

ABOUT RGM

Rashtriya Guni Mission (RGM) has been working in Rajasthan, India in the domain of traditional health system. It was established on 2nd march 1998 in Udaipur (Rajasthan). From 1998 to 2006 it has been working for conservation and promotion of traditional health systems as oral institution/ organization. It was legally registered under the National Trust Act 1882/ Registration No. 1863 from New Delhi /Date 21-2-2006 for its operation. All the people involved with RGM have been active in their area for work of promotion of traditional health system. The aim of RGM activities is to strengthen the traditional health systems and its Practitioners (Guni), develop community's mentality towards traditional health systems, medicinal plants conservation, promote and aware the traditional community knowledge at local level and to inform community importance of knowledge.

WHO IS A GUNI?

Once man realized significance of "Wonder of herb" they recorded them in mind, learned by initiation and transmitted orally or passed their knowledge either from generation to generation or through "Guru-Shrishya Parampara" (teacher disciple relationship).

In all most all villages in India we can find people of any caste or community who treat different diseases with local plants or "*Jari-butis*" (*Herbs*).

These non degree holder doctors posses distinctive and astonishing competence in bone setting, curing skin diseases, asthma, snake bites and various human and animal ailments. They are capable of doing wonders and that's why they are named Gunis.

These practitioners are known by different names at different places in India such as *Vaidu, Vaidhyaraj, Amchis, Gaitas, Uche and Danga Bhagat*. But by different literature in the world they are called as tribal doctors, bare footed doctors, herbal doctors, tribal medicine man (TMM), herbalist, folk healers, and folk and laymen practitioners. The international organizations such as WHO, IUCN and WWF has recognized them as traditional health practitioners (THPs).

HOW DO GUNI WORK?

In the process of searching the Gunis and knowing their work some interesting things came out gunis do not differentiate with people on basis of caste or class while doing their job. Most of the Gunis treat without any fee; they use their expertise as social service and do not try to en cash it. Since these Gunis term their art and competency as patent gifted by God they do not share the name, identification and qualities of the herbs they use. Either they get this knowledge from any Guni or monk through Guru (teacher)-disciple tradition.



RGM GOAL

The goal is to provide low cost, easily accessible and effective health services by protection and promotion of Traditional Medicine System at the same time enabling biodiversity conservation by promoting Traditional medicinal Knowledge.

RGM OBJECTIVE

- To Revival and promotion of traditional System of Medicine
- To establish the Traditional health Practitioners (Guni) in the Society
- To develop and revitalize community based health care system.
- To promote sustainable conservation and identification of medicinal plants and provide scientific base for validation of traditional health care practices.
- To re-organize the traditional knowledge and methods and re-establish them at community level
- To cater maximum health needs at community level on the basis of community initiative and traditional methods.

RGM WORKING AREA

We are working in Rajasthan, Uttarakhand, Madhya Pradesh, Bihar, Orissa, Himachal Pradesh, Gujarat, and Jharkhand. In all these states we have strong networking partners like NGO,CBO,Youth Gurop, SHG etc. with whom we work. Details of working area (district) of RGM in all the above mentioned states are as follows:

| S.No. | Name of state | Name of Districts |
|-------|------------------|---|
| 1. | Bihar | Bhagalpur, Champaran, Darbhanga, Jamui, Nalanda, Madhubani, Supaul, Saran and Samastipur district |
| 2. | Gujarat | Dahod district |
| 3. | Himachal Pradesh | Sirmaur, Shimla, Chamba, kullu, Kangra, Mandi and Solan district |
| 4. | Jharkhand | Deoghar, Ranchi, Dumka, Sahibganj and Gumla district |
| 5. | Madhya Pradesh | Jhabua district |
| 6. | Orissa | Bodh and Puri |
| 7. | Rajasthan | Ajmer, Alwar, Banswara, Baran, Barmer, Bhilwara, Bikaner, Chittorgarh, Dungarpur, Jaipur, Jaisalmer, Jhalawar, Jodhpur, Kota, Pali, Rajsamand and all Rajasthan |
| 8. | Uttarakhand | Chamoli, Dehradun and Almora districts |

In the above mentioned 8 states RGM has searched and identified around 1250 gunis and dais and documented 240 medicinal plants which are used by gunis for the treatment during treatment through traditional health system.

