

# anamed seminars in Kenya 2007

written by Keith Lindsey

## First Seminar: Nairobi

We got off to a cracking start. At 4p.m., our official starting time, we had only half the group. What should we do, start or wait? Neither was a good option. Then Rebecca, a Kenyan Salvation Army Captain, said, "We will sing". After the first song came the second. And in Africa one cannot sing without dancing. After the third song we were laughing, we had all greeted each other, and most people had arrived.

Thank you Rebecca for a wonderful beginning!

We were 34 participants and 5 leaders. We were from all over the lower half of Kenya, 4 people working in southern Sudan and 3 from Uganda. Our leader team was Kenyan, German and English. Many thanks go to Roger Sharland and Anne Sigei of REAP, our partner organization in Kenya, that did most of the preparatory work.

Rebecca's enthusiastic start set the scene for the whole week. There was laughter, and everyone joined in the spirit of the week. But serious things were spoken. Peter Kombo, a chief from near Kisii in Nyanza Province, told how many in his very rural and poverty stricken area had died of malaria, until he started to cultivate artemisia. Now, he beamed, malaria patients are being healed successfully at virtually no cost. Rosalia spoke about how the use of moringa leaf powder was saving the lives of malnourished children, and Christine and Anne said that they hoped that this seminar would help them to improve the lives of the AIDS patients and orphans that they care for.



*Millicent massages Amina with the newly made chilli ointment*

rather overwhelming, for example,

*"This has been a wonderful training ever in my heart / life. It has really touched me and I feel I have a call towards it. I need to know more on Natural Medicine. It's a beginning and I believe there is more."*

*"This seminar is one of the best that some of us have ever seen. It's historical for we have learned a lot. Not only learning about plants but also it has changed (my) heart. Anamed be there for LIFE"*



*The leader team: From left to right: Julia Henry, Tamima Omondi, Roger Sharland, Rosalia Oyweka and behind Keith Lindsey*

Julia introduced the group to honey ointment, a remarkable treatment for "hard to heal" wounds, Monica demonstrated the wonders of a simple solar cooker, readily available in Nairobi, and Rosalia showed us how to make a very simple tip-tap. Because nutrition and health are so closely related, we invited Didi Ruchira of the Abha Light Foundation to visit us to make a presentation on the theme of nutrition for those who suffer AIDS.

The feedback given on the evaluation sheets towards the end of the week was



*Tamima teaches Monica "What is a handful" whilst teaching anti-amoeba tea*

*“I am very happy. The seminar is very interesting because I am learning a new thing each and every moment. I have acquired a lot of information and I am very sure that my people are going to be changed and add more days to their lives.”*

*“I like the mixture of practical and theory.*

*I like that there is much participation from the group (I learn from that as well)*

*I like also the way of teaching the theoretical part. Very practical. Gives me a lot of ideas (which challenges me of course to put it into practice)”*



*Sally Atieno teaching in the open-air compound of Onyalo Biro Women’s Group*

## **Second Seminar: Kendu Bay**

An eight hour bus-ride brought us to Kendu Bay, on the shores of Lake Victoria, where we were given a truly overwhelming reception. We had been there twice before and we were greeted as long lost friends.

In many respects, the contrast with Nairobi could not have been greater. In Nairobi we stayed in a very comfortable Catholic retreat centre, meals were provided from the well-equipped kitchen, there was constant electricity and the chairs were all cushioned. In Kendu Bay we met under the partial shade of the trees in the compound of our host, the Onyalo Biro Womens Group, the food was prepared by four willing volunteers on open fires (for up to 60 people), there

was no electricity at all and stacking chairs were hired from a local firm.

We held two 3 day seminars. The first for 60 people, a third of whom were HIV positive. It was a real joy to see that they were indistinguishable from the others. How was this possible? Well, they were members of the Onyalo Biro Womens Group, in which they receive loving support. In addition to their ARV drugs, they take great care with their nutrition, drinking artemisia tea when it is available, and adding moringa leaf powder to their porridge. Once again Julia taught honey ointment. This time a young lady had a very bad two year old “hard to heal” wound, and Julia demonstrated how to dress this wound, using the ointment.

As leaders, Julia, Tamima and I were joined by Sally Atieno. When Julia or I taught, we needed Sally or Tamima to translate. Here in Kendu Bay the participants used copies of the anamed Seminar Handbook that had been translated into the local language, Luo.

The second seminar was just for 25 people, some of whom had participated in previous seminars. They presented their reports of what they had been doing, for example,

*“Over a period of two years I have trained 35 groups in 15 different communities in 6 constituencies. I have discovered that, if my chickens feed on fresh artemisia leaves, they do not suffer from coccidiosis”, Joel Jaguga*

*“I have conducted two teachings per month. I taught or treated 10 individuals and 5 women’s groups (in the Mosque) with a total membership of 200. The demand for small chillies is too high especially with the old aged people. They need the chilli ointment.” Asha Oryango*

*“I grow artemisia, Moringa oleifera, Carica papaya, Aloe vera, garlic, lemon tree, orange tree, tomatoes, potatoes, Euphorbia hirta, eucalyptus, lemon grass, passion fruit, ground nuts, pigeon pea and so, and so many other medicinal plants. I teach women’s groups, churches and any other gatherings whenever I get the chance. I treat many people. Some call for me and I visit them, and then they do not even have enough money to pay for my transport.” Beldina Awino Ajwang*



