

**POST-ACCREDITATION INITIATIVES OF
GANDHIGRAM RURAL INSTITUTE - DEEMED UNIVERSITY**

SUBMITTED TO

**NATIONAL ASSESSMENT AND ACCREDITATION COUNCIL
(NAAC)
BENGALURU - 560 072**



GANDHIGRAM RURAL INSTITUTE - DEEMED UNIVERSITY

(Fully Funded by Ministry of Human Resource Development, Govt. of India)

GANDHIGRAM - 624 302

DINDIGUL DISTRICT

TAMIL NADU

Post-Accreditation Initiatives of Gandhigram Rural Institute - Deemed University

The Gandhigram Rural Institute - Deemed University (GRI), a unique educational institution established on the basis of Gandhian ideologies with the aim of empowering the rural populace and fully funded by MHRD, Government of India, was accredited by NAAC with Five Stars in 2002 (First Cycle) and re-accredited with 'A' Grade in 2010 (Second Cycle). The Institute was categorized under 'A' Grade by the Deemed Universities Review Committee appointed by the Government of India in 2013.

The Institute has taken a number of initiatives to ensure and sustain quality during the post-accreditation period. The various initiatives undertaken by the Institute during this period are listed below along with the comments of the NAAC Peer Team (Second Cycle).

1. “Feedback from parents, alumni and stakeholders need to be formalized.”

The Institute collects students' feedback on courses as well as course teachers systematically. The IQAC of the Institute has designed a structured schedule for this purpose and feedback is obtained every semester. The feedback collected is analysed using indigenously developed software and the report is submitted to the authorities and a copy of the feedback on courses is sent to the respective departments for consideration in terms of curriculum revision. From 2015-16, students' feedback is collected online. Through IQAC, an exit questionnaire is also administered to all outgoing students and their feedback on academic activities, infrastructure facilities, extension activities and their overall impression of the Institute and the respective programmes they studied are gathered. This helps in curriculum revision and also in infrastructure development.

Apart from this, the Institute has evolved a system of Participatory Assessment of Academic Programmes (PAAP) which is undertaken through a Departmental Committee which consists of student representatives and faculty members handling various courses for the department with a senior faculty from another department as the Chairperson of the committee. The committee meets every semester and analyses the students' performance, difficulties faced by the staff and students in terms of teaching and learning and infrastructure facilities, both within and outside the department. The minutes of the Departmental Committee meetings are submitted to the Vice-Chancellor for further action.

Further, every department conducts a parents' meeting after the declaration of semester examination results. The minutes of these meetings are submitted to the authorities for action. The suggestions and views of the parents are taken into account while planning for the following academic year.

During the post-accreditation period, several departments have organized alumni meets which have provided a platform for the interaction of faculty with their former students. The Institute organized a Mega Alumni meet on 23rd January 2016 where even the first batch of students (1956-58) participated. One of the faculty members has been nominated as Staff-in-charge of the Alumni Cell for coordinating the activities.

The Institute has also conducted, through the Department of Extension Education, a Social Audit on its various outreach programmes. The purpose is to assess the relevance and utility of the outreach programme and to plan for future.

Thus the Institute has formalized the collection and analysis of feedback from various stakeholders—students, parents and alumni. The feedback gathered from various sources has helped in the fine-tuning of the curriculum of various programmes, strengthening of the Institute’s extension activities and augmentation of its infrastructure.

2. “The current student strength is not commensurate with the existing norms.”

The Institute scrupulously follows the reservation policies of the Government of India. The following reservation norms, as stipulated by the Government of India, are being followed with regard to admission of students to various programmes:

OC	: 50%
OBC	: 27.5%
SC	: 15%
ST	: 7.5%

3% of the seats are reserved for the disabled and one seat is allotted for the wards of Defence personnel, based on merit.

There is a provision for the creation of 15% supernumerary seats for foreign students out of which 5% of the seats is earmarked for the children of Indians working in the Gulf (NRIs).

The Institute adheres to the reservation policies of the Government of India in toto and the composition of students are as per the norms.

The overall strength has increased steadily from 2200 in the year 2010-11 to 2723 in the year 2015-16. The table 1 shows a steady increase in the strength of the students belonging to weaker sections of the society.

