

THREADS OF CHANGE OUR 2024 STORY

A Pictorial
Representation



Science & Technology Resource Centre
Gondwana University, Gadchiroli

Technology | Enterprise | Development

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

THREADS OF CHANGE : OUR 2024 STORY

A Pictorial Representation

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Science & Technology Resource Centre Gondwana University, Gadchiroli

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 in 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 underserved tribal communities of Gadchiroli region and as a bridge between knowledge activities of the University and enhanced livelihoods in the neighborhood.



THREADS OF CHANGE : OUR 2024 STORY



The forest dependent communities of Gadchiroli, primarily comprising indigenous tribes like the Gond, Madia and Pardhan, have a deep rooted connection with the region's dense forests for their livelihood, sustenance, and cultural identity. Non Timber Forest Produces (NTFPs) such as *tendu* leaves, *bamboo*, *honey*, and *medicinal* plants play a vital role in their economy.

Preface

Dear Friends,

It gives me immense pleasure to present the annual publication, '**Threads of Change: Our 2024 Story**', a reflection of our relentless commitment to advancing scientific inquiry, fostering innovation, and empowering communities through the transformative power of science and technology.

The past year has been a remarkable journey for STRC, marked by achievements that reaffirm our vision of harnessing science and technology for sustainable development. As we navigate the intersection of traditional knowledge systems and modern innovations, STRC continues to serve as a catalyst for knowledge activities in the university and enhanced livelihoods, in the Gadchiroli region.

In 2024, our focus has been on pioneering social entrepreneurship initiatives that integrate skill, knowledge and low-cost technology with livelihoods to facilitating the development of value-added products through forest resources, STRC has strived to bridge the gap between science and society.

One of the highlights of this year has been the emphasis on capacity building of communities. By training and providing learning platforms to local youth, especially women, traditional artisans, fish farmers, paddy/vegetable farmers, traditional healers and grassroots organizations, we have nurtured a generation of change makers equipped to tackle the unique challenges of their ecosystems.

This publication captures the milestones achieved, lessons learned, and the path ahead. It is a testament to the collective efforts of the inspired team at STRC, mentored by RGSTC and Gondwana University, our partners, and the communities we work with. Every initiative featured in this compendium reflects our core belief—that science and technology, when rooted in local context and aspirations, can transform lives.

As we look forward to the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead, I extend my heartfelt gratitude to everyone who has contributed to STRC's endeavours in 2024 and invite all stakeholders to join us in this shared journey of empowerment and sustainability.

Let's keep pushing the boundaries of innovation, collaboration, and impact.

Thank You!



Ashis Gharai

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



Padma Vibhushan Dr. Anil Kakodkar

Chairman

Rajiv Gandhi Science and Technology
Commission, Mumbai,
Government of Maharashtra

“

Science & Technology Resource Centre at Gondwana University Gadchiroli has been set up to nurture a sustainable ecosystem that enhances livelihood as well as contributes to enriching academics and research in the local context leveraging synergy between the two. This is still work in progress, however, some progress has been made in the context of Bamboo. In principle connecting up with other institutions with similar / complimentary objectives would further strengthen the ecosystem.

”



Senior Management



Dr. Charudatta Mayee

Chairman,
Governing Body,
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Shri. Ashis Gharai

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



What We Do



Aquaculture based Livelihoods

Mandated to focus on enhanced production and access to good quality fish seeds / feed and hand-holding support through Aqua Facilitation Centre for local fish farmers. To have an advanced and sustainable approach to promote business of fish through Fish Farmers' Interest Groups (FIGs).



Bamboo based Livelihoods

Mandated to develop a decentralized entrepreneurial eco-system with an artisan centric approach to boost the local artisan economy. To curate specialized skill programs in structural application of bamboo and to design low-cost craft tools and innovative products in utility / lifestyle space. Strengthening community centric resource management of bamboo as a sustainable development approach.





Forest and Agri based Livelihoods

Mandated to ensure deployment of good forest conservation and climate smart agriculture practices through standard package of practice. Promote minor farm mechanization through low-cost tools and technologies and to ensure their wide spread adoption. To encourage establishment of community enterprise around non-timber forest produce leading to sustainable income generation. Conservation and scientific documentation of indigenous medicinal knowledge and promotion of traditional healers and healing practices through appropriate platforms.