*Sarife Awiti, a member of Onyalo Biro Women’s Group, HIV positive, a former AIDS patient. She said “I am strong!” She was – every morning she walked 7 kilometres to the seminar, and every evening she walked 7 km home again.*

### **Third Seminar: Kajulu, Kisumu**

Rosalia works with many women's groups and church groups in and around Kisumu. She asked me to help her to run two seminars, but my schedule only allowed me to be there for one week. We had 34 participants drawn from many different churches. There were many signs of the work of Rosalia and her colleague Pastor George. Even outside the church in which we met there was a large garden full of Roselle (*Hibiscus sabdariffa*) and lemon grass (*Cymbopogon citratus*), with a few examples of other medicinal plants. The roselle and lemon grass has been used to improve the health of many people, mainly HIV positive people, and their sale has provided a significant income for the church. Having the garden so close to the church also gives the opportunity to



*A two year old wound being dressed with honey ointment*



*Rosalia Oyweka and Tamima Omondi in Kajulu, Kisumu where we produced honey ointment and artemisia ointment*

teach the church attenders about Natural Medicine on a regular basis.

As in Kendu Bay, here in this district anamed Natural Medicine has given hope to families where everything seemed hopeless. Their worst diseases have been healed or vastly improved, and they have discovered how to make enough income to support themselves.

Pastor George himself is a very competent gardener, and he demonstrated how to sow artemisia seeds, how to cultivate the plant and how to take cuttings. Once again we enjoyed a range of herbal teas, and the simple but very adequate food was prepared on two fuel efficient stoves. Pastor George also gave an eloquent presentation in which he made it absolutely clear that being a Christian means using not only the fruits of the trees for food, but also the leaves for healing.

During the closing ceremony, one participant spoke a very touching word of appreciation. Then Rosalia conducted us all in singing the wonderful song about planting medicinal plants that she has composed in Swahili. This song will certainly be ringing in the ears of all participants as they return to their home churches to spread the message of what they have learnt.

### **The way ahead.**

#### **A. The Anamed Kenya Coordinating Group comprises the following people:**

1. Major Rebecca Nzuki, Salvation Army, Email: rebeccanzuki@yahoo.com Tel +254 735 526303
2. Samuel B. Mdune, Methodist Church, Email: sammdune@yahoo.com Tel: +254 733 865448
3. Roger Sharland, REAP, Email reap@maf.or.ke Tel: +254 734 643052
4. Rosalia Oyweka, REAP, Email: royweka@yahoo.com Tel: +254 735 704421
5. Tamima Omondi, Onyalo Biro Womens Group, Email: Tamima\_ajul@yahoo.com, Tel +254 733 560317

They will continue to conduct seminars themselves, and will provide a point of reference for anamed activities in Kenya.

#### **B. Additional experienced seminar leaders:**

Sally Atieno, Email: sallieati@yahoo.com, Tel: +254 724 393119  
Emilly Nundu, Email: emillynundu@yahoo.com, Tel: +254 733360311.

### **C. Home page**

A new page for anamed in Kenya has been added to the anamed web-site.

See [http://www.anamed.net/Kenya\\_page.pdf](http://www.anamed.net/Kenya_page.pdf) It refers people to the team of experienced Kenyan seminar leaders, and many others who have an active interest in Natural Medicine in Kenya. In the future it will also give news of anamed activities in Kenya.

### **D. Support from REAP in Nairobi**

Anne Sigei will administer the printing and storage of anamed publications, and the purchase and storage of certain seminar materials. These will all be available for sale at a fair price. Email: reap@maf.or.ke and Tel: +254 203 871 438.

### **E. Support from anamed International based in Germany**

Keith Lindsey hopes to visit Kenya again in 2009 to visit projects and to run seminars together with Kenyan facilitators. He looks forward to receiving reports of activities relating to Natural Medicine in Kenya, and is always available to answer queries. Email: anamed@t-online.de



*Pastor George speaks with Vanessa Salzer, a horticulturalist from Germany, who joined us in Kendu Bay and Kisumu*

### **Acknowledgement**

We thank all those very many people and organisations, who in a practical or financial way contributed to the success of these seminars. They are just too many to name individually.

### **Future seminars in other countries**

Keith will visit Ghana in March 2008 to conduct two week-long seminars. The first will be with the Baobab Children Foundation in Kisii, near Cape Coast, and the second in Tamale. A day seminar will also be held in Kumasi. Donations are more than welcome – both for future seminars in Kenya and this programme in Ghana! For information about other seminars that are planned please visit [www.anamed.net/html/attend\\_a\\_seminar.html](http://www.anamed.net/html/attend_a_seminar.html)



*Participants in Kajulu, Kisumu leave from the church in which we conducted our seminar*

### **Bank details**

Account name: anamed international

Account number: 7219069 Bankleitzahl (i.e. Bank Code): 60250010

BIC = Swift Code number: SOLADES1WBN

The international IBAN account number: DE12 6025 0010 0007 219069

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