Table 1: Year-wise strength particulars of the students belonging to SC, ST and OBC

Year	Total	SC	ST	OBC
2010-11	2200	584	35	1325
2011-12	2412	632	40	1486
2012-13	2652	729	47	1674
2013-14	2681	744	46	1839
2014-15	2823	757	67	1931
2015-16	2723	633	60	1389

3. “Classroom lectures are supplemented by the use of PowerPoint presentation and overhead projectors etc., which need to be further strengthened.”

The faculty members of this Institute have adopted a host of technology-enabled pedagogical measures for effective teaching and learning. Some of the significant interventions are:

- ✓ For effective teaching and learning, the faculty has adopted technology leading to blended learning;
- ✓ Lectures are downloaded from well-known web portals such as NTPTL, to supplement classroom teaching;
- ✓ The Institute’s Computer Centre organized 4 e-content Development Workshops for the faculty during the assessment period and the materials developed during the workshops help in augmenting classroom lectures;
- ✓ The language labs at the Faculty of English and Foreign Languages and the Faculty Tamil, Indian Languages and Rural

Arts have user-friendly software for enriching students' soft skills and for teaching French and Indian languages;

- ✓ The Departments of Political Science and Development Administration, Education and the Centre for Geoinformatics have e-labs which are used for research and training purposes;
- ✓ The Institute's Digital Knowledge Centre, housed in the main library, enables students to access web-based learning materials;
- ✓ The Institute has signed an MoU with IIT, Bombay and has been recognized as a research centre for the Spoken Tutorials of IIT-Bombay, a component of the Talk to the Teacher Project funded by the National Mission on Education through Information and Communication Technology (NMEICT); and
- ✓ The Institute uses mobile technology for teaching and learning in a limited manner. The Centre for Applied Geology and the Faculty of Rural Health and Sanitation have made a beginning in this regard.

In short, technology-enabled teaching and learning has been deployed in a conscious manner and this has certainly enriched the teaching-learning process in a big way.

4. “Modular Courses are yet to be developed.”

- ✓ Based on the report of the Academic Audit that was conducted in August 2013 and in tune with the UGC's Guidelines on CBCS, the Institute has thoroughly revamped the CBCS.
- ✓ Under the revised CBCS regulations adopted from 2015-16, all departments have developed and introduced modular courses besides Major, Non-Major and Skill-based Electives.

5. “The institute has relatively low percentage of UGC-NET qualified lecturers.”

- ✓ The Institute is fully funded by the MHRD and as such all appointments are made on an All-India Basis as per the reservation norms of the Government of India.
- ✓ The Institute ensures that only fully qualified faculty are appointed at all levels—Assistant Professors, Associate Professors and Professors. Wherever necessary, additional degrees and/or specializations are called for while filling up posts in emerging/specialized areas of study. Out of 142 permanent faculty members, 128 (90.1%) are PhD holders. Of the 26 Assistant Professors recruited during the assessment period, 13 are UGC-NET/SET qualified candidates.
- ✓ GRI-DU is the first institute in Tamil Nadu to adopt API Score as a basis for selection of candidates for teaching positions.

6. “Financial support to research is insufficient.”

- ✓ The Institute, a fully-funded institution by MHRD, receives funds under the following heads: Plan and Non-Plan. The funds received under Plan Grants are utilized for equipments, buildings and books and journals. Out of the Plan Grants, 25,498 books worth Rs.130 lakhs have been added and this has helped in enhancing the research output of the Institute.
- ✓ The Institute has encouraged various departments to apply for financial support from national agencies. The following departments have received funds under UGC-SAP and DST-FIST as given in Table 2.

Table 2: Departments Receiving Funds from National Agencies

Department	Quantum of Funds (in lakhs)
UGC-SAP	
Mathematics (DRS-I to DSA-II)	63.50
Chemistry (DRS-I to DRS-II)	150.00
Political Science and Development Administration (DRS-II)	32.00
Tamil (DRS-I)	70.00
Computer Science and Applications (DRS-I)	41.00
DST-FIST	
Mathematics	47.00
Chemistry	165.00
Computer Science and Applications	45.00
Physics	122.00
Total	735.50

- ✓ Further, the Institute has completed 79 research projects with a financial outlay of Rs.669 lakhs and presently 77 research projects worth Rs.1628 lakhs are being carried out in various departments. Thus, the Institute has augmented its financial support for research over the years.