Applied Research and Academic Programs

Mandated to design applicable R & D, innovation and structured academic programs. Roll out unique experiential learning curriculum for school children and certificate courses to address scientific knowledge, skill and technology enabled human capacity development in the region.

Development Communication

Mandated to ensure effective utilization of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) as a tool for creating awareness leading to knowledge enabled development and empowerment of the underserved communities in the far-flung areas.

Whom We Cater To ...



Fish Farmers

372



Traditional Artisans

244



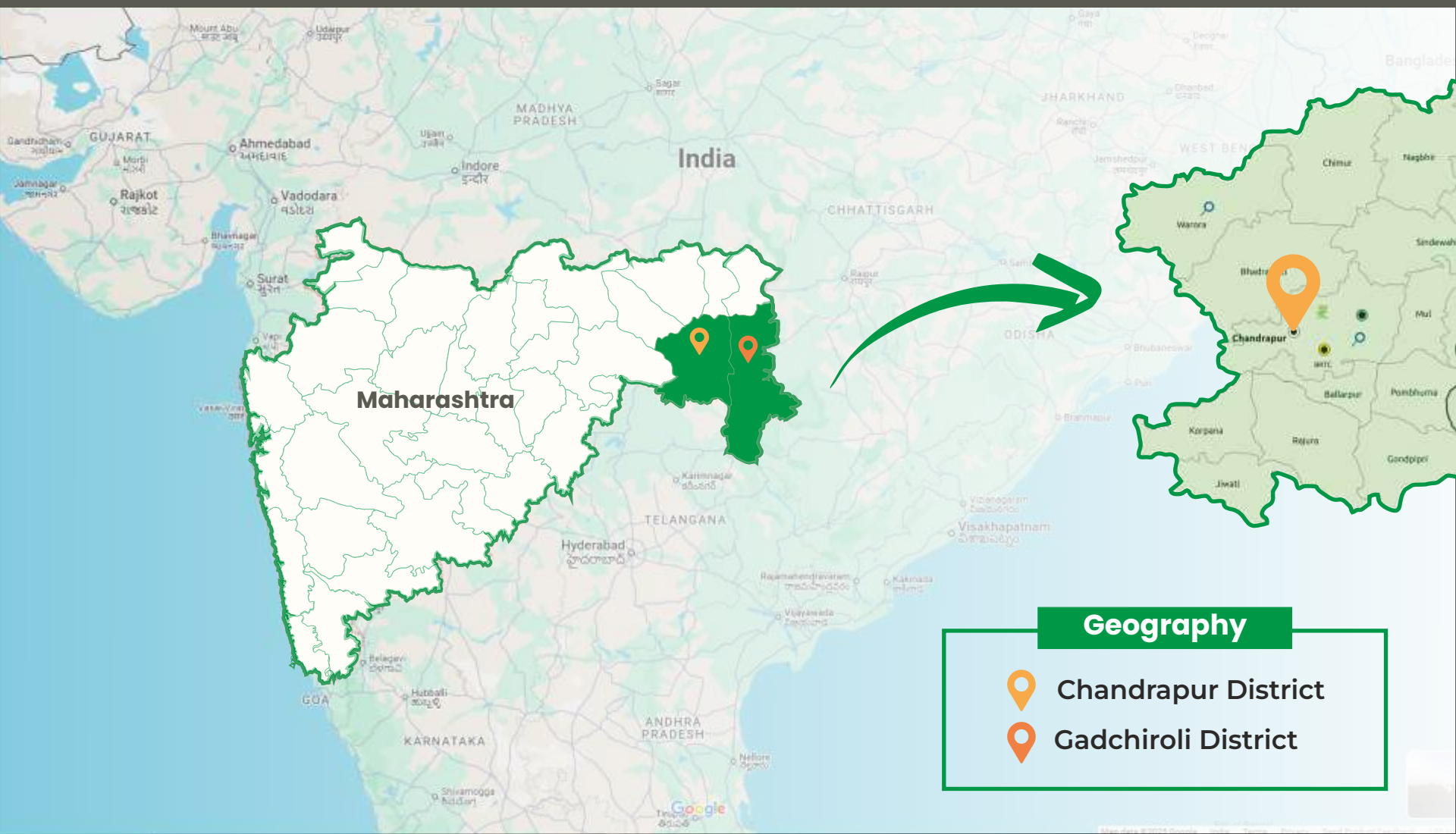
Traditional Healers

475



NTFP Collectors

427





Paddy/Veg Farmers

158



School Children

654



Technology Transfer

Dev. 22 | Transfer 852










STRC Outreach

45000



Legend

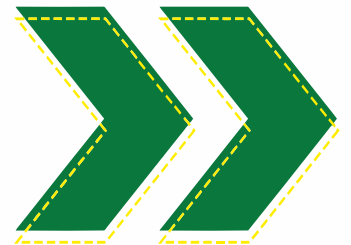
-  STRC Gondwana University
-  NTFP and Agriculture Initiatives
-  Aquaculture Initiatives
-  Bamboo Initiatives (Training, Entrepreneurship, Plantation)
-  Medicinal Plant Initiatives (Traditional Healers, IMK, Nursery)
-  NTFP Collectivization
-  Environment Education for School Children

Our Outreach

2024



What We Did
This Year



STRC Funded Scientific Fishery Project (2019-25) :

Co-implemented with Maharashtra Animal & Fishery Sciences University (MAFSU), Nagpur



Cumulative Numbers

07

FIGs Formed

210

Fish Farmers Registered

04

Hatcheries Installed

7.5 million

Fish Spawn Produced

03

Vending Units Distributed



The following activities under the project, 'Development of Organized Fish Seed Production, Culture and Marketing to Ensure Sustainable Livelihood Opportunities in Aquaculture in Gadchiroli District', were carried out this year;

