

October 5, 2020

We are contacting our colleagues involved in Ethnobotany and Plant-based medicine to invite you to participate in the Global Covid-19 Medicinal Plant Project, a survey being initiated by Asili Research Alliance. Asili Research Alliance is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization with a focus on investigating Traditional Medicine as a way to increase access to healthcare in East Africa. For more information about our organization, please visit www.asiliresearchalliance.org.

We plan to fast-track this paper with a top journal in the field and hope that you might be interested in joining us as a co-author. If there is anyone else you think may be interested in participating, please let us know or feel free to pass this email along to them.

Background and synopsis of the project:

Throughout the pandemic, we've watched the pharmaceutical industry rush to create a vaccine/treatment for COVID 19. Working globally, we have witnessed an equally powerful movement in non-western countries to develop regional standards of care that include herbal formulas and plant-based treatments. This project would explore how different regions are responding to the pandemic, both from the perspective of the plants being used, and how the treatment development process took place.

This is an opportunity to ensure that countries from around the globe are included in discussions around COVID 19 research and efforts towards a treatment/vaccine. We feel strongly in the validity of traditional medicine and respect these bodies of knowledge that provide important healthcare services. We believe it is imperative to create opportunities for primary source authorship alongside western scholars.

The novelty of Covid-19 presents us with a unique opportunity to follow the development of new plant-based medicines. We are hopeful that the universal nature of COVID 19, will present more opportunities for inclusive, collaborative research and contribute to a greater understanding of plant medicines and their role within our respective societies.

Ethical Considerations

During the project, the International Society of Ethnobiology Code of Ethics (<http://ethnobiology.net/code-of-ethics/>) will be followed. This includes obtaining consent, full disclosure of intent, required permissions being granted, respect for cultural norms and beliefs. Please refer to the website above for complete information.

Statement of Benefit Sharing

Data from this project will be compiled into an open-access, academic research publication to demonstrate the diversity of traditional medicines being used to treat Covid-19. No organization or individual may utilize this information to create products for sale without first obtaining permission from the source of the information. Contact information can be requested through Asili Research Alliance. The

organization or individual must also agree to provide benefit sharing to the source of the knowledge, to be determined by an agreement between the parties involved and following the international standards for permission and benefit sharing as defined in the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and the Nagoya Protocol. The intent of this information gathering and publication is to facilitate the exchange of information among people and communities, which may help with managing the impact of COVID-19.

Any organization, person or community is solely responsible for the potential positive or negative outcomes that may occur when and if any of these treatments with these traditional medicines may be utilized.

Authorship

All contributions will be acknowledged in aggregate. Those contributing full information for their region of expertise will be listed as a co-author for their collaboration, unless they notify us otherwise. Please send all inquiries to project@asiliresearchalliance.org. We appreciate your responses and greatly look forward to the collaboration.

If you would like to participate, please use the attached questionnaire as a guide to provide a narrative, and return to project@asiliresearchalliance.org; or the questionnaire can be completed online using this link:

<https://www.mysurveygizmo.com/s3/5841753/Global-Covid-19-Medicinal-Plant-Project>.

Thank you for considering participating in this important undertaking. We look forward to the collaborations!