ACTIVITIES OF RGM:

- Search, identification of Gunis (Traditional health practitioners)
- Registration of guni knowledge in gram panchayats/gram sabha
- Organize workshops for gunis
- Capacity Building of Guni
- Conservation of Medicinal Plants and local biodiversity and establish home herbal gardens
- Establishment of seed banks of medicinal plants
- Promotion of Traditional Health and Practice
- Integrated child & women health Development
- Prevent malnutrition and promote nutritional diet among children, women
- Provide information and education about women child health
- Establish traditional health clinics of gunis
- Organize herbal festival, guni haat, etc.
- Conservation, documentation and promotion of traditional medicinal Knowledge/Traditional Community Knowledge
- Collaboration and coordination with public health services
- Research & Development
- Advocacy & Network



GUNI SEARCH AND IDENTIFICATION

The first important work of RGM is search and identification of gunis who resides in hills and interior village areas and has knowledge of traditional health system. RGM does this work with the help of its networking partners, local governing bodies, school teachers, anganwadi workers etc. After the identification of gunis various programs are organized to increase the capacity and capability so that mentality can be changed and knowledge of traditional health system can be provided to more and more people.

The selection of Guni is based on following measures:

CRITERIA FOR IDENTIFYING A GUNI:

- He/she inherits the knowledge traditionally or learned through Guru – Sishya Parampara (Teacher disciple system) and treat with Jadi-Buti (medicinal plant) or any other indigenous practices.
- He/she has the knowledge to identify, utilities, harvesting and conservation process of Jadi-Buti.

He/she should know the after-effect of Jadi-Buti into particular disease and should diagnose traditionally through proper symptoms.

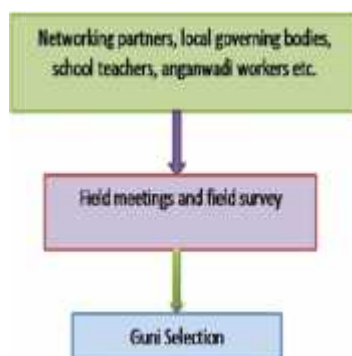
- He/ she should have the knowledge to formulate the medicines with Jadi-Buti, define its doses required to any person and instructions or restrictions that one could follow.

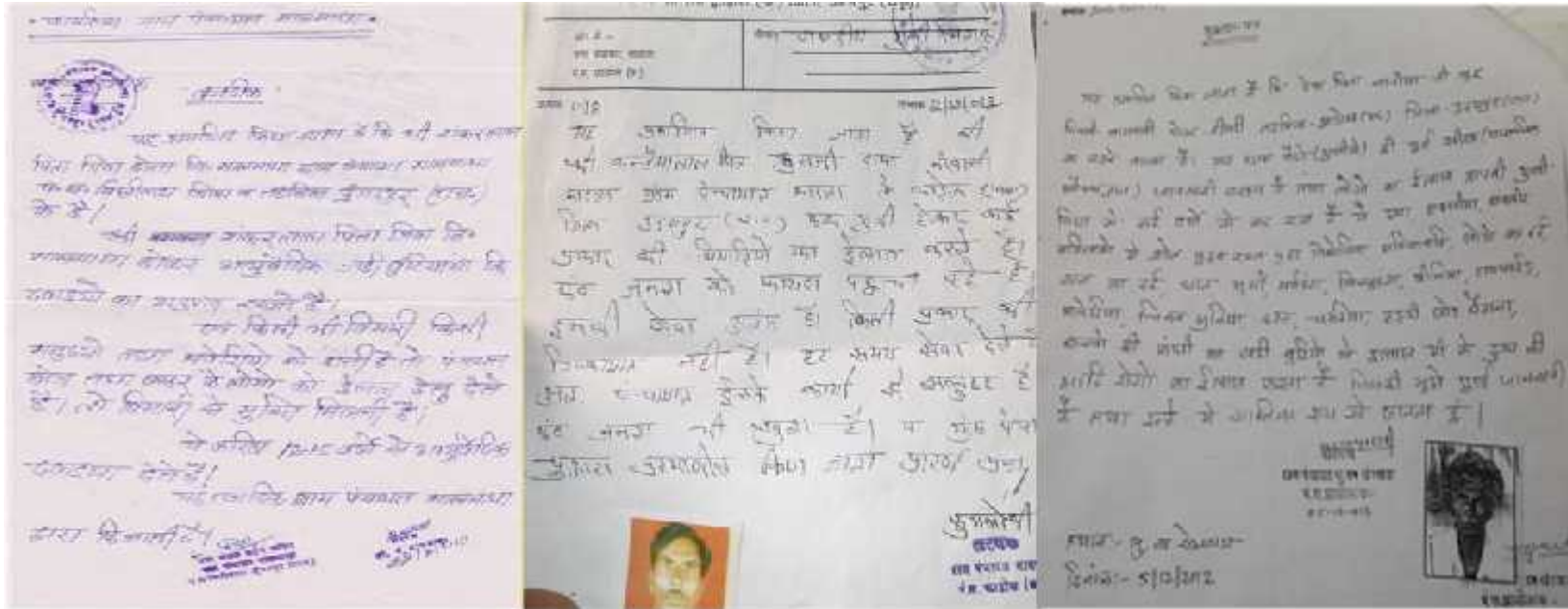
We don't include:

