

## Income Generation and Employment Opportunity of the Entrepreneurs and Farmers Through Production, Processing, and Marketing of Medicinal Plants in Bangladesh

**Authors :** Md. Nuru Miah, A. F. M. Akhter Uddin

**Abstract :** Medicinal plants are grown naturally in a tropical environment in Bangladesh and used as drug and therapeutic agents in the health care system. According to Bangladesh Agricultural Research Institute (BARI), there are 722 species of medicinal plants in the country. Of them, 255 plants are utilized by the manufacturers of Ayurvedic and Unani medicines. Medicinal plants like Aloe vera, Ashwagonda, shotomul, Tulsi, Vuikumra, Misridana are extensively cultivated in some selected areas as well; where Aloe vera scored the highest position in production. In the early 1980, Ayurvedic and Unani companies procured 80 percent of medicinal plants from natural forests, and the rest 20 percent was imported. Now the scenario has changed; 80 percent is imported, and the rest 20 percent is collected from local products (Source: A study on sector based need assessment of Business promotion council-Herbal products and medicinal plants, page-4). Uttara Development Program Society, a leading Non-Government development organization in Bangladesh, has been implementing a value chain development project under promoting Agricultural commercialization and Enterprises of Pally Karma Sahayak Foundation (PKSF) funded by the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) in Natore Sadar Upazila from April 2017 to sustainably develop the technological interventions for products and market development. The ultimate goal of the project is to increase income, generate employment and develop this sector as a sustainable business enterprise. Altogether 10,000 farmers (Nursery owners, growers, input supplier, processors, whole sellers, and retailers) are engaged in different activities of the project. The entrepreneurs engaged in medicinal plant cultivation did not know and follow environmental and good agricultural practices. They used to adopt traditional methodology in production and processing. Locally the farmers didn't have any positive initiative to expand their business as well as develop value added products. A lot of diversified products could be possible to develop and marketed with the introduction of post-harvest processing technology and market linkage with the local and global buyer. Training is imparted to the nursery owners and herbal growers on production technologies, sowing method, use of organic fertilizers/compost/pesticides, harvesting procedures, and storage facilities. Different types of herbal tea like Rosella, Moringa, Tulshi, and Basak are being produced and packed locally with a good scope of its marketing in different cities of the country. The project has been able to achieve a significant impact in the development of production technologies, but still, there is room for further improvement in processing, packaging, and marketing level. The core intervention of the current project to develop some entrepreneurs for branding, packaging, promotion, and marketing while considering environment friendly practices. The present strategies will strengthen the knowledge and skills of the entrepreneurs for the production and marketing of their products, maintaining worldwide accepted compliance system for easy access to the global market.

**Keywords :** aloe vera, herbs and shrubs, market, interventions

**Conference Title :** ICPMMP 2023 : International Conference on Plant Medicine and Medicinal Plants

**Conference Location :** Dubai, United Arab Emirates

**Conference Dates :** January 30-31, 2023