grading, treatment, structural use were discussed in great detail. Noted experts Dr. P. Tetali, Scientist, Plant Research, Shri Vinay Kolte, Bamboo Nursery, Bhor Pune, Shri Sanjeev



Karpe, Managing Director, Native Konbac Bamboo Products Pvt. Ltd., Shri Avinash Kumar, I.F.S., Director, Bamboo Research & Training Centre, Chichpalli, Smt. Nirupama Deshpande, Founder, Sampurna Bamboo Kendra, Melghat, Shri M. Shrinivasa Reddy, Director, Chandrapur Forest Academy amongst others including Dr. Narendra Shah, Member Secretary, RGSTC, Mumbai, Govt. of Maharashtra and Smt. Pragati Gokhale, Advisor, RGSTC, Nagpur Govt. of Maharashtra shared their in-depth research and industry experience during the technical sessions.

Consolidating the insightful suggestions from the participants and keeping the future roadmap in mind, STRC aims to generate a 'white paper' with enriched perspectives on bamboo incorporating viable strategies for leveraging its industrial and commercial use for the benefit of individuals and communities in the region.

Side Events of the Workshop



Pilot product range created by the students of undergraduate Diploma in Bamboo Entrepreneurship & Design

Inauguration of in-campus stall of Gondwana Craft



Customised Bamboo made Mobility Aids for persons with physical disability, designed and developed under STRC Assistance for S & T Application Scheme, in collaboration with VNIT, Nagpur.
Project P.I. : Prof. A. M. Kuthe



Joint meeting of the Governing Body and Program Advisory Board of STRC



The joint meeting of the Governing Body (GB) and Program Advisory Board (PAB) of Science & Technology Resource Centre (STRC), Gondwana University, Gadchiroli was held on January 26, 2024 in the august presence of Padma Vibhushan Dr. Anil Kakodkar, Chairman, Rajiv Gandhi Science and Technology Commission, Mumbai, Govt. of Maharashtra.

Hon'ble Vice Chancellor, Gondwana University Gadchiroli and Chairman, Program Advisory Board Dr. Prashant Bokare presided over the meeting and apprised the esteemed members on the significant progress made under the project. Chief Program Officer & Head, STRC and Member Secretary, GB & PAB - STRC, Shri. Ashis Gharai, during his presentation, elaborated on the notable developments and roadmap towards sustainability of the project.

Member Secretary, Rajiv Gandhi Science and Technology Commission, Mumbai, Govt. of Maharashtra, Dr. Narendra Shah, Principal Advisor, BAIF, Shri. Girish Sohani, Managing Director and CEO, MKCL, Dr. Veena Kamath, Director, Chandrapur Forest Academy, Shri. M. Srinivas Reddy, I.F.S., Advisor, RGSTC, Govt. of Maharashtra, Smt. Pragati Gokhale, and along with other eminent members, provided important insights on the development and future growth of the project during the meeting. The collective suggestions of the members and decisions taken based on the agenda points were recorded in the proceeding of the meeting. Board members unanimously expressed their happiness looking at the recent growth and overall impact the project has managed to create.

The meeting was followed by a visit to the sites under the scientific fishery project in Chamorshi block where Dr. Kakodkar and other eminent delegates interacted with the project investigators (MAFSU, Nagpur) and beneficiaries to understand technicalities and impact of the intervention.



A team of Project Investigators conducted monitoring visits to STRC's Aquaculture Project sites

Under the ongoing STRC funded scientific fishery project on 'Development of organized fish seed production, culture and marketing to ensure sustainable livelihood opportunities in aquaculture in Gadchiroli District' jointly implemented with Maharashtra Animal and Fishery Sciences University (MAFSU), Nagpur, multiple Portable Carp Hatcheries (PCHs) have been installed to promote fish breeding and production of improved quality fish-seeds in Chamorshi, Kurkheda and Korchi taluka of Gadchiroli.

Project Investigator, Dr. Prashant Telvekar, Assistant Professor, MAFSU, Nagpur and Co-Project Investigator, Shri Ajay Sahare, Scientific Officer, STRC, monitored and reviewed all the project sites and interacted with direct beneficiaries and members of the Fish Farmers' Interest Group (FIGs) during 11th to 15th January 2024. Breeding of common carp fish were successfully carried out on-site during the period.



India International Science Festival - 2023

India International Science Festival (IISF) – 2023 was organized by Department of Science and Technology (DST), Govt. of India during 17th to 20th January 2023 at Faridabad, Haryana. IISF's primary objective is to commemorate the world of science, making it accessible to all.

STRC was invited to represent Rajiv Gandhi Science and Technology Commission (RGSTC), Mumbai, Government of Maharashtra, in this festival as a successful experiment. During the 4 day science extravaganza, STRC showcased the variety of tribal products and practices under Gondwana Craft and used this platform to explore technical collaboration opportunities for S & T based development in bamboo and other STRC relevant sectors.

Exposures to such international platforms like IISF provides great opportunity for STRC to understand the current trends in science and technology, applicable ideas for innovation and R&D.



'Mukhyamantri Mahila Sashaktikaran Abhiyan' Organised in Gadchiroli

'Mukhyamantri Mahila Sashaktikaran Abhiyan' campaign was held on January 9, 2024, at Gadchiroli. Science & Technology Resource Center (STRC) was invited to exhibit and promote varieties of products representing traditional art-forms such as bamboo craft, rock dhokra, pottery and gond painting under its Gondwana Craft brand.

On the day, Deputy Chief Minister Shri Devendra Fadnavis and Minister, Food & Drug Administration, Shri Dharmarao Baba Atram, along with many eminent politicians, District Collector, Gadchiroli, District Superintendent of Police, Gadchiroli, amongst others graced the occasion.



Beyond the Headlines

Hon'ble President of India, Smt. Droupadi Murmu invites Dr. C. D. Mayee

Dr. Charudatta Mayee was invited as one among the three eminent retired agriculture scientists of the country by the President of India for a home reception at Rashtrapati Bhavan

South Asia Biotechnology Centre President Dr. C. D. Mayee, was invited by Hon'ble President of India Smt. Droupadi Murmu for a home reception at Rashtrapati Bhavan, on the occasion of the 75th Republic Day to discuss on societal impact of the country-wide innovative and grassroot projects implemented by South Asia Biotechnology Centre, Jodhpur.

It is a matter of great pride for STRC, Gondwana University, Gadchiroli, as Dr. Mayee, Chairman of the Governing Body of STRC, was honored by the President of India.





About STRC

Conceived and funded by Rajiv Gandhi Science and Technology Commission (RGSTC), Mumbai, Government of Maharashtra, Science & Technology Resource Centre (STRC) is an autonomous institute established in concurrence with Gondwana University, Gadchiroli. STRC is entrusted with generating livelihood opportunities by deploying appropriate science and technology, particularly for the under-served tribal communities of the Gadchiroli region since 2014. As a centre of excellence for sustainable value creation, STRC is leveraging local resources, relevant knowledge and appropriate technologies for human capacity development. STRC acts as a catalyst to science and technology based development of the region and as a bridge between knowledge activities of the University and enhanced livelihoods in the neighborhood.

Core Verticals

- » Aquaculture & Livelihoods
- » Bamboo Craft & Livelihoods
- » NTFP Medicinal Plants and Other Livelihoods
- » Applicable R & D and Academic Program Development
- » Communication for Development through ICT



STRC Offers :



STRC Assistance for S&T
Application Scheme
Research Grants



One Year Undergraduate
Diploma in Bamboo
Entrepreneurship and
Design



Vaidya Chikitsalay
A unique platform to promote
traditional healers and healing
practices