7. “The publication profile of some faculty members need to improved”

Efforts Initiated

- ✓ The institute has taken systematic efforts to encourage its faculty to publish their research findings in National/International journals and in the form of books.
- ✓ Periodical meetings are held to review the publication output of the faculty members.
- ✓ IQAC has taken steps to publish the list of indexed journals in respect of Science and Social Science disciplines.

The Outcome

- ✓ The efforts taken during the assessment period has resulted in the publications of 1781 research articles in peer reviewed National/International Journals.
- ✓ Further, as many as 2974 papers have been presented in National/International Seminars/Conferences.
- ✓ The h-index of the institute has gone upto 46.

8. “The institute could generate more resources through consultancies.”

- ✓ The Institute has come out with an official policy for structured and formalized consultancy;
- ✓ The salient features of the policy on consultancy are:
 - (i) Three different types of consultancy, viz., individual consultancy, institutional consultancy and institutional project can be undertaken.
 - (ii) Consultancy includes the establishment of a lab/pilot plant, preparation of bankable projects, sample/product/material testing, consultancy at the industry/farm site, professional training, sharing of expertise with NGOs, private groups and others, and field visits for diagnosis and problem-solving exercises.
 - (iii) The revenue generated under individual consultancy will be shared between the faculty and the Institute at 60:40; under institutional consultancy, it will be 50:50. For individual consultancy project(s), honorarium will be fixed by the Consultancy Advisory Committee.
- ✓ The Institute has introduced an innovative Venture Capital Scheme (VCS) to support teacher entrepreneurs who can help the Institute by promoting a business plan through incubation with the support of the Institute.

- ✓ The details of consultancy projects handled during 2010-15 are given in Table 3.

Table 3: Consultancy Projects

Sl. No.	Title of the Project	Name of the Faculty	Name of the Funding Agency with Full Address	Amount Generated (Rs.)
2011-12				
1.	Traditional Science and Technology Development for the Benefit of Students and People of Dindigul District	Dr. N.S.Nagarajan, Professor of Chemistry & Dean, Faculty of Rural Oriented Sciences	Tamil Nadu State Council for S & T, Chennai	1,00,000/-
2.	Capacity Building Programme for Research Team of SSA, Kerala	Dr. M.A.Sudhir, Professor of Applied Research	State Project Director, SSA Bhavan, Thiruvananthapuram	3,93,003/-
3.	Consultancy Project for "Puthu Vaazhvu Project," Govt. of Tamil Nadu, Dindigul District	Dr.K.Somasundaram, Professor of Computer Science and Applications	Collectorate, Dindigul District	3,83,000/-
4.	Study by NITTR, Chennai on the Social Impact of Resettlement and Rehabilitation Programmes of Tamil Nadu Road Sector Project	Dr. M.P. Boraian, Professor of Extension Education	World Bank, Tamil Nadu	15,00,000/-
2013-14				
5.	Farming Equipment	Dr.R.Uthaya Kumar, Director i/c, Rural Energy Centre	Jeyasorna Agro Tech., Dindigul	10,000/-
6.	The Town of Child Labour Elimination: Change of Sivakasi	Dr.L.Rathakrishnan, Professor, Dept. of Rural Industries and Management	IDE & JETRO Japan	US \$ 5400
7.	Fluoride Analysis	Dr.S.Meenakshi, Professor of Chemistry	Meenakshi Dental College, Chennai	Rs.3,600/- @ 100/ sample
8.	Analysis of Fluoride in Urinary Samples	Dr.S.Meenakshi, Professor of Chemistry	TWAD Board, Chennai	28,000/- @ 100/ sample
2014-15				
9.	Impact of Rural Housing Scheme (CMSPGHS, IAY) in Addressing Rural Poverty and Women Empowerment	Dr.K.Mahendran, Professor, Rural Technology Centre	State Planning Commission, Chennai	4,99,000/-

Sl. No.	Title of the Project	Name of the Faculty	Name of the Funding Agency with Full Address	Amount Generated (Rs.)
10.	Baseline Survey and Micro Level Plan for 23 Villages in Ariyalur District	Dr N.Lalitha, Professor of Rural Development	Ultra Tech Cement Company-Aditya Birla Group	5,00,000/-
11.	Project to Write Policy Recommendations for a Research Study - Conducted by NCAER, New Delhi	Dr. G. Palanithurai Professor of Political Science and Development Administration	IDRC, Canada	5,00,000/-
Total				42,67,603/-

During the assessment period, a sum of Rs.42,67,603/- has been generated through consultancy.

