

Technology management in rural industries

Governmental initiatives in India

Vinay Kumar and Jyoti S A Bhat

Given the diversity and importance of rural industry in India's economy, the technology management needs of this sector are particularly challenging. The Government of India has therefore given special emphasis on enhancing technology management capabilities of rural industries. It is taking appropriate measures on technology upgradation, technology transfer, technology adoption, technical training for capacity building, etc. The article discusses and presents an overview, along with case studies, of the Government's efforts in this direction.

Dr. Vinay Kumar
Scientist G

Mr. Jyoti S A Bhat
Scientist F

*Department of Scientific & Industrial
Research, Government of India
Technology Bhawan, New Mehrauli
Road, New Delhi 110 016, India
Tel: (91-11) 6960098/6567373
Fax: (91-11) 6960629/6868607
Email: jsabhat@alpha.nic.in*

Introduction

Industries based on the needs of the locality are based on products as well as services. Some of these are blacksmith services, manufacture of farming implements, carpentry, cattle related services, and personal care services.

Among these, it is the industries based on locally available raw materials that are most growth oriented and have the greatest potential. This article refers mainly to such industries.

Technology management in the rural sector

The technology management needs of rural industry in India have been particularly challenging for a variety of interlinked and complex reasons.

First, there is a very large number of products that are generated by the

rural sector: agro-based products, leather, silk from sericulture, honey, hand-woven cloth, pottery, coir, bamboo and many other products. Second, as may be observed, these industries are very diverse in nature and can be classified into four basic categories - small industry, village industry, cottage industry and individual artisans - making it difficult to replicate solutions across categories. Third, a very large number of people are employed in this sector: one estimate indicates this as nearly 6 million. Fourth, there are not enough statistics available in respect of these sectors. Fifth, and quite important, it has been estimated that these products constitute nearly 30 per cent of the total product exports from India. Sixth, of concern is that the number of persons employed in this sector has been steadily reducing