



Changing poor man's timber into green gold: The Cane and Bamboo Technology Centre Guwahati, Assam, India

Grown in abundance in the north-eastern region of India, cane and bamboo - a strong, resilient and eco-friendly resource with a wide variety of uses - have the potential to play a central role in the economy of the region. Especially for the rural poor, both are an excellent resource on which to build income and employment opportunities.



The Cane and Bamboo Technology Centre, with UNIDO as implementing agency, is playing a key role in promoting these excellent natural resources in India and transforming them from "poor man's timber" into "green gold" to change lives.

Since its inception in 2000, the Centre has become the focal point for information, technologies and networking in India's cane and bamboo sector.

Through its activities, it has not only created awareness: it has also instilled a sense of urgency among policy makers to tap this vast, hitherto largely under-utilized, resource.

The Centre identifies and promotes technologies in the cane and bamboo sector in order to improve the incomes of small entrepreneurs; it strengthens existing institutions by improving their networking and linking them with specialized institutions in India and abroad; and it trains crafts persons and provides them with access to improved technology.

The Centre's concept of "Bamboo Processing Zone" has been hailed as a major innovation. When established, it will be the first of its kind in the world.

In its continuing endeavour to boost the cane and bamboo sector, the Centre is:

- implementing India's Bamboo Mission for the north-east;
- partnering with the Building Materials and Technology Promotion Council to establish bamboo mat production centres;
- providing technology for industrial bamboo units;
- designing and constructing innovative bamboo structures;
- training people in the creation of handicrafts and industrial bamboo products;
- promoting bamboo handicrafts in other states of India;



UNITED NATIONS
INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATION

www.unido.org



- designing clusters and common facility centres for remote rural areas;
- fostering linkages with UNIDO to promote technology interventions in countries such as Ghana, Cuba, Mexico and Timor-Leste under South-South Cooperation.

The Cane and Bamboo Technology Centre has, in a short period of time, positioned itself as the leading institute of its kind not only in India, but also in South Asia.

India is the world's second largest producer of bamboo after China, and the second richest country in the world in terms of bamboo genetic diversity with 136 species spread over around 12.8% of the country's forest area.

With modern technology, bamboo components (particle, mat and ply boards, flooring tiles, corrugated sheets, etc.) are stronger and lighter than wood, and provide today an economically viable, aesthetically pleasing, and environmentally superior alternative whether for housing, furniture, packing materials or other purposes. Bamboo housing is climate-friendly and safer in seismic zones.

