database would be invariable. In choosing the species for the database the author was guided by the suggestions made by a) United Nations Industrial Development Organisation (UNIDO) and World Health Organisation (WHO) (Bannerman, 1983; Farnsworth, 1983; Penso, 1980) and b) Oliver-Bever (1986), as summarised below:

Suggestions of UNIDO and WHO:

UNIDO and WHO suggested the following criteria for the choice of the drug plants from those used in traditional medicine (Bannerman, 1983; Bannerman, 1983; Penso, 1980):

a) the drug product derived from plants should be safe and effective as judged from its wide use in the developing countries,
b) the plant should be growing extensively in the wild or easy to cultivate,
c) there should be scientific evidence to suggest that a useful drug can be developed, from the concerned plants, with preferably the existing or easily developed technologies with an export potential, and
d) the costs of the drug products derived from plants and treatment should be competitive with synthetic drugs of the same therapeutic category, promising economic production at least in the long run.
Oliver-Bever (1986) suggested the following criteria:

a) the plant should be the only one or one among the few used in the treatment of a particular disease,
b) the plant should be in common use,
c) the plant should be less toxic than the other existing drugs and
d) the plant should have possibilities of production of the drug cheaper than those in use.

Basing on these guidelines, 127 species were chosen for the database and six for the encyclopaedic profiles.

The information available on plants used in the control of gastrointestinal disorders is organised at three different levels:

a) comprehensive list of species used in the control of gastrointestinal disorders (Table 3),
b) a database giving information on different aspects of 127 selected species, as detailed in Table 4 and
c) encyclopaedic profiles of
   (i) *Cassia fistula* L.,
   (ii) *Cyperus rotundus* L.
   (iii) *Holarrhena antidysenterica* (Roth) DC.,
   (iv) *Moringa oleifera* Lam.,
   (v) *Picrorhiza kurrooa* Royle ex Benth.
   (vi) *Punica granatum* L.
The information incorporated was gathered from the following sources:


A number of tribals and Ayurvedic practitioners were also interviewed.

A glossary of medicinal terms used is included.

VIII. THERAPEUTIC POTENTIAL OF SPECIES IN THE DATABASE

The species in the database have been in use for a long time in the control of gastrointestinal disorders for their different therapeutic effects. The major symptoms of gastrointestinal disorders are dysentery/diarrhoea, vomiting and fever. Pain, flatulence, inflammation, spasms, defective