- Restructuring and registration of **four FIGs** involving over **100 Fish Farmers**
- Relocation of **one Portable Carp Hatchery (PCH)**
- Breeding operation initiated in **two locations**
- Target production of **2.5 million spawns** per PCH.



Dr. Niteen Patil, Hon'ble Vice Chancellor, MAFSU, Nagpur releases Fish Seeds (IMC) into the water bodies of Gadchiroli District Open Jail initiating a new collaboration

Successful Completion of Manav Vikas Mission Supported Projects

STRC successfully implemented two Manav Vikas Mission supported projects, in Integrated Fishery and Social Enterprise in Bamboo, with a budget outlay of INR 24.94 Lakh. STRC played the role of a community enabler and provided required institutional, technical and entrepreneurial support, to facilitate improved livelihood generation.

01. Integrated Fish Farming (Fish & Poultry) Project in Aheri Taluka

Capacitating local farmers on modern fish farming with poultry through an integrated approach



20 HH as Direct Beneficiaries
24000 Fish Seeds Distributed
20 Poultrysheds Developed & Distributed
1600 Chicks Distributed
Training & Onsite Sessions Organized
Dual Source Revenue Generation Initiated

02. Establishment of Bamboo based Common Facility Centre Project at Maldugi

Rural entrepreneurship development centered around skilling, technology and institutional support for traditional bamboo artisans

62 HH as Direct Beneficiaries
One CFC Established
Sustainable Jobs Created
62 Craft Toolkit Distributed
60 Days Production Workshop
Two Exposure Visits Organized
Bamboo Plantation Drive Organized
3.83 Lakh Revenue Generated



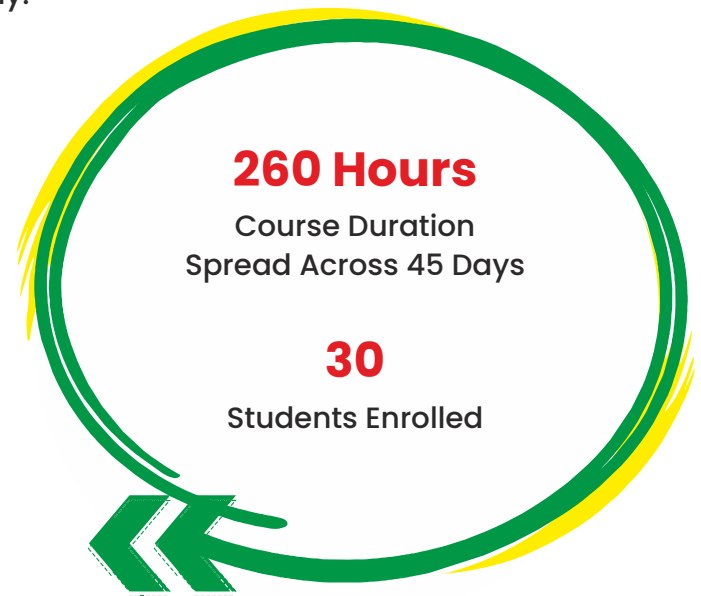
Registered STRC as a 'Training Centre' and 'Training Provider' under Maharashtra State Skill Development Society, Mumbai, Govt. of Maharashtra

