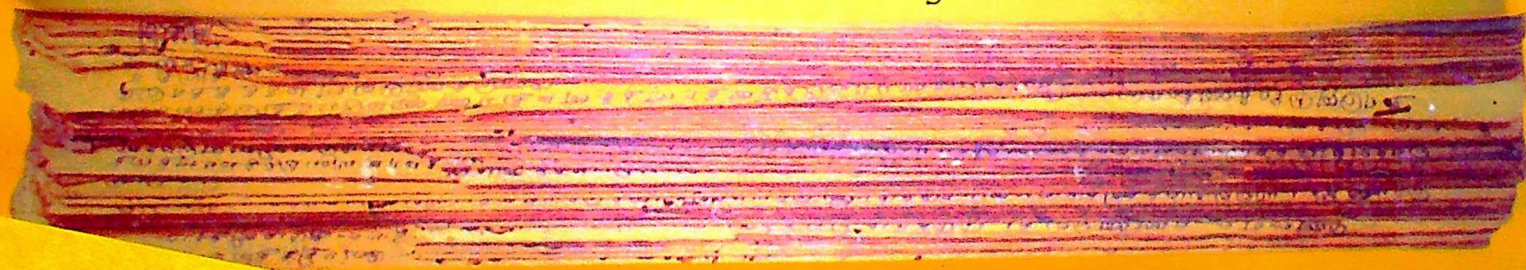


Revitalising
Indian Medical Heritage



 **FRLHT**
Foundation for Revitalisation of Local Health Traditions



Mission

FRLHT's mission is to revitalize the traditional health sciences by high quality research, training world-class human resources and creative community services. This mission is focused on 3 thrust areas viz.,

- Fundamental and Trans-disciplinary research on Traditional Health Knowledge systems including the community based local health traditions.
- Conservation of the natural resources (flora, fauna, metals and minerals) used by Indian Medical Heritage
- Designing sustainable community outreach programs related to the above two thrust areas

Vision

The vision of FRLHT is enhancing the quality of healthcare in rural and urban India and globally by creative application of India's Traditional Health Sciences.

Institutional Status

FRLHT is a registered Public Trust and Charitable Society, which started its activities outlined below in March 1993. The Ministry of Science & Technology (DSIR) recognizes FRLHT as a scientific and research organization. The Ministry of Environment and Forests has designated FRLHT as a National Center of Excellence for medicinal plants and traditional knowledge.

Profile of Activities

Conservation of Natural Resources: Since the mid 70s ICAR and CSIR had been focusing on standardizing agro-technologies for around forty-five species of medicinal plants but no institution in India was promoting conservation of the wild gene pools of the 8000 species that constitute the medicinal wealth of India. Between 1993 and 2004 in collaboration with state forest departments of Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh and Maharashtra, FRLHT has conceived, designed and technically guided a 40 crore project for the creation of 55 Forest Gene Banks (FGBs) of 200-500 hectares size each, across Peninsular India. These 55 FGBs have been designated by the State Governments as permanent Medicinal Plant Conservation Areas and they capture the gene pools of the medicinal plant diversity of the region. In 2004, the UNDP and GEF (Global Environment Facility) have pledged to work with MoEF, Govt. of India to expand the Peninsular India program to the N.E., N.W. and Central India. FRLHT has been designated as the technical resource agency for guiding this program.

Awards

1998: FRLHT received the prestigious Norman Borlaug Award.

2002: 'Medicinal Plants Programme' in Peninsular India was one of the projects selected by the UN from around the globe for the Equator Initiative Prize.

2003: The Rosenthal Centre for Complementary & Alternative Medicine, in the Columbia University, New York, awarded FRLHT with its first award for "International Cultural Stewardship".

2007: Rotary Club of Bangalore awarded FRLHT its "Citizen Extra Ordinaire" award for its path breaking contributions to the field of traditional medicine & environment

Information Technology & Traditional Knowledge : The use of Information Technology for processing the vast and rich materia medica of Traditional Systems of Medicine was pioneered by FRLHT in 1995. This is an innovative program for the modernization of Indian systems of medicine in order to improve their access, and mine their knowledge base for a variety of research purposes. FRLHT, by 2004, has developed multi-disciplinary databases on medicinal plants linking the traditional materia - medica (on plants and metals & minerals) computerised from primary texts over the period 1500 BC to 1900 AD to fields like botany, agriculture, geology, conservation, trade, phyto-chemistry and pharmacology.



Bridge between Traditional Knowledge and Science:

FRLHT lab, set up in 2001, is a pioneering initiative in *epistemologically informed cross-cultural research*. Its work is based on a rigorous methodology (that is still evolving) for correlating concepts, categories and approaches of traditional knowledge systems with modern science. It has standard facilities in chemistry (including phytochemistry) & biology (including microbiology and molecular biology). Over the last 7-years it has standardized raw materials and processes used

in traditional medicine and developed innovative products for industry on a consultancy basis. It has initiated research on basic concepts of Ayurvedic pharmacology like 'rasa' and is investigating traditional methods for purifying water and has developed an innovative, low cost, chemical kit for identification of medicinal plants.

Scientific Repositories of Natural Resources:

FRLHT pioneered in 1995, the establishment of the first internationally accredited herbarium (botanical repository) of the medicinal plants of India. At the end of 2004 the Herbarium has collected around 70% of the medicinal plants used by the codified Indian Systems of Medicine.

FRLHT has already initiated digitization of the herbarium, and has planned in future to expand the repository to include medicinal fauna and the metals and minerals used by traditional systems of medicine.

Revitalisation of Folk Healing Systems: Since 1995 FRLHT has been working with a network of community based organizations to revitalize local health cultures in rural communities in Southern India. It has sponsored dozens of taluka, district and state level conventions of folk healers in Southern states. For the last nine years it has also been giving annual *Nati Vaidya Ratna* awards to outstanding folk healers.

A very significant program for promoting *health security* of rural households was initiated by FRLHT in 2000. Under this program in collaboration with reputed NGOs and self-help women groups over 200,000 home herbal gardens have been established across the states of Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra, Orissa & Chattisgarh and the households trained in the use of the herbs for primary health care.

Since 2002, FRLHT has been doing field studies to document and evaluate traditional bone setting, veterinary practices and preventive treatments for Malaria in South India. It has helped to establish around 100 folk healer associations in rural communities across four southern states.

Mini Hospital: In 2004, FRLHT has started a small 20-bed Ayurveda & Yoga nursing home on its campus in Bangalore to standardize holistic strategies for management of different health conditions. This facility is planned to be up scaled to a 100-bed clinical research hospital and wellness centre in 2008.

A Herbal Public Ltd Company owned by Rural Women and Small Farmers:

In 2001, FRLHT initiated a community owned enterprise whose shareholders are small marginal farmers and rural women. It is called the Gram Mooligai Company Ltd. This company is designed along the AMUL model for the herbal sector. It is registered under the Companies Act. The company engages in cultivation, collection and value-addition of herbal products.



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