- He/she doesn't include supernatural sprit or Jhad-phuk into his/her traditional medicines practices.

Jadi-Buti (Medicinal Plants): -Jadi-Buti includes crude plant material such as leaves, flowers, fruit, seed, stems, wood, bark, roots, rhizomes or other plant parts, which may be entire, fragmented or powdered.

Traditional Medicine (TM): The knowledge, skills and practices of this Traditional Medicine are comprised to individuals, communities and tribal belongs to any culture and religion, is not documented. Their formulation includes Jadi-buti (Medicinal Plants) that contain as active ingredients parts of herbal plants, or other plant materials, or combinations.

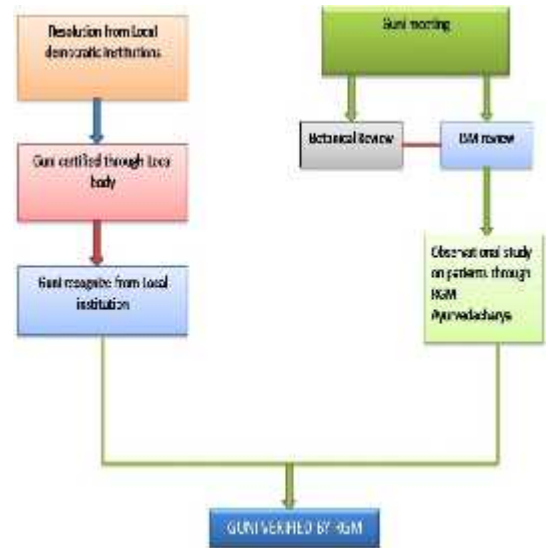




ROLE OF LOCAL VILLAGE DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTIONS

At the first phase we contact with sarpanch, teachers, wardpanch, anganwadi centres etc to verify gunis in rural areas in which people give us detail information about guni. Gramsabha is being organized at village to which guni belongs and then local people gives information about guni like from how many years guni has been treating patients, in which disease guni is expert, how many patients he treats in a month and then guni gives information about his treatment process, herb that is being use to treat specific disease and from whom they got this knowledge. After this process is over guni applies for certification by panchayat in the gram sabha. Then guni and village people presents this application in front of sarpanch and then guni is given certificate from panchayat when sarpanch agrees on every one's consent. Then with the help of experienced ayurvedacharya RGM analyses which medicinal plants are used by guni for treatment and whether it is mentioned somewhere in ISM, botanical review or not.

If there is some formulation which is not mentioned in ISM system but it is found unique and patients get relief from such formulation then it is documented as unique formulation.





GUNI TRAINING

After guni search and identification to increase their capacity and capability 5-5 days guni training programs are organized in three phase. The details of training are as follows:

FIRST PHASE OF TRAINING

At the first phase of training guni knowledge is increased by knowledge exchange program. Then discussion is done on following points:

- Information about history of Traditional health system
- When, how and from whom guni got knowledge of traditional health system
- Importance of health in human life
- Information about balanced diet during daily routine..
- Relation between health and environment
- Information about home remedies and primary treatment
- Information about vata, pitta and cough
- What should be role of gunis in coming society?
- Knowledge of seasonal diseases, symptoms and their treatment
- Information about local diseases in women and children their reasons, symptoms and treatment

SECOND PHASE OF TRAINING

Second phase is also of 5 days. In this only those gunis participate who participated in first phase. In this phase there is forest visit in which information about identity and use of medicinal plants are given. During forest visit information is given about name, identity, used in which disease, how to use etc. are shared by Gunis with each other so that after identification of medicinal plant their herbarium can be developed.

THIRD PHASE OF TRAINING

It is of 5 days and those guni who participated in 1 and 2 phase participate in third phase. In this phase all gunis formulate their medicine and describes about their formulation to other guni like medicinal plant used to prepare it, quantity used, method of preparation, in which diseases it can be used, how to consume it and how long etc. At the end of training gunis are provided medicinal kit which contains medicines and useful things required for treatment.

