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The Rising Trend for Use of Herbal Medicine by the low income local communities in Kenya

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The use of herbal medicine is increasingly finding more relevance today, especially with the recognition that we are facing more challenges in the treatment of some medical conditions such as HIV opportunistic infections and other common ailments. Traditional medicine has great potential to increase people's access to health care services unfortunately it is often neglected part of health care. Kenya is endowed with vast resources of medicinal and aromatic plants but with its population growing at the rate of 2.8 per cent per year, the increasing demand for local resources such as agricultural land, fuel wood and commercial logging threatens the medicinal plant biodiversity. These activities have reduced the indigenous forest cover to less than 2 per cent of the land in the country. Growing use of herbal medicines and the expansion of their market pose challenges in safety, quality and efficacy of traditional remedies and practitioners. Historically, the use of traditional medicine has been on a small local scale through provision by traditional healers often without government involvement. There are not many publications or records on the traditional herbal medicine use among the various Kenyan communities despite the widespread use. There is therefore an urgent need to document traditional medicines in Kenya for future reference and research. There is also need to look into challenges facing the sector and the possible solutions to streamline the practice and maximize on the benefits. Development of a national policy for guiding, promoting and regulating traditional medicine is very important

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