

STRC NEWSLETTER

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Gondwana Craft
We preserve, promote & practice...



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).

STRC is hitting the right notes !

It has been a truly enriching past twelve months for STRC. As we approach the close of an eventful year, I do have a sense that, few significant strides in the right direction have been taken towards attaining the goal of becoming a self-sustainable entity in coming future. While on-going initiatives have taken traction, new avenues of collaborative action have emerged. STRC has just begun to make a mark as an institution with a clear mandate of science and technology-based development in the region. I am optimistic about the future, however, I must admit, a lot more effort is required to be put in.

There are encouraging signs of growth in current initiatives. Whether it is the strategic social entrepreneurship action to boost the local artisan economy through STRC's Model Production Unit, exposure to various state level platforms / exhibitions and 'Gondwana Craft' or our community initiatives in the collectivization of minor forest produce and conservation of herbal plant resources through the 'Gondwan Vanaushadhi Ropvatika' community nursery, or in the indigenous medicinal knowledge through Vaidya Chikitsalay initiatives, the progress is evident. STRC believes that a more focused knowledge and skill-driven development approach with low-cost technology support would produce better results than an input-driven model.

Effective institutional liaising at the national and regional level with institutes / departments such as the National Skill Development Corporation, New Delhi, Indian Council of Social Science Research, New Delhi, BAIF, Pune, Agharkar Research Institute, Pune, Tata Memorial Centre, Mumbai, NABARD etc. has resulted in tapping resource and knowledge support, possibilities of mobilization of funds and co-implementation of various projects in the pipeline. Similarly, this year, Manav Vikas Mission, Govt of Maharashtra through local district administration has entrusted STRC with a few projects, and organizations such as Maha Metro Corporation, Nagpur, Agrovision Foundation, Nagpur and Lloyd Metals amongst others who have come forward to collaborate and support STRC activities.

The coming months seem to hold a lot more promise and hopefully would present us with plethora of opportunities for sustained growth and new accomplishments.



Shri Ashis Gharai

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



Promising Livelihood Opportunities in the Bamboo Craft Sector, Especially for Local Women

Science and Technology Resource Centre has been actively involved in mobilizing and capacitating traditional artisans in bamboo craft for the past 5-6 years. With the aim to harness the abundant bamboo resources through the deployment of science and technology, STRC is involved in developing a social entrepreneurship network leading to sustainable income generation and better livelihoods. As a significant step in this direction, a well-equipped model production unit has been established at STRC which acts as a central hub for training and capacity building and required R&D in bamboo craft.

Currently, the focus is on engaging traditional bamboo artisans, especially local women, in the production of bamboo raw materials, including strips, rods, baskets, and slats at various levels. This engagement ensures a minimum monthly benefit to each household involved. By actively involving bamboo-based communities, particularly women associated with Self-Help Groups (SHGs), we are working to create a pool of artisans for the regular supply of bamboo products and raw materials. This process has ensured a sustainable income source, and local women artisans form the major chunk of the beneficiary group.

To further enhance these efforts, we are actively seeking funds from external agencies, including district administration and NABARD. The infusion of external support will allow us to scale-up our operations and impact, providing more opportunities for women-centric SHGs and Minor CFCs in the bamboo craft sector. In the long run, our overarching goal is to establish a Bamboo-based Off Farm Farmer Producer Organization (O-FPO) that will serve as a social entrepreneurship platform, fostering sustainable bamboo activities in the region. This initiative would not only contribute to the economic empowerment but also would create a cadre of skilled artisans in the bamboo craft sector.



Shri Gandharv Pilare

Scientific Officer,
Science & Technology Resource Centre
Gondwana University, Gadchiroli



'Gondwan Vanaushadhi Ropvatika': A Community Nursery Initiative at Dhanora

In an effort to create awareness on the importance of ex-situ conservation of valuable medicinal plant resource of the region, STRC is developing a medicinal plant nursery named, '*Gondwan Vanaushadhi Ropvatika*' at Kharkadi, Dhanora. Focused on propagating commercially important, rare, endangered, and threatened species, this community nursery project, to be implemented in a PPP mode, promises to help ecological sustainability and create income generation opportunities for the locals through sale of saplings.

Being erected on a two acre CFR land, this nursery would propagate over 100 diverse species of commercially valuable medicinal plants. The initiative has commenced with meticulous groundwork, including land preparation, polybag refilling, soil tray arrangement, bed preparation and seed sowing, along with bamboo fencing. The involvement of the Science and Technology Resource Centre ensures scientific expertise and technical support, fostering a harmonious blend of traditional wisdom and modern methodologies of nursery development. As the '*Gondwan Vanaushadhi Ropvatika*' takes root, it may set an example of community-driven conservation, promising a greener and economically resilient future for Kharkadi village.



Exposure visit : Students of Bamboo Diploma visited BRTC, Chandrapur

As part of the academic curriculum, STRC's Diploma in Bamboo Entrepreneurship and Design students visited the Bamboo Research and Development Centre (BRTC), Chichppalli, Chandrapur. Prof. Shirish Kaner and other BRTC faculties shared insights on the bamboo sector, covering its future prospects, diverse applications, product development, and construction techniques. Under their guidance, students got first hand experience of using machines like Jig saw and nail gun. Visit to BRTC's Bambusetum provided knowledge about species diversity and plantation techniques.

