



# Capacity Development Framework for Traditional Healers



Anke Weisheit\*, Pamela Mbabazi, Meinen Moshi, Donald Otieno, Alex Ariho\*

## Aim and Objectives

To domesticate safe medicinal plant species for income generation, improvement of herbal health care provision and conservation of the environment.

## Specific objectives

- To enhance skills in ex-situ conservation of useful medicinal plants hence reducing pressure on over exploited wild medicinal plant species
- To build capacity in sustainable harvesting techniques for medicinal plants, post harvest and enhance storage packaging herbal medicines
- To organize Traditional healers in groups which is vital for sustainability of the interventions
- To develop various value chains for herbal medicine enterprises and run their practices economically
- To train the management of a revolving-fund to help traditional healers access soft loans and provide a start up portfolio
- To contribute to the establishment of a Agro-Business Incubator
- To provide MSc and PhD students a platform for knowledge sharing with traditional healers



Lake Bunyonyi Region, Kabale Uganda



Group Work and Peer Learning Exercise - Harvest

## Capacity Building Principles

From the know to the unknown

Practice & Hands-on

Peer Sharing & Learning

Documenting & Record Keeping

New Techniques & Knowledge



Field Seminar on Sustainable Leaf Harvesting



Seminar Vegetative Propagation of Trees

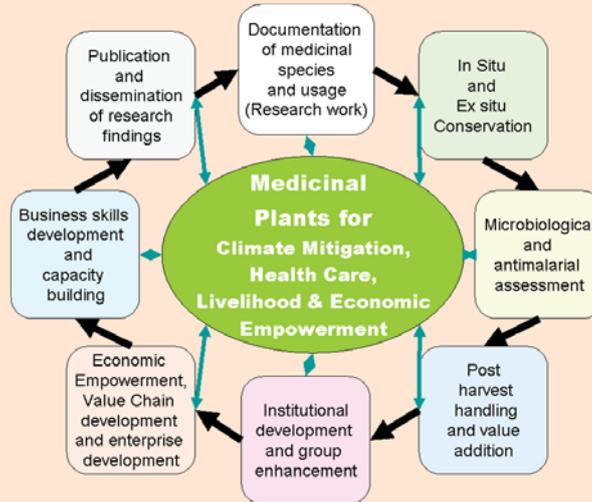


Record Keeping Training - follow up visit



Sharing at the COP17, Durban, South Africa

## Capacity Development Framework for Traditional Healers



Training business skills in local language



Healer Group meet every first Friday here



Income diversification using indigenous crafts works



Demonstration of herbal tincture making

## Key Outcome

- Cultivation of highly-demanded medicinal species for income generating options
- Healer Group formed an association and meet every first Friday in the month
- Medicinal plants occurring in the region of Lake Bunyonyi are effective against malaria, bacterial and fungal infections
- Ex-situ conservation of medicinal plants is an effective way of mitigating against their loss in the wild due to over exploitation and destruction practiced.
- Improved practices of traditional medicine preparation, packaging and how to run their practices will enable them improve on the quality of their services
- Practice as an enterprise - Value Chain Development for herbal medicine can improve livelihood and service provision
- Access to credit can empower traditional healers improve on and run their clinics more effectively.

## Collaborators:

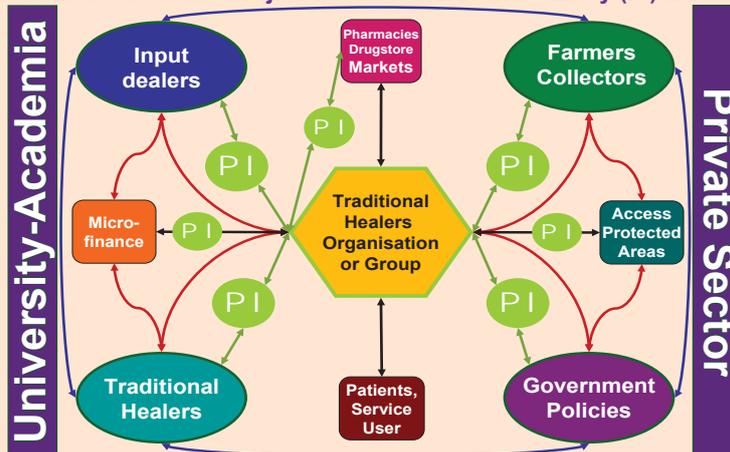
**Prof. Mainen J. Moshi,**  
Institute of Traditional Medicine, Muhimbili, University of Health and Allied Sciences (MUHAS), Tanzania  
email: gynura1955@yahoo.com