Two Courses Enlisted to be Offered

1. Bamboo Grower (QP Code: HCS / Q6101)
2. Bamboo Work Artisans (QP Code: HCS / Q8702)



STRC launched and successfully completed the first batch of 'Bamboo Grower', during June - September 2024. This course provided both theoretical and practical knowledge on bamboo species selection, propagation and planting techniques and plantation management, equipping students with comprehensive knowledge essential for aspiring bamboo growers. Other relevant courses will be rolled out subsequently.



New Academic Session of Bamboo Diploma

The new academic session (Winter 2023-24) for Batch III (07 students enrolled) of One Year Undergraduate Diploma in Bamboo Entrepreneurship and Design, was rolled out in September 2024.

Cumulative Numbers

29

Students
Enrolled

22

Students
Graduated Till
Date

07

Students
Employed

04

Industry
Exposure



Geographical Expansion of NTFP Collectivization Project

NTFP collectivization project at Kharkadi, Dhanora made significant progress

- » Geographical expansion through addition of new cluster and beneficiaries
- » Enhanced volume of collected commodities and higher revenue generation.
- » Relevant low-cost tools (air blowers, collection nets etc.) procured to be distributed.
- » Women SHGs identified to be trained in value addition of select NTFPs.



One Cluster Added
70 Primary Collectors Added
14 Villages Added
427 Total Number of Collectors

In 2024

2023-24
Cumulative
Numbers
(In Qtls)

77.0 Mahua Seeds
70.0 Mahua Flowers
7.4 Wild Honey
50.0 Kusum Beej
3000 Poles of Raw Bamboo
3.72 L Income Generated

Initiative in Medicinal Plant

Development of Forest Department Allocated Land for Polyhouse based Propagation of Medicinal Plants

- » Poly-house has been repaired
- » Land preparation underway
- » Experimental plots developed
- » Bamboo Plantation initiated
- » Herbal Garden and Seed Bank planned



Efforts Made to **Build a Skilled Network of Artisans** Across the Region



Sustainable Skills to Create Better Livelihood Opportunities for Gadchiroli Open Jail Inmates

STRC initiated a unique collaboration with Gadchiroli Open Jail, to educate, aware and train more than 50 of its inmates, serving the last leg of their jail-term, on Bamboo Craft as a viable and sustainable livelihood option for a dignified life after jail



To build and expand the skilled network of artisans, STRC identified and engaged with several artisan groups, involving more than 100 artisans through focussed interactions across the region, including Katholabodi, Bhandara, Gadchiroli, Warora, and Lakhandur. Other pockets such as Chimur and Mul are in the pipeline.

STRC Vaidya Chikitsalay Empowers Traditional Healers in Gadchiroli

Forest-dependent tribal communities, particularly Traditional Healers (*Vaidus*) in Gadchiroli, possess a wealth of indigenous medicinal knowledge passed down through generations. These custodians of ethno-medico botanical wisdom face the risk of losing their heritage due to the lack of scientific documentation and validation. The STRC Vaidya Chikitsalay initiative, launched in September 2022, seeks to promote these traditional healers, offering them social recognition and fostering research to integrate their practices with modern healthcare. Gaining popularity, the centre now operates four days a week, aiming to mainstream traditional healing through scientific validation and ensure holistic well-being for all.

