

Convention on
MEDICINAL PLANTS For Sustainable Livelihoods

September 16, 2011



Madurai Symposium 2011

September 14-18, 2011

MADURAI SYMPOSIUM

Madurai Symposium is a development platform, where Development Stakeholders – Community, Institutions, Civil Societies in Government & Non-Government organizations(NGOs), Financial Institutions and Academia Converge at Madurai for Conventions and Conferences. Four pioneer Symposiums were organized in Madurai between 2003 and 2009, each attended by over 15000 participants. Building upon the experiences of the earliest symposiums, the theme for 2011 is **Advancing Development: Towards Sustainable Livelihoods**. In line with that it is decided to organize a Convention by inviting more than 300 medicinal plants gatherers, cultivators and different stakeholders, to discuss about the ways and means to make medicinal plants activity as a **Sustainable Livelihood** activity for the poor.

Scope of Medicinal Plants

From time immemorial, Indian medicinal systems of medicine comprising, Siddha, Unani and Ayurvedic have been using plants, herbs and spices as a base for preparing traditional medicines and in curing of common ailments. Among 47,000 plant Species identified, 15000 found to be having rich medicinal values. Ayurveda uses 1350 plants, Unani uses 650, Siddha uses 950, Homeopathy 1100 and 78% of Modern Medicinal products are the derivatives of Medicinal Plants either directly or indirectly.

According to World Health Organization (WHO) report, 80% population in the developing countries depends on traditional medicine for the relief of some common ailments as they are easily accessible. Besides they are cheaper and do not have any side effect. Efficacy, safety and high sensitivity to disease causing pathogens like bacteria, fungi, viruses, worms, etc are added advantages of herbal medicines.

At least 25% drugs manufactured by pharmaceutical industries are derived from plants and many other, which are synthetic analogues, built on prototype compounds, isolated from plants.

According to an estimation done by the Department of AYUSH, the raw medicinal plants are used by Herbal industries, Rural Households and Exports. India now ranks the World's second largest exporter of medicinal plants, registering a growth of 20% in the last financial year and shares 8.13 % of Global requirements following China which contributes 28% of the Global needs. During last year India has exported raw drugs worth Rs.685.14 crores. This is due to the wider context of growing demand for plant based medicines, health products, pharmaceuticals, food



supplements, cosmetics, etc. in the national and international markets.

Medicinal plants being a boon bestowed by nature on mankind and the increasing demand for them, occupy an important position in the socio-cultural, spiritual and medicinal arena of rural and tribal people in India. This sector involves many stakeholders like local collectors, cultivators, middlemen, traders and pharmaceutical companies having diverging interests. The past experiences reveal that, there exist many problems starting from collection/cultivation till marketing to the end users. Considering the importance of this activity, to make it as a sustainable livelihood to the poor people who are involved in it, a **“Convention on Medicinal Plants” is organized on 16th September, 2011.**

Role of Medicinal Plants in the Rural Sector:

At present, 90% collection of medicinal plants is from wild sources generating employment to poor rural women folk.

Medicinal plants are collected without paying attention to the quality aspects such as stage of plant maturity for collection, proper drying and storage, duration of storage, and methods of packing, etc. While a sustainable income from Agriculture is a problem due to various factors, cultivation of medicinal plants as an intercrop or pure crop in part of their land would augment their income source. It is a major source of income for women who are unable to do any hard physical works. Empowerment of these people with knowledge on **Good Collection** and **Good Agricultural Practices** would help to have a Sustainable Livelihood from the collection and cultivation of Medicinal plants.

Stakeholders

Stakeholders who will take part in the Convention are :

1. Primary Stakeholders –Medicinal plants gatherers and cultivators
2. Traditional Medical Practitioners
3. Traditional medicinal houses and modern drug industries
4. Support service providers :Department of Horticulture, TNAU, Medicinal Plants Board, Department of Ayush and Bankers.

Role and Experience of KTL

Kalanjium Thozhilagam Limited (KTL), a business initiative of DHAN Foundation, is a public limited company with people institutions as share holders, registered under Companies Act 1956. It promotes various livelihood activities for the poor to improve their income by reducing steps in the supply chain. Among all other activities, KTL feels proud to intervene in the medicinal plants activity as it is a main source of livelihood for the poorest of the poor women in interior parts of villages. KTL adopts FAIR TRADE PRACTICES in all the stages from procurement to marketing.

At present KTL works with around 1000 medicinal plant gatherers in the foothills of the Western Ghats. 16 procurement centers have been established to procure the products from them in their own villages or very nearby.



Punarnava / Vattasaranathy kodi
Boerhaavia diffusa

gatherers to come out of their drudgeries in marketing their products. Further, KTL undertakes the process of cleaning, sorting and baling of products before marketing them.

Purpose of Convention

To Primary Stakeholders:

1. To make them understand the quality standards while collecting.
2. To enlighten them the proper stage of harvesting the plants to maintain the alkaloid content.
3. To train them in Sustainable and Regenerative methods of medicinal plants collection.
4. To impart **“Good Collection Practices”** of medicinal plants.
5. To Impart **“Good Agricultural Practices”** for the cultivators.
6. To exchange the knowledge and skill of collection and cultivation of medicinal plants.

To Traditional Medical Practitioners

1. To make the primary stakeholders to revive the traditional medicine for common ailments.
2. To provide the medicinal plant gatherers simple techniques in preparing traditional medicines for healing Anaemia, Diabetes, Hypertension, etc.
3. To make them understand the use of traditional medicine in combination with allopathic formulations.

To Traditional Medicinal Houses and Modern Drug Industries

1. To explore the potentials of different medicinal plants required for their use.
2. To ascertain the quality of their purchase.
3. To identify the new products for their R&D.
4. To popularize their products to the farmers and medicinal plants gatherers and cultivators.

To Service Providers

1. To channelize service resources to other stake holders
2. To act as a bridge between service providers and stakeholders.
3. To support the promotion of Infrastructural Facilities enabling value addition to increase the benefit to the primary stakeholders.

Outcome of the Convention and Seminar

1. Making the medicinal plants activity as Sustainable Livelihood of Primary stakeholders.
2. Betterment of Supply Chain Model.
3. Revival of Local Health Tradition
4. Policy framework for livelihood promotion through medicinal plants activity.



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