**Dr. Donald F. Otieno**  
Dept of Biological Sciences  
School of Science  
Moi University, Kenya  
email: dfotieno@yahoo.co.uk

**Assoc. Prof. Pamela K. Mbabazi**  
Mbarara University of Science and Technology (MUST), Uganda  
email: pkmbabazi@infocom.co.ug

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<http://www.VicRes.net>

## Stakeholders and Project Intervention Point of Entry (PI) Matrix





# Conservation of Medicinal Plants Domestication and Cultivation



Ms. Anke Weisheit (MUST), Mr. Alex Ariho, (EHC)

## Background

- Traditional medicine serves 80% of Ugandans' primary health care
- Affordable, accessible and culturally accepted
- High potential leverage on public health with 1 herbalist per 200-500 inhabitants compared with 1 allopathic Doctor to 2000 - 20.000 inhabitants

### Main constraints faced by traditional healers

- Increasing population - degrading forests
- Limited supply of phytomedicinals
- Poor harvesting practices
- Limited knowledge about cultivation and propagation
- Limited land availability

### The need to move from wild harvesting to on-farm cultivation of phytomedicinals

- Concurrently, population pressure on the natural resource base and the resulting high rate of deforestation have decreased the diversity and availability of medicinal plants in forest and agro-ecosystems.
- Resource access to protected areas is limited.
- Population pressure on the natural resource base and the resulting high rate of deforestation have decreased the diversity and availability of medicinal plants in forest and agro-eco systems.
- Medicinal products are mostly harvested from the wild and the cultivation culture for medicinal plants, especially on a large scale is not widespread in Uganda.
- Markets of medicinal plants products exist but are not organised and are often woody species.

## Introduction

### The aim: Improved livelihoods

- Cultivation of highly-demanded medicinal species offers income-generating options
- Transferring the resource from the forest to the farm saves collection labour, reduces transport costs and eases management.
- Increased product supply contributes to decreasing costs of treatments, thus enhancing access to health care especially by the poorest.
- Exchange of knowledge, skills and planting materials among herbalist groups
- Exploring the potential on multi-purpose medicinal trees

### Conservation of biodiversity

- Reduction of pressure on wild populations
- Introduction of indigenous species on farm (ex-situ Conservation)
- Advocating the promotion and planting of indigenous trees and plants on farm

### Maintenance of indigenous knowledge

- Technical support helps herbalists to value their own indigenous knowledge and share it more freely
- Documentation of indigenous knowledge and sharing with the younger generation
- Herbal Medicine Practice as an enterprises for income
- Institutional Support

## Identification of Beneficiaries

### Selecting of Herbalists

- Selection of three herbalist associations who are not serving the same area (avoiding competition feeling)
- Should be organised to facilitate sharing self elimination of quacks



Biodiversity loss - Priority Species Identification



Germplasm Collection (seeds and cuttings)



Collection tools and post seed processing



Herbalists training - Nursery (at RPWRD)



Training in potting and transplanting seedlings



Low technology vegetative propagation tunnel



Herbalist's own plant / tree nurseries



Cultivated - Aloe vera & Vernonia amygdalina



Good coppicing of Sesbania sesban



Inspecting the coppicing progress of Vernonia a.

