

EDUCATION & TRAINING

Education & Training in Sustainable and Equitable Use of Agrobiodiversity

What we do?

The Community Agrobiodiversity Centre (CAbC) envisions the emergence of an eco-sensitive, self-reliant society empowered in conservation and sustainable & equitable utilization of biodiversity. The strategy adopted to reach the vision includes educating the public, farmers, women, teachers, youth and children about the importance of conservation, sustainable and equitable use of biodiversity. The processes of building a knowledge base help community to enhance their capacity in responding to varied issues such as biodiversity loss in on-farm and off-farm habitats, and shift in land use pattern, degradation of natural resources, and erosion in genetic diversity of plant and animal genetic resources.

The on-going education programme focused in tribal and biodiversity related legislations, sustainable utilization of biodiversity and

natural resources, innovative practices in crop production etc resulted in a large number of men and women learnt how to manage their natural resources like soil and water and improve their food security by managing their homesteads and semi-wilderness habitats in a better way. For instance, over 500 women were trained in the production, application and marketing of primary health care products. More than 100 of farmers were trained in Systems of Rice Intensifications (SRI) and Modified Methods of Rice Cultivation.

Through the network of Village Resource Centres and Village Knowledge Centres, the Centre provides local specific need based knowledge to the tribal and rural community to improve their life and livelihood options. The Village Knowledge Centres are functioning in partnership with Grama Panchayaths and local community in the tribal and economically backward areas.

The Every Child a Scientist initiative of CAbC that aimed at promoting the inquisitiveness of children to

learn about biodiversity and natural environment. This programme is implemented among children and youth of tribal and rural communities for improving quality of learning through field-oriented studies contributes effectively to the vision of eco-sensitive generation.

programme, which in turn will bridge the digital divide between poor and rich. The major strength of the programme is availability of a fine setting and the infrastructure facilities for in-house education and training. The children of tribal community are undergoing psychological orientation to mingle with rest of the society, the drop out are joining back to school and resuming formal education, they respect their value and traditions are the glimpses and impact of ECAS initiatives.

A cadre of 100 children belonging to tribal and rural communities of the district was educated on conservation and sustainable management of key bio-resources like medicinal plants, wild food plants and beneficial insects to agriculture. Resource

materials in the form of simple databases and printed booklets on medicinal plants, rare and endangered plants and wild edible plants are available.

Goal 1

Empower CAbC- stakeholder institutions

The contribution of the tribal and rural communities in conservation and enhancement of plant genetic resources is well recognized all over the world. They conserve valuable genetic materials like medicinal rice, a wide range of millets, pulses, oil seeds, tubers, vegetable crops, etc which constitute feed stock for the organized plant breeding and genetic engineering enterprises. The future food security also depends up on these valuable genetic wealth and knowledge associated with its utilization and other aspects.

Article 8 (j) of the CBD recognizes contributions of local and indigenous communities to the conservation and sustainable utilisation of biological resources through traditional knowledge, practices and innovations and guarantee



provisions for equitable sharing of benefits arising from the utilization of such knowledge/practices and innovations.

Recognizing the contribution of indigenous communities the Indian Parliament passed the PPV& FR Act 2001, Biological Diversity Act 2002 for recognition and rewarding for the contribution of tribal and rural communities for their past and ongoing contributions in conserving genetic resources.

Assessing the contribution of indigenous people who conserve the important genetic resources (both cultivated and wild) is crucial to ensure recognition and reward for them under the provision of PPV& FR Act 2001, Biological Diversity Act 2002.

The main emphasis of the IPR Cell in this context is to empower the local community to access reward and recognition for their contribution through (1) preparing the data base of plant genetic resources and associated knowledge, (2) enhancing human resource capacity to handle issues related to the Intellectual

property Rights, (3) ensuring support of national and international institutions dealing IPR and (4) undertake research and documentation to generate evidences to support the claim of indigenous communities over their IPRs.

Goal 2

Empower CAbC- stakeholder institutions

The power of local partnerships in supporting each other to achieve common developmental goals is well understood and accepted as an important developmental strategy. Several tasks can be achieved by mobilising the power of partnership, since irrespective of the individual strengths of the alliance partners their collective strength becomes considerable. The partners also bring with them their learning experiences and their outreach. With training in skill and knowledge management, they can be empowered for enhancing outreach, knowledge dissemination and influencing policy formulation. CAbC must provide service and support to these groups for not only

helping them in achieving their goals but also to build the community linkages of CAbC to a newer height.

Goal 3

Establish a Village Resource Centre and 6-10 Village Knowledge Centres

At a function held in Tunis on November 15, 2005, the International Telecommunication Union recognised India's Mission 2007: Every Village a Knowledge Centre, as the flagship of the "Connect the World" movement. The National Commission on Farmers have also recommended that village knowledge centres (VKCs) should be established in every village as soon as possible for the knowledge and skill empowerment of rural families. A National Alliance for Mission 2007 was formed in 2003 to provide a platform for multi-stakeholder partnership in this movement. The National Alliance currently includes 22 government organisations including the Department of Information Technology, the Ministry of Panchayati Raj, the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India, and Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited; 94 civil society organisations; and 34 private sector information and communication technology (ICT) leaders such as NASSCOM, TCS, HCL, and Microsoft. Besides, 18 academic institutions such as the Indian Institutes of Technology, and the Indira Gandhi National Open University; and 10 financial institutions such as the National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) and the State Bank of India. The strategies are linkage and networking with PRIs, Research Institutions line

Dept. and Peoples institutions, for technical connectivity, content creation capacity building and infrastructure support for VRCs and VKCs.

Goal 4

Establish 25-30 ECAS Centres

The Every Child a Scientist Programme is started for children belonging to the economically under-privileged sections of society, in the age group of 7-15 years with the objective of make learning an enjoyable experience using computers and multimedia as a tool. Theme-based training modules are used on biodiversity conservation and management, Eco-technology, Information and Communication Technology, Health and Hygiene, Environmental issues and Biotechnology to reach out to the children. Children are the future stewards of biodiversity. In Wayanad this is used among the children of tribal communities to learn more about the nature that surrounds them and about how to use them in their day-to-day life in a more sustainable manner. Establishing linkage with PRIs; Education Dept., Tribal Departments, SSA, WTDS; building rapport with local communities and Trainers training are the important strategies in this domain.

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