Students also got an opportunity to explore BANS, Chandrapur, and interacted with Mr. Gajendra Deulkar, Manager, BANS. Mr. Deulkar, appraised about his work experience, showcasing current products. Visiting students got a chance to observe laser cutting and engraving techniques. The objective was to familiarize students with the operations of a small-scale bamboo production unit.





AGROVISION 2023 : STRC participates at the India's Premier Agri Summit

Every year Agrovision provides a huge platform for farmers, industry, government organizations to bring together new innovation in agriculture to create a better future for the farmers. The 14th Agrovision, was held during 24th to 27th November 2023 at Nagpur under the leadership of the Chief Patron Shri Nitinji Gadkari, Hon'ble Union Minister, Road Transport & Highway and Dr. C. D. Mayee, Chairman, Advisory Council. Science & Technology Resource Centre (STRC) has been participating in this India's largest agri summit since 2018.

STRC showcased varieties of products including its promotion and sale, multiple S&T based interventions for collaboration. The Vaidya Chikitsalay of STRC drew a lot of attention for its novelty. STRC's Mobile Demonstration Unit (MDU) Van was placed for demonstration and IEC activities. During this four-day event, thousands of visitors flocked in to the STRC enclosure. Eminent invitees to Agrovision- 2023 were felicitated with STRC Bamboo Lotus bouquets.

Chief Program Officer & Head, STRC, Shri. Ashis Gharai was invited by Agrovision as a Guest Expert to address the audience on 'Social Entrepreneurship in Bamboo Craft as a Boost to Artisan Economy'. The panel of speaker included the likes of Shri Pasha Patel, Veteran Farmer Leader, Former Chairman, Maharashtra State Commission for Agricultural Costs & Prices and Former MLA, Maharashtra, Dr. V. M. Illorkar, Scientist, AICRP on Agroforestry, College of Agriculture, Nagpur, Shri Sanjiv Karpe, Managing Director, KONBAC, Shri Shrinivas Rao, Additional Principle Chief Conservator of Forests and Managing Director, Maharashtra Bamboo Development Board, Govt. of Maharashtra



LLOYD METALS is keen to support Bamboo based Entrepreneurship

Senior officials of LLOYDS Metals recently visited Science & Technology Resource Centre (STRC), Gondwana University Gadchiroli and expressed their keenness to support STRC in strengthening the bamboo artisan network and development of an entrepreneurship ecosystem. They enquired about the artisan network, development of a skilled cadre and STRC's business model in detail, during the presentation by the Chief Program Officer & Head- STRC. Impressed by STRC's efforts in creating a skilled cadre and a sustainable business model, Lloyd Metals officials agreed to support a craft outlet at Nagpur airport. This collaboration emphasizes shared commitment to empower bamboo artisans leading to overall development of the region.



World Fisheries Day celebrated at Malezari (Mulchera)



Every year, the 21st of November is celebrated as 'World Fisheries Day' to highlight the importance of sustainable stocks of fisheries in the world, to strengthen human rights for the small scale fishing communities and to make a meaningful difference in the working conditions of the fishery communities. As part of the World Fisheries Day 2023, Science and Technology Resource Centre organized a day long training program on 'Sustainable Fisheries in Freshwater Bodies' at Malezari, in Mulchera taluka. The training aimed at enhancing productivity by providing valuable information on pre and post stocking management, production of fish fingerlings and grow-out fish farming technology aligning with scientific and sustainable practices.

Workshop on Aquatic Livelihood Opportunities

STRC was invited to participate in a one-day workshop titled 'Aquatic-based Livelihood Opportunities', organized by Jaljivika, Pune at Yatri Niwas, Sevagram, in Wardha on November 2, 2023.

Assistant Fishery Development Officer, Wardha and Branch Manager, Bank of India, Wardha were among the invited guests at the event. Both dignitaries shared their experiences and provided essential information related to government schemes, aqua-based technologies, and the diverse opportunities available in the sector. Various stakeholders, including community members, and representatives from different organizations showed keen involvement at the event. Such platforms help STRC to share its commitment towards promoting sustainable practices and making scientific fishery available and accessible to local fish farmers.





Gondwana Craft

An initiative by Science and Technology Resource Centre, Gondwana University, Gadchiroli, to bring all the traditional art-forms of the region under one umbrella brand, 'Gondwana Craft', with an artisan centric approach to preserve and promote these unique yet dying art-forms on a sustainable and viable social entrepreneurship platform.

Traditional art forms of the region with rich cultural and historical significance like Bamboo Craft, Rock Dhokra, Gond Paintings, and Earthen Pottery are at risk of being lost. The decline of such traditional crafts can be attributed to various factors, including changing lifestyles, economic pressures, and lack of awareness and support.

Science and Technology Resource Centre (STRC) has taken the mettle to preserve and promote such traditional art-forms through the Gondwana Craft platform. This effort would not only help in preserving and promoting these dying art-forms and safeguarding cultural heritage but also would contribute to the economic well-being of the traditional artisan groups.

This effort would involve local communities in the preservation and promotion, fostering a sense of pride and ownership. Provide training programs to artisans to enhance their skills and introduce them to contemporary techniques.

Encourage the transfer of knowledge from experienced artisans to younger generations to ensure the continuity of traditional craftsmanship. Leverage physical and digital platforms to create greater presence for Gondwana Craft, reaching out to a wider audience and facilitating e-commerce for traditional art products. STRC plans to organize events, workshops, and exhibitions to raise awareness about the significance of traditional art-forms within the community and beyond.

Bamboo Craft



Rock Dhokra



Gond Paintings



Earthen Pottery



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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