

Medicinal plants used in the treatment of fungal and bacterial infections in and around Queen Elizabeth Biosphere Reserve, western Uganda

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**Abstract:**

In Uganda, bacterial and fungal infections are prevalent especially, the sexually transmitted diseases including HIV/AIDS. Because of low socio-economic empowerment, traditional beliefs and cultural barriers, the suffering people resort to use of herbal remedies in search of cure especially for rural women who rarely discuss/disclose diseases affecting secretive body parts. The study documented 67 medicinal plants distributed among 27 families and 51 genera used to treat fungal and bacterial infections in and around Queen Elizabeth Biosphere Reserve in western Uganda. The highest numbers of species were from Families Lamiaceae (13) and Asteraceae (11). The most commonly harvested plant parts were leaves (88.1%) and roots (23.9%). The most common growth form harvested were herbs (47.8%) and most of the medicinal plants used were wild species (67.2%). The main methods of herbal drug preparation were by squeezing, boiling and pounding and were mainly orally administered. However, most of the steamed plant species were inserted in the birth canal besides oral administration. Some plants such as *Allium sativum*, *Aloe vera* and *Ocimum gratissimum* are topically applied on the affected body parts. This vital indigenous knowledge about healing secretive and discrete diseases among the marginalized population requires urgent ethnobotanical studies to sustain livelihoods.