

**Training on Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) protection and  
Traditional Knowledge (TK) documentation with 50 healers (traditional  
knowledge holders) of Telangana State  
(or) in Telugu  
Telangana Prathama Moolika Vaidyula Samavesham 2016  
(First Telangana Herbal Healers Conference 2016)**

**Background:**

**Article 8(j) of Nagoya Protocol (Convention on Biological Diversity)**

Each contracting Party (Country) shall, as far as possible and as appropriate:

Subject to national legislation, respect, preserve and maintain knowledge, innovations and practices of indigenous and local communities embodying traditional lifestyles relevant for the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity and promote their wider application with the approval and involvement of the holders of such knowledge, innovations and practices and encourage the equitable sharing of the benefits arising from the utilization of such knowledge innovations and practices.

**Biological Diversity Act, Traditional Knowledge and ABS - a relevance**

Government of India has enacted Biological Diversity Act (2002) and Rules (2004) for conservation of biological diversity, sustainable use of its components and fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising out of the use of biological resources, knowledge and for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto.

Section 41(1) of the BD Act provides for relevant “chronicling of knowledge related to biological diversity”, while Section 36(5) has enabling provision in empowering the Central Government “to respect and protect the knowledge of local people relating to biological diversity, as recommended by the National Biodiversity Authority through such measures, which may include registration of such knowledge at the local, State or national levels, and other measures for protection, including sui generis system”.

Traditional knowledge refers to the knowledge, innovations and practices of indigenous and local communities around the world. Developed from experience gained over the centuries and adapted to the local culture and environment, traditional knowledge is transmitted orally from generation to generation. It tends to be collectively owned and takes the form of stories, songs, folklore, proverbs, cultural values, beliefs, rituals, community laws, local language, and agricultural practices, including the development of plant species and animal breeds. Sometimes it is referred to as an oral traditional for it is practiced, sung, danced, painted, carved, chanted and performed down through millennia. Traditional knowledge is mainly of a practical nature, particularly in such fields as agriculture, fisheries, health, horticulture, forestry and environmental management in general.

There is today a growing appreciation of the value of traditional knowledge. This knowledge is valuable not only to those who depend on it in their daily lives, but to modern industry and agriculture as well. Many widely used products, such as plant-based medicines, health products and cosmetics, are derived from traditional knowledge. Other valuable products based on traditional knowledge include agricultural and non-wood forest products as well as handicraft.

Traditional knowledge can make a significant contribution to sustainable development. Most indigenous and local communities are situated in areas where the vast majority of the world's genetic resources are found. Many of them have cultivated and used biological diversity in a sustainable way for thousands of years. Some of their practices have been proven to enhance and promote biodiversity at the local level and aid in maintaining healthy ecosystems. However, the contribution of indigenous and local communities to the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity goes far beyond their role as natural resource managers. Their skills and techniques provide valuable information to the global community and a useful model for biodiversity policies. Furthermore, as on-site communities with extensive knowledge of local environments, indigenous and local communities are most directly involved with conservation and sustainable use.

Telangana has a long tradition of practicing herbal medicine especially in the forest regions. Many tribal traditional herbal healers practice natural medicine for generations with substantial effectiveness.

### **Objectives of the programme**

- To provide a platform for tribal healers from various regions of Telangana
- Identify ten prevalent and common diseases in the region
- Explore the possibility of bench marking best practices for these common diseases of humans and animals
- Identify the rare and likely extinct herbal plants
- Prepare a list of 100 herbal plants with local names and botanical names identified and used by the healers.
- In the long run, evolve “Telugu medicine’ compiling the best practices for diseases being practiced effectively by traditional healers in Telangana.
- Undertake validation of these practices with experts in the formal system.
- Explore the possibility of patents for the short listed practices.