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COMMUNITY ENTERPRISE IN INDIA

VIDEO

KATHAMMAL AND VILLAGERS
GATHERING HERBS

KATHAMMAL WALKS /
UNLOADS AND CLEAN HERBS

KATHAMMAL ON CAMERA

ACTIVITY IN WAREHOUSE

AUDIO

NARRATION

In rural communities in India, gathering medicinal plants is a common way of making a living for village women who have no land or cattle. (8")

They worry about their future. (12")

But Kathammal is not worried. Six years ago, she invested one US dollar, and bought fifty shares in a local company. Her investment has paid off. (10")

KATHAMMAL: (Tamil)

"In the first year, they gave us one thousand shares. I'm hoping that the company will do well and I'll make more money." (6")

NARRATION

Founded in 2001, the Grama Mooligal Company Limited, or GMCL, procures medicinal plants from dozens of villages in the

southern state of Tamil Nadu. (12”)

TRUCK IN TRAFFIC /
ENTERING GATE

Most of the goods go to Bangalore to big manufactures such as Himalaya Herbal Healthcare, one of India’s leading companies in this field. R. Manjunatha is a representative of the company. (15”)

MANJUNATHA ON CAMERA

MANJUNATHA: (English)

“We prefer buying herbs from GMCL because of the quality of the herbs they supply us. Secondly they have a sustainable harvest, Thirdly, for the rural empowerment of women.”
(9.5”)

KATHAMMAL AND VILLAGERS
GATHER HERBS IN WOODS

NARRATION

India has over six thousand species of medicinal plants known to local communities. GMCL was created as part of an effort to conserve these plants by promoting sustainable harvesting and ensuring community benefits.
(15.5”)

Villagers like Kathammal have learned to avoid picking young plants, and have come to understand the standard of quality required by the market. (8”)

KATHAMMAL ON CAMERA

KATHAMMAL: (Tamil)

“Our customers want us to separate the roots, remove the sand and stones. We sift through them to make sure that it’s all clean.” (10”)

KATHAMMAL REMOVES DIRT
FROM HERBS

NARRATION

Kathammal is one of the eight hundred stockholders of GMCL. This village enterprise, entirely owned by gatherers and cultivators, is an initiative conceived by the Foundation for Revitalization of Local Health Traditions and is supported by the United Nations Development Program. (17”)

LOADING HERBS ONTO
OXCART / OXCART ON ROAD

The company offers villagers a guaranteed price and comes directly to them to pick up their goods – a great convenience that saves the villagers from exploitations by market agents. (11”)

The company wants to do more, says one of the directors, Adichi. (5”)

ADICHI ON CAMERA

ADICHI: (Tamil)

“We want to provide good quality medicinal plants and medicines to the world. This is our dream.” (4.5”)

RAJU IN OFFICE

NARRATION

The villagers have hired G. Raju, who is based in Bangalore, to manage their business. (5.5”)

RAJU ON CAMERA

RAJU: (English)

“We find that there is very little money in it. So we ventured into products.” (4.5”)

VILLAGERS GRINDING
PLANTS TO POWDER

NARRATION

The company now produces seven kinds of

medicines. (3.5”)

WORKERS PUT POWDER INTO
CAPSULES

RAJU: (English)

“Our medicines are for cold and cough, for fever, for joint pains, which seem to be the set of health conditions that are affecting the poor.”
(7”)

WOMAN INSPECTS PILLS/
WORKERS BOTTLE PILLS /
SEAL BOTTLES WITH HOT
IRON

NARRATION

The company sold about 200,000 US dollars worth of herbal medicine last year, and hopes to sell half a million dollars worth this year. (8”)

PEOPLE BUY HERBS AT
STORE

The medicinal products, ranging in price from less than five cents to a little over two dollars, are available in over three hundred stores in Bangalore. Profits benefit villagers like Kathammal directly. (13”)

KATHAMMAL ON CAMERA

KATHAMMAL: (Tamil)

“I have no worries about money or food today. If something bad happens, I can go to the company and get my money.” (6”)

KATHAMMAL COUNTS MONEY

NARRATION

The community-based enterprise has improved the lives of the villagers, and perhaps more importantly, they now have a sense of ownership and financial security with which to face the future. (11.5”)

UN LOGO

This report was prepared by Patricia Chan for the United Nations.