9. “The class rooms are small and are not ventilated. The institute has inadequate infrastructure for its teaching programmes.”

- ✓ During the assessment period, the Institute has added buildings with a plinth area of 5,437 m² at the cost of Rs.780 lakhs. A new classroom complex consisting of sixteen well-ventilated classrooms has been built at the cost of Rs.157 lakhs. Repair and renovation works to the tune of Rs.979 lakhs have been undertaken. Thus, the Institute has taken earnest steps to strengthen its infrastructure for teaching-learning.

10. “The seating capacity and ambience in the reading room needs to be improved and better access to Science Journals is needed in the institute library.”

- ✓ The ambience at the library has been improved to a large extent;
- ✓ An Annexure to the existing library has been constructed at the cost of Rs.28 lakhs. A major renovation of the library has been undertaken with a financial outlay of Rs.13 lakhs;

- ✓ A Digital Knowledge Centre has been established to cater to the needs of students and scholars;
- ✓ The Institute's website is connected to UGC INFONET e-journal link. Journals belonging to Springer, Taylor & Francis Series, JSTOR, JCCC, JSID, the Institute of Physics, Economic & Political Weekly and Cambridge University Press can be accessed. The Institute website is linked to DELNET and Indiatat.com; and
- ✓ The Institute has signed an MoU with MHRD for Open Source Resources as a partner institute under NMEICT programme.

11. “The Canteens, Hostels and Mess services need to be improved. Hostels are overcrowded and more accommodation needs to be provided.”

- ✓ New hostel with a plinth area of 3,318 m² buildings have been constructed at the cost of Rs.348 lakhs and repair and renovation works have been undertaken at Ladies Hostel at the cost of Rs.393 lakhs. The second floor of the Boys' Hostel has been renovated at the cost of Rs.189 lakhs. Thus, the hostels have received a major facelift and expansion during the assessment period;
- ✓ New mess halls have been constructed in both Boys and Ladies Hostels which have resulted in the improvement of mess facilities; and
- ✓ Efforts have been taken to improve the canteen facilities and services. Additional building has been constructed in the canteen complex at a cost of Rs.36 lakhs which houses the Student Cooperative Stores.

12. “The placement cell needs to be activated for providing better job opportunities and for keeping placement records of the students.”

- ✓ The Placement Cell of the Institute has been revamped and steps have been taken to not only train the students for placements but also to bring prospective employers to the campus; and
- ✓ The tie-ups with TCS, Yamaha Motors and Murugappa Groups of Companies are expected to ensure placement in the coming years.

13. “The institute may consider reintroducing HEPSN.”

- ✓ HEPSN has been re-introduced. As in the previous years, HEPSN, in its fourth innings now, offers a strong support system to the physically challenged students studying at the Institute.

14. “The institute needs improvement in infrastructure for Sports and Co-curricular activities.”

During the assessment period, the facilities for sports and games have been upgraded:

- ✓ There has been a three-fold increase in the budgetary provision for sports and games;
- ✓ A new basketball court has been constructed at the cost of Rs.20 lakhs;
- ✓ A Women’s Fitness Centre has come up at a cost of Rs.45 lakhs;
- ✓ A 8-lane track has been constructed for athletic events at a cost of Rs.60 lakhs; and
- ✓ Facilities for indoor games have been created in both the hostels.

15. “Attempt may be made to fill the 11th plan sanctioned posts.”

- ✓ Fifteen teaching posts were sanctioned during XI Plan period and all the fifteen posts have been filled up.

16. “The institute needs to tap more effectively the community resources from its alumni and dignitaries viz. MLAs/MPs etc.”