Milestones

- 2017-18** ● Launched 'Van-aushadhi Abhiyan' in Gadchiroli
- 2019-21** ● Organized 'Vaidu Sammelans' and released Vaidu Directory
- 2022** ● Established First in-campus Vaidya Chikitsalay OPD
- 2023** ● Received wide Spread Recognition in different forums
- 2024** ● Signed MoU with Lloyds Metals & Energy Ltd.
Satellite OPD launched at LKAM Hospital, Hedri
Successfully treated 2000 patients before the end of the year



Key Highlights

- ✓ Significant patient inflow from far off and adjacent districts reflects growing popularity and sustained trust in traditional healing
- ✓ University platform augurs well for greater recognition of THs and sustainable income provides required motivation to take up traditional healing as a lucrative profession
- ✓ Successfully treated patients have played the role of brand ambassadors by spreading the word around



STRC Vaidya Chikitsalay's satellite OPD at LKAM Hospital, Hedri

Our industry partner, Lloyds Metals & Energy Limited (Lloyd Infinite Foundation) extends support to open a branch of STRC Vaidya Chikitsalay at Lloyds Kali Ammal Memorial Hospital, Hedri, Etapalli; an effort to integrate traditional healing practices with modern healthcare services ensuring comprehensive healthcare support to the under-served communities of southern gadchiroli.

Vital Stats 2024

17

Traditional Healers

197

OPD Days

>2100

Patients Treated

12

Major Locally Prevalent
Ailments Treated

5.98 L

Revenue Generated
by Healers



Future Scope

Networking and Empowerment of THs

Forming a larger network of traditional healthcare givers with proven expertise, and adherence to ethical practices and building their capacities

Research and Collaboration

Documenting the methods of treatment, conducting collaborative ethno-medico botanical studies and lab research to validate the efficacy of traditional remedies

Replicable Model for Universities/Institutes

STRC sees future scope of expansion of the Vaidya Chikitsalay platform, as a replicable model for other universities and institutes having its presence in relevant geographies





Environment Education Program for School Children

An uniquely designed module based curriculum with informative content using innovative 'Teaching Learning Methods' using ICT and Field Tools, to garner greater interest among the target group of young children from select local schools of the region. Considering the long-term implications of the depleting environment and its immediate impact on the present and future generation, it is important to inculcate the idea of a sustainable environment and culturally responsive science teaching (CREST) among young minds to help them become more responsible adults.



Modules

Module I
Introduction
to Biodiversity

Module II
Ecological
Processes
through
Nature Trail

Module III
Ethno-botany
and Herbal
Garden

Module IV
Soil, Plants
and Humans

Module V
Diversity of
Local Wild
Vegetables

Impact

Buoyed by its success last year, with 10 schools and 374 students on board, the EES program has taken significantly bigger stride, adding new set of schools, students and teachers into the fold, cumulatively addressing over 650 students and 60 teachers from 18 schools so far.



*NURTURING
YOUNG MINDS,
BEYOND
CLASSROOMS
AND TEXTBOOKS!*





Gondwana Craft

We Preserve, Promote & Practice ...



*We also provide
customised craft /
construction
services under all
categories*



Gondwana University, Gadchiroli
Science & Technology Resource Centre Foundation Gadchiroli



An initiative by Science & Technology Resource Centre Foundation, Gadchiroli, to bring 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 viable and sustainable social entrepreneurship platform

Outlets Near You!

Display Units Installed at

Melghat Haat, Amravati
Regional Commissioner Office, Nagpur
Office of the District Collector, Nagpur

Upcoming Outlets

Futala Fountain View Gallery, Nagpur
Dr. B. R. Ambedkar International Airport, Nagpur
Mohurli Gate, Tadoba Andheri Tiger Reserve, Chandrapur
Gondwana University Campus, Gadchiroli
Office of the District Collector, Gadchiroli



Cumulative Numbers

300+

Tribal Artisans

06

Artisan Clusters

150+

Products

05

Craft Categories

05

Proposed Outlets

Felicitation of Dignitaries with Gondwana Craft Products during 2024



Padmavibhushan
Dr. Anil Kakodkar
Chairman, RGSTC, Mumbai, GoM



Shri. C. P. Radhakrishnan
Hon'ble Governor of Maharashtra



Shri. Ramesh Bais
Hon'ble Governor of Maharashtra



Shri. Nitin Gadkari
Minister of Road Transport and
Highways, GoI



Shri. Bhupender Yadav
Union Cabinet Minister L&E,
MOEFCC, GoI

Research and Development Efforts



STRC Assistance for S & T Application Scheme: 'Mahua Harvester'

A research grant on the project 'Mahua Flower Harvester for Forest Fire Prevention' was awarded to Dr. Rahul Krishna Kamble, Associate Professor, Sardar Patel Mahavidyalaya, Chandrapur, under the scheme, with a primary objective to develop a Mahua Flower Harvesting Tool, leading to a long-term outcome to help reduce instances of forest fire in the region.