From these trainings guni learn method of treatment and their knowledge can be preserved by documenting it so that this knowledge can be used in future. This will also help in preserving environment which is very valuable for us. This treasure of traditional medicine knowledge is on extinction today that is why we need to propagate traditional health system so that it can be saved for coming generation.



GUNI CLINIC

With the aim of providing easily available, cheap and effective treatment guni clinics are established in village of guni and nearby areas where people can reach easily. In these guni clinics patients of various diseases like asthma, joint pain, piles, skin diseases, leucorrhoea, and hemorrhage are treated by gunis through traditional health system. RGM record registers are also available at guni clinic in which guni records all the information about patients. With these registers RGM can know that how many patients guni treats in a month and of which diseases. At guni clinics guni also gives information about living healthy and balanced diet to the patients. Guni packs the medicines neatly and also take care of cleanliness and hygiene at clinics so that patients feel safe to use medicines.

Through guni clinic there has been improvement in the working capacity and self confidence of gunis. Gunis believe that their clinic is temple because patient comes there with diseases and it is gunis responsibility to get them well.

GUNI CLINIC

- Enjoy faith of the community
- 24-hour availability
- Preventive, curative & promotive health care services provided
- Affordable treatment
- Self sustaining system
- Encourages bio-diversity conservation

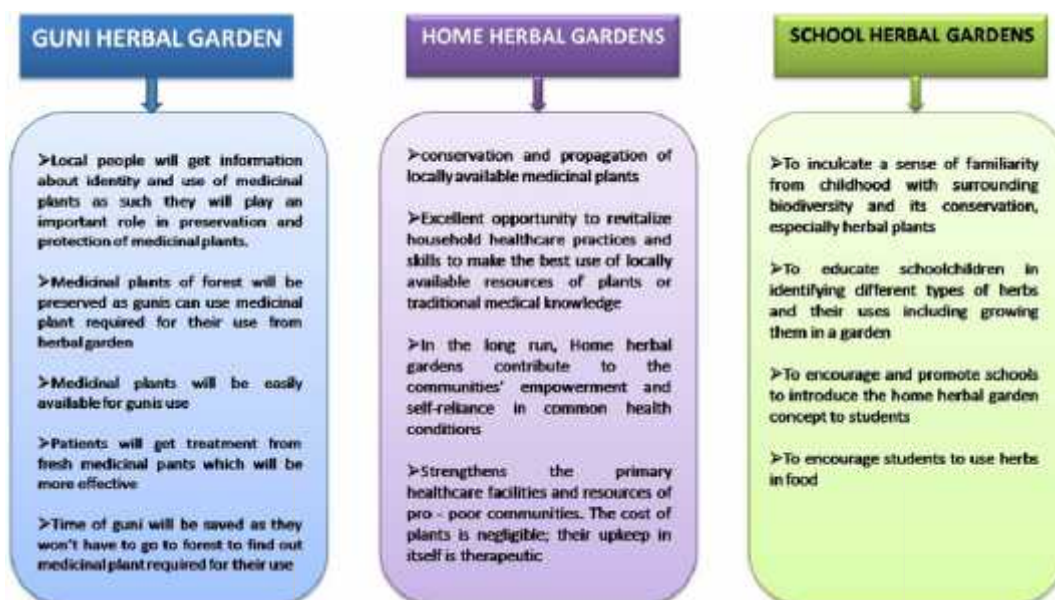


HERBAL GARDENS DEVELOPMENT

For the protection and promotion of medicinal plants available at local level and to create awareness about these medicinal plants among more and more people RGM established home herbal gardens, school herbal gardens and Guni herbal gardens. Guni Herbal gardens are established at land available with gunis, in these herbal gardens gunis grow medicinal plants which are used by them for the treatment of patients. With the development of these gardens time of guni is save as he don't have to go to forest to collect herbs and the medicines prepared by fresh plants are more effective, this way medicinal plants available in the forest are also preserved.

To create awareness about medicinal plants among children herbal gardens have been established in schools. From these school herbal gardens students are provided information about identity and use of medicinal plants together with ways to protect and prevent them. The children are given responsibility of taking care of herbal gardens so that they remain in connection with medicinal plants.

Home Herbal gardens are also established at homes in which 10- 15 different plants are grown which can be used to cure some of the common diseases like fever, cold, cough, mouth ulcer, diarrhea, stomach infection etc at home by the people, this way it also saves time and money of people. Home herbal gardens create habit in local people to preserve medicinal plants and it also provides knowledge about medicinal plants which can be used for coming generation too.





