



## Medicinal plants traditionally used for the management of female reproductive health dysfunction in Tana River County, Kenya

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### Abstract

Reproductive dysfunction is a major health concern amongst the inhabitants of Tana River County. An ethno botanical study was conducted in Garsen, Itsowe and Ngao sub divisions of Tana River County to document the utilization of medicinal plants for the management of female reproductive ailments. The target population was practicing herbalists from Pokomo, Ormo and Giriyama communities in the study area. Structured questionnaires and focussed group discussions were used to collect data. Forty eight plant species distributed in 40 genera and 29 families were documented as being important for the management of pregnancy related complications, menstrual disorders, infertility, fibroids and as contraceptives. The species most frequently cited by the herbalists were fourteen. Fifty two percent of the plant species were probably being mentioned for the first time as being useful in reproductive health management. In conclusion, Tana River has a pool of TMPs with a wealth of indigenous knowledge that needs to be exploited. The plants used to treat dysmenorrhea for example may be important analgesic agents that need further investigation while those with anti-fertility properties may contain steroidal phyto chemical compounds. Such species therefore need further investigation to establish their efficacy and mechanism of action.

**Keywords** medicinal plants, female reproductive ailments, Tana River, Kenya