Few more innovative research projects are being considered for award of grant, this session.



STRC Erects its First Bamboo Polyhouse in the University Campus

A Rajiv Gandhi Science and Technology Commission (RGSTC), Mumbai, Govt. of Maharashtra initiative on development of Bamboo Polyhouse in collaboration with CTARA, IIT, Bombay and SASMIRA, Mumbai.

The first polyhouse of 125 sq. mtr. size has been erected at STRC premises. STRC is developing a herbal garden for education and demonstration purpose.

Solar Hydro Distillation Field Trials held at STRC



A Solar Hydro Distillation Unit (Micro), conceptualized at CTARA, IIT Bombay, developed under the supervision of research scholar, Shri Vikrant Katekar, was put to test through a pilot experiment to extract essential oils and liquid decoctions from medicinal and aromatic plants at STRC.

Extraction of *Brahmi Ark* was undertaken as the first experiment. Building on this success, traditional healers at STRC Vaidya Chikitsalay have started using the tool to extract *Tulsi Ark*.

These initiatives align with STRC's core mandate to promote a R&D eco-system to create low-cost technologies enabling better resource utilization.

iDEAS For Future

Detailed Project Report and Sustainability Plan for the Period 2025–29

The Comprehensive DPR builds on the success of collective initiatives taken root in the past 6–7 years and lays out an ambitious road map for deepening and expanding STRC’s initiatives through the following program divisions, namely ;

1. Aquaculture based Livelihoods
2. Bamboo based Livelihoods
3. Forest and Agri based Livelihoods
4. Applied Research and Academic Programs
5. Development Communication

These exclusive divisions would evolve around a few cross cutting and specific centers to function under the STRC Foundation.

Bamboo for a Green Economy [Proposed DPR with budget outlay of INR 1.5 Cr.](#)

With a sustainable resource development approach, STRC aims to strengthen community centric integrated resource management of bamboo to enhance rural economy. Under the Bamboo Task Force DPR, a proposal “*Strengthening Bamboo based Business Ecosystem in CFR Areas of Gadchiroli through Optimized Resource Management and Technology Integration*”, amounting to INR 1.5 Cr. (Approx.) is slated to be sanctioned.

Medicinal Plant Resource Centre (MPRC) [Proposed DPR with budget outlay of INR 7.10 Cr.](#)

The MPRC at STRC will serve as a strategic initiative to harness the potential of medicinal and aromatic plants for conservation, action research, scientific documentation on indigenous medicinal knowledge and academic advancement fostering improved market access and empowering livelihoods.

Aquaculture Technology Facilitation Centre (AFC) [Proposed DPR with budget outlay of INR 7.85 Cr.](#)

Under the sustainable development of Aquaculture, AFC will serve as a knowledge hub delivering hands on technical know-how, training and real time advisory services to local fish farmers and cooperatives. Equipped with the state of the art facility for research, awareness and demonstration to promote best practices in aquaculture.

Design and Innovation Centre (DIC) for Bamboo & Other Materials [Proposed DPR with budget outlay of INR 6.0 Cr.](#)

DIC at STRC will play a crucial role in advancing bamboo based product design and innovation, contributing to sustainable development and the promotion of bamboo as a versatile material in various industries. Mandated to develop new technologies and products using bamboo for multiple sectors like housing, furniture, handicrafts and packaging. Promote innovation in bamboo processing, treatment, and value-added products. Conduct research on bamboo varieties for optimized use in construction, bio-energy, and high-end products.

Centre for Circular Bioeconomy (CCE)

Ideas have been floated and taking shape for a potential collaboration between Environmental Management Centre (EMC) Pvt. Ltd. / Ekonnnect Knowledge Foundation (EKF) and Science & Technology Resource Centre, Gondwana University, Gadchiroli to establish a Centre for Circular Bio-economy (CCE).