- ✓ The Institute organized a Mega Alumni Meet in January 2016 and during the Meet certain measures for tapping into the resources from the Alumni were initiated;
- ✓ An additional laboratory building has been constructed at a cost of Rs.20 lakhs in the Department of Physics from the local MLA Constituency Development Fund; and
- ✓ An additional floor has been constructed in the Martin Luther King Block which houses the Centre for Applied Geology from the Constituency Development Fund of the local MP.

Significant Initiatives for Quality Enhancement during the Post Re-Accreditation Period.

1. New Courses:

- ✓ In furtherance of the objectives of the Institute, the following academic programmes have been launched:
 - (i) M.Phil. Energy
 - (ii) M.Phil. Computer Science
 - (iii) M.Tech. Renewable Energy
 - (iv) M.Sc. Applied Geology and Geomatics
 - (v) B.Sc. Agriculture
 - (vi) B.Sc. Textiles and Fashion Design
 - (vii) B.Voc. Footwear and Accessories Design
 - (viii) B.Voc. Farm Equipment Operation and Maintenance
 - (ix) Vocational Programme in Two Wheeler Mechanism and Maintenance

2. Online Admissions:

- ✓ The Institute switched over to online admissions from 2015-16. The online process was user-friendly and enabled the Institute to avoid repetitive paper work and needless postal expenses. Thanks to this initiative, the Institute could save manpower, avoid expenditure on advertisements, printing of applications and postal charges—amounting to approximately Rs.15 lakhs.
- ✓ The payment of semester examination fee is also through the online mode.

3. CBCS Restructuring

- ✓ Based on the Academic Audit Committee's report and the UGC's revised CBCS Guidelines, the Institute re-formulated its CBCS regulations. Under the revised CBCS, each programme consists of Core Courses, Allied Courses, Major Electives, Non-Major Electives, Modular Courses and Skill-Based Courses. Yoga has been made as a mandatory course for all the students.

4. Exam Reforms

During the assessment period, the following examination reforms were introduced:

- ✓ Decentralized conduct of PG examinations; and
- ✓ Introduction of Unique Subject Code and combination of internal and external valuations which have strengthened the quality control exercise.
- ✓ The new grading system based on UGC guidelines has been implemented from the academic year 2015-16.

5. Research and Development

- ✓ The Institute has approved the guidelines for the introduction of Doctor of Science (D.Sc.) and Doctor of Literature (D.Litt.);
- ✓ The existing SAP Departments viz., Mathematics, Chemistry, Political Science and Development Administration have been upgraded to the next phase with a financial outlay of Rs.245.5 lakhs;
- ✓ The Departments of Chemistry and Mathematics have been elevated to the next phase of funding by DST under FIST;
- ✓ The Departments of Tamil and Computer Science and Applications have been selected under SAP with a financial sanction of Rs. 111 lakhs;
- ✓ The Departments of Physics and Computer Science and Applications are being funded under FIST (Level-I) by DST;
- ✓ The Institute has been selected by UGC for financial support under the Indo-US 21st Century Knowledge Initiative Award to collaborate with the University of North Florida, USA; and
- ✓ A separate cell for Intellectual property Rights (IPR) has been established to help the faculty in filing for patents.
- ✓ 25 MoUs have been signed between GRI-DU and other research institutions/universities/companies mainly for the purpose of encouraging research activities.

6. Administration

- ✓ The MoA of the institute has been revised in tune with the guidelines of MHRD and UGC.
- ✓ New recruitment rules for non-teaching staff have been framed;
- ✓ Administrative Manual for Finance along with Manuals for Hostel and Guest House Administration have been prepared;
- ✓ Five training programmes have been organized for the non-teaching staff with a view to enhance the quality;
- ✓ Administrative and Academic audits have been conducted;

- ✓ Digitization of land records has been completed; and
- ✓ Campus security has been enhanced with the installation of CCTV cameras.

All the issues and concerns expressed by the NAAC Peer Team (Second Cycle) have been addressed earnestly. And these post-accreditation strategies have helped the Institute to ensure and sustain quality in its three-pronged mission of teaching, research and extension, and eventually in nation-building.

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