## Key Activities

- Herbalists select rare and highly-demanded medicinal species for domestication
- Propagation work in the professional nursery is being conducted on priority species
- Practical training provided to herbalists in basic tree/plant nursery establishment and management, and propagation
- On-farm testing of propagation methods through seeds, wildings and cuttings (vegetative propagation) of supplied species
- Provision of training in appropriate seed collection and guided field trips on sustainable harvesting build collectors' capacity to improve their practices

## Results

- Diversity of rare species total number of rare species mentioned = 103 species (24 herbalists)
- Only 19 out of 103 species are cited by more than one herbalist as 'difficult to find'. Most species are cited only once.
- Diversity of cultivated species
- Total number of cultivated species = 120 species (20 herbalists)
- Only 20 out of the 103 rare species are cultivated
- Only 15 out of 100 cultivated species are cultivated by more than one herbalist
- The range of species used and cultivated by herbalists is highly specific to individual herbalists
- Knowledge sharing on cultivation practices can have strong impact for conservation

## Outcome / Impact

- Herbalists have built confidence in the partnership and are increasingly open to work together and to share their knowledge about cultivation and conservation.
- 15 tree / plant nurseries established and transplanted on farm
- Herbalists collecting their own planting material and use the acquired propagation skills in germplasm collection and handling
- Associations in Western districts of Kasese, Kabarole and Bundibugyo have requested similar support.
- Early steps at RPWRD have been made to increase its capacity to produce, process and market medicinal products.
- Herbalists' capacity and awareness of the need for documentation and preservation of indigenous knowledge have been enhanced

## Partners

**Host:** The Rukararwe Partnership Workshop for Rural Development (RPWRD) is an indigenous NGO in Bushenyi district established in 1986 which cooperates with three local herbalist associations.

**Technical Support:** The World Agroforestry Centre (ICRAF) is an international agricultural research organization. Its mission is to improve human welfare by reducing poverty, improving food and nutritional security, and enhancing environmental resilience in the tropics.

**Funding:** Environmental Conservation Trust of Uganda (ECOTRUST), <http://ecotrust.or.ug>

## Award

Winner 2003: The CGIAR - Innovation Marketplace, "Best Innovative Partnership Program" to Mr. Nyine Bitahwa of (RPWRD), in partnership with Ms. Anke Weisheit, (ICRAF), Strengthening the Capacity of Herbalists in Conservation and use of Medicinal Species. By the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research

## Objectives

- To build capacity in sustainable harvesting techniques for medicinal plants
- To build capacity in good post harvest handling practices and technologies
- To introduce simple technologies for adoption by traditional healers and small scale processors on herbal medicine
- To improve the capacity for preparation, packaging and labelling herbal medicines
- To provide guidance in fulfilling legal requirements for traditional medicine by local authorities
- To develop value chains for herbal medicine

## Harvesting of Medicinal Plants and Trees



Leaf harvesting exercise on Eucalyptus spp. before training session



L: Bark harvesting on Eucalyptus spp.  
R: Covering wound with banana fibres



Field Training on Sustainable Leaf harvesting cultivated *Vernonia* spp.

## Post harvest processing of herbal medicine



Sun Drying of medicinal plant on the floor – Risk of contamination (chicken etc)



Improved drying shade for medicinal plants



Interior with drying shelves and separators

## Local processing and packing of herbal medicine



Exposing improved herbal medicine to the market - at a local Expo



Pounding dry herbs for making powder a dust producing process



Try it myself to get a "feel" on the job – doing it outside is better



Boiling herbs on firewood – strong unhealthy smoke & contamination with ash

## Improved processing and packing of herbal medicine



Improved (one room) herbal medicine processing unit & protective clothing



Herbal Tincture making session – new technologies using alcohol as preservative



Packing herbal medicine in appropriate (new) bottle and labelling session



Gas stove – hygienic source of heat, optimal for herbal medicine processing



Packing herbal medicine in clean environment - requirement by regulatory body



Development of the packing of herbal medicine was a gradual process

## Key Outcome

- Reduced harvest and post harvest losses leading to reduced pressure on plants
- Reduction of using the wrong medicine through clear labelling and colour coding
- Safe herbal remedies free from avoidable contaminations
- Attractive looking, informative and convenient herbal medicine packaging
- Reaching wider market and consumer base
- Increasing compliance and comfort in using herbal remedies
- Products fitting in the urban and modern life style