Meetings & Workshops



One Day Workshop cum Round Table Discussion on Bamboo for a Green Economy at Gondwana University, Gadchiroli

January, 2024



Bamboo for a Green Economy Roundtable at BAIF, Pune

May, 2024



STRC's Role in Taking Forward the Idea of CILLAGE : RGSTC Steering Committee Meeting, at KBCNMU, Jalgaon

April, 2024



State Level Consultation on the Status of Adivasi Livelihoods (SAL) at BAIF, Pune

December, 2024



Bamboo Hastakala Udyojak Workshop at Van Bhavan, Pune

June, 2024



STRC's Governing Body and Program Advisory Board Meetings held at GU, Gadchiroli and RGSTC, Nagpur

January & November, 2024

Representation at National Fests



01. 9th and 10th India International Science Festival (IISF), Faridabad (Jan 2024) and Guwahati (Nov 2024)
02. 10th World Ayurveda Congress & Arogya Expo, Dehradun (Dec 2024)
03. Tadoba Festival, Chandrapur (March 2024)
04. 15th Agrovision: Central India's Largest Agri Summit (Nov 2024)
05. 21st Kerala Bamboo Fest, Kochi (Dec 2024)

STRC Participated in 13 such events during 2024

STRC's Growing Popularity

Interaction with Eminent Personalities



A memorable interaction with Noted Educationist Dr. Achyuta Samanta



District Collector, Nagpur, Assures Space for STRC's Gondwana Craft Outlet



Meeting Shri Harsh Chaturvedi to Explore Scope of NTFP Marketing in Chhattisgarh



Shri S.H.S. Khandwawala, Former Director General of Police, Gujarat & Head, Anti Corruption Unit, BCCI



Shri Sanjay Daine, I.A.S., District Collector, Gadchiroli



Dr. Atul Vaidya, Director, National Environmental Engineering Research Institute (NEERI), Nagpur



Shri Vikas Kulkarni, Under Secretary Education, Raj Bhavan Maharashtra



Political Representatives from Maharashtra Navnirman Sena (MNS)



Ms. Snehal Dhokey, Nagpur Representative Director General of Foreign Trade, Gol

Teachers, Doctors and Special Children



Principals & senior faculties from various colleges across Maharashtra



Young medicos visited STRC as part of their summer internship



Differently-abled students from across Gadchiroli

STRC hosts ISRO's Space On Wheels Program



STRC proudly hosted 'Space on Wheels', the flagship program of the Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO), Govt of India, during February. The event received an overwhelming response with over 1250 enthusiastic children from 12 peripheral schools, converging in the STRC premises, were enthralled to witness well-equipped mobile exhibition depicting the history and current development of the Indian space program. Later, Chairman, ISRO, Shri S. Somanath, congratulated Hon'ble Vice Chancellor, Gondwana University for successfully hosting the event.

Shri Nitin Gadkari Ji Called on Team STRC-GUG

STRC, led by Dr. C. D. Mayee, Chairman, Governing Body and Dr. Prashant Bokare, Hon'ble Vice Chancellor, Gondwana University, met the Hon'ble Minister of Road Transport and Highways, Govt. of India, Shri Nitin Gadkari at Nagpur. STRC presented a note honouring his remarkable achievements on a frame made of rustic bamboo wood, as a token of love. The hon'ble minister also interacted with Smt. Pragati Gokhale, Advisor, RGSTC and Shri Ashis Gharai, Chief Program Officer & Head, STRC during the meeting. Gadkari ji, very categorically stressed and urged STRC to focus on sustainable harvesting and supply of raw & cut-to-size bamboo for the charcoal briquette making industries.



Other Publications



60 Issue
Published



Gondwana Craft

Product Catalogue



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+91 9975252669

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Now



Website Relunched

www.strc.org.in



**Team STRC is proudly led by
Shri Ashis Gharai,
CPO & Head, STRC**



STRC is represented by a group of competent and committed young professionals having expertise in varied techno-social development sectors, ably leading science and technology based programs centered around forests and other natural resources, designed for livelihood enhancement and all round human capacity development of the local communities.

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Reach Us At

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