

anamed in Zimbabwe Report of the 2010 seminars by Lucie Bradley



I am a Medical Herbalist and Massage Therapist living and working in Edinburgh and Lancashire. Born and raised in Blackpool, Lancashire I attained a BSc (Hons) in Herbal Medicine from the Scottish School of Herbal Medicine in Glasgow in 2008 and began working with Anamed this year. My love of herbal medicine also extends into teaching and sharing information, especially amongst women - in Scotland I run workshops on a variety of different natural medicine topics and also teach basic First Aid to mothers with young children.

Anamed International's recent trip to Zimbabwe facilitating 3 seminars in Harare, Mutare and Bulawayo was a great success.

As a first time visitor to Zimbabwe my anxieties were quelled by warmth, friendliness,



generous hospitality and inspiration.

Our stay in Harare at the River of Life Church, Westgate set a president for herbal excellence – an enormous herb garden of mostly European plants and a very well run herbal clinic, headed up by a nurse from the US and 3 very experienced Zimbabwean ladies; learned in herbal lore and practice. The herbal clinic, run by 'Foundations for

Health' an off-shoot of Westgate's 'Foundations for Farming' has a well respected reputation. Local hospitals are now making referrals when they are unable to provide adequate treatment or drugs. In a country so stifled by political problems the orthodox health service has suffered terribly, though herbal medicine is flourishing; providing many people with an affordable and sustainable form of effective health care. As a practicing Medical Herbalist in Scotland it was inspirational to meet so many people using herbs in the treatment of many serious medical conditions and to hear so many testimonies of comprehensive healing through the use of herbs and the loving care given my Anamed trained workers.

The day seminar at Westgate provided an opportunity for many people experienced in herbal medicine to come and share knowledge and learn more. For those novices, like me, it was an eye-opening experience!

In Mutare, the week-long seminar held at St. Joseph's Catholic Training centre was attended by over 30 men and women; some from the local community care



programme and some from as far way as Chipinge. Organised by the Diocese of Mutare Community Care Programme (DOMCCP), the seminar included those who attended Anamed workshops in 2006 and/or 2008 and some with no previous experience of Natural Medicine at all. The week was hugely successful; again an opportunity for sharing information and support, covering a vast remit of subjects. It was my privilege to be included in the teaching and I greatly enjoyed sharing knowledge of skin problems, the causes and treatment of diarrhoea and most enjoyably teaching simple massage techniques, which was wonderfully received – if only we hadn't had a power cut!

Something that I feel deserves a special mention is the DOMCCP Herbal Research and Therapy Centre. A place of innovation and dedication, it was a pleasure to visit somewhere so very dynamic and progressive. With an extensive herb garden, laboratory with a viral load machine, capsule making facilities, an extensive dispensary of preparations and a processing room equipped with locally-made electric herb dryer and an exceptional and very time-saving herb cutting machine it really is a centre of excellence. Additionally they are presently undertaking a clinical trial into the comparative use of *Artemisia annua anamed* (A-3), *Moringa oleifera* and anti-retroviral drugs in the treatment of HIV/AIDS, which is showing very positive results and a great asset to the ratification of herbal medicine.

Our last destination was the very rural location of Kezi in the South of Zimbabwe, near to Bulawayo. Nelson Moyo from Malawi, Keith Lindsey and I departed early from Mutare on a very long and frustrating journey on a so-called 'chicken bus', but were very warmly met in Bulawayo. The following day we set off early out of town to Kezi to prepare for the



seminar which was to be attended by women in the local area, most of whom provided community based home care services. On arrival at 'Ebenezer' – a project overseen by Foundations for Farming, we saw lush, compact farm plots alongside the arid desolate surrounds where apprentices from the local rural communities are trained for 2 years in organic, sustainable farming practices set out by Foundations for

Farming or what used to be known as Farming God's Way. It was an oasis in the desert!

The seminar was held at the local church's meeting ground under a rather weather-beaten marquee, though close to 50 women travelled from the surrounding area to attend. With a translator close by the seminar was a great success. We had the privilege of visiting a neighbour's compound that proved invaluable to our teaching. Here we saw and learnt about many of the medicinal plants taught by anamed: mango, guava, orange, lemon, eucalyptus and aloe (a rather bitter version in the form of *Aloe arborescens*, though we weren't reluctant about tasting it much to the amusement of the attendees!). We did extensive teaching on the propagation and use of A-3, lemon grass, moringa, paw paw and grain amaranth. Being in such a rural area was an inspiration to see the enthusiasm and positive reception of the attendees; we were highly entertained by the singing and dancing of the women, most notably the eldest ones.

In conclusion, Zimbabwe is showing to be a very self-reliant and dynamic example what can be achieved with the use of Natural Medicine. Not only is the work of anamed very keenly received and being put into practice, but the ideas of western herbalism, orthodox medicine and scientific, clinical testing are being synthesised and integrated into the existing clinics. Zimbabwe holds great potential to be truly autonomous in its health care and has the opportunity to turn its problems into solutions; it is the home to very dynamic and inspirational global citizens.