SEED BANKS

To preserve the medicinal plants seeds the seed banks are established at gunis place. In these seed banks locally available medicinal plants seed are stored and then these seeds are used to grow medicinal plants and also for preparing some herbal medicines. Gunis exchange seeds from these seed banks so that they can have collection of different seed which are not available with them.

Seed banks will certainly play an increasingly important role in helping communities find new ways of using natural resources sustainably.

They hold priceless diversity of value to forestry, and medicine, and they also act as hubs for sharing of knowledge associated with the propagation and use of Medicinal plants.



HEALTH CAMPS

To promote traditional health system and gunis in the society health camps are organized by RGM from time to time. The health camps are of two days in which various diseases asthma, joint pain, fever, stone, piles, skin diseases, leucorrhoea, and hemorrhage are treated. In the health camp expert gunis from are joined who also gets herbal medicines prepared by them for the treatment of patients. People are surprised and attracted towards gunis when they see guni treating patients during health camps, gunis also feel good about this behavior of people. The place where health camps are organized gunis gives information to people about the medicinal plants available there and its use. Through Health camps gunis are getting recognition in far off areas and people also remain in contact with gunis.



GUNI MEETING

Guni meeting are organized every month in different district and states compulsorily. In these meetings gunis gives presentation of the work done by them. Details of guni meeting are as follows:

- Number of patients treated by gunis
- Patients of which diseases were treated by them
- Problems faced by gunis during treatment
- new medicinal plants identified
- discussion about diseases with each other
- provide information about referring patients to expert gunis
- health camps organized by gunis and number of patients treated during camp
- any problem faced by guni during preparation of herbal medicines
- upcoming activities of gunis

During guni meeting guni share their experience and makes discussion on all the above mentioned points. Guni meetings develop leadership quality amongst guni which is must for developing self confidence of gunis. Guni meetings are organized by guni at their own level and place for next meeting is also selected by gunis. Guni have registers during meetings in which they record all the details of meeting.



SEMINARS AND WORKSHOP

RGM organizes seminars and workshop of guni at district, state and national level from time to time in which discussion is done to improve condition of gunis and how government and non government organizations can support gunis. Guni provide information about their work and problems faced by them in continuing the work themselves during seminars and workshop.

HERBAL FESTIVAL

RGM organizes Herbal Festival from time to time. This activity enhances the confidence of Gunis & their capacities. The community gets affordable system of medicine. It creates awareness in community towards Traditional Health Care System. In these festivals gunis of Rajasthan, Himachal Pradesh, Uttaranchal, Bihar, Jharkhand, M.P., Gujarat, etc participate & provide their expert services for different ailments like diabetes, asthma, eczema, stomach ache, leucorrhoea, hemorrhage, heart trouble, etc.



DOCUMENTATION

1. DOCUMENTATION & ASSESSMENT OF GUNI'S KNOWLEDGE

RGM has recognized Gunis from Rajasthan, Himachal Pradesh, Bihar, Jharkhand, Uttaranchal, and Madhya Pradesh & Gujarat. These gunis are specialist of one or two diseases. RGM is documenting the indigenous knowledge of the Gunis that they possess i.e. the name of plant used, part used, the method in which the medicine is taken, the dosage, the food regime, the symptoms by which the disease is diagnosed, etc.

2. COMMUNITY HEALTH KNOWLEDGE REGISTER (CHKR)

The traditional medicinal knowledge is present in the community as oral folk lore. RGM has documented this indigenous knowledge in the form of community health knowledge register. This is an important document to protect intellectual property right. These registers are presented to Gram Sabha & then kept in school or Gram Panchayat as treasure of village, as it will protect the locally available bio resources & will provide ownership right to the community.

3. COMMUNITY BIODIVERSITY REGISTER (CBR)

Prevent erosion of biological resources and knowledge. The CBR documents all biological resources and knowledge, its properties, products, uses (economic, religious, socio-cultural) its mention in any folk tale, song or any other medium of communication.

The CBR will thus act as a tool for remembering. The empowerment process that it unleashes will further help in advocating the cause of traditional health practitioners. The documentation in the CBR may be initiated by the students, teachers, older people, grandmother, schools, (specially for identifying lost and rapidly depleting resources), Gunis, community welfare group the elected Panchyat members like *Sarpanch*, Block Development Officer, Block Pradhan etc. or simply the whole village community getting together. The community may choose a day and time to congregate for the purpose of making entries in the register like a religious ceremony or a festival.