

A new antimalarial phyto-medicine developed in Mali from *Argemone mexicana*



by Prof. Rokia Sanogo
President of
Aidemet NGO



Argemone mexicana L. (*Papaveraceae*) is a plant coming from Mexico and Antilles, and now widely naturalized in many tropical countries. It is an annual herb with bright yellow sap, used by many people, including those in its native area, for natural medicine.

In Mali, *A. mexicana* is traditionally used as a decoction in the management of malaria in the area of Finkolo, Sikasso Region. To verify the effectiveness of these practices, some researches were developed in the framework of the project "Traditional Practices and Primary Health Cares", funded by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (DDC-Swiss) and carried out by the Department for

Traditional Medicine (DMT) of the National Institute of Public Health (Bamako, Mali), and by the Swiss NGO Antenna Technologies, with the support of the PNLP and the participation of the international network RITAM. *Aidemet* NGO participated in the strategic reflection and assured the coordination of the activities, the technical and financial management, and the communication among the different actors.

From 2002 to 2006, epidemiological, ethnopharmacological, preclinical and clinical studies demonstrated the efficacy and safety of the decoction of *A. mexicana* in the treatment of malaria.

The success of the research was possible thanks to a Malian traditional healer, Tiémogo Bengaly, who made his knowledge of the antimalarial plants freely available to the population of Mali, and participated with a great helpfulness and effectiveness in the different studies conducted for corroborating the use of *A. mexicana* for the treatment of uncomplicated malaria at the village level.

Further clinical studies on decoction and other focused researches are in preparation, in partnership between the Malaria Research and Training Centre of Bamako, Geneva University, and DMT, with the coordination of Mali-Geneva Association and *Aidemet* NGO. DDC-Swiss and Medicines for Malaria Ventures are supporting this work.



At the same time, other studies are carried out with Mali University funding, in order to develop a new syrup based on *A. mexicana* extracts.

After quinine (America) and artemisinin (Asia), will the next antimalarial treatment come from African traditional medicine?



For further information:

Links:

<http://www.antenna.ch/recherche/medecine/mali-recherche>
www.giftsofhealth.org/ritam
www.aidemet.org

Articles:

<http://ehp.niehs.nih.gov/malimed/2007/p1d.pdf>
http://www.aidemet.org/doc/paludisme_2.pdf
http://www.aidemet.org/doc/news_032008_2.pdf
<http://www.malariajournal.com/content/10/S1/S8>

Contacts

Rokia Sanogo. Prof. de Pharmacognosie à la FMPOS, Université de Bamako. Chercheur au Département Médecine Traditionnelle de l'INRSP. Présidente de *Aidemet* Ong. rosanogo@yahoo.fr

Jacques Falquet. Biochemist and Scientific Adviser. Member of Research Initiative for Traditional Antimalarial Methods (RITAM) and Mali-Genève. jfalquet@sciadnet.org

Bertand Graz. MD, MPH - Secrétaire de l'Association Mali-Genève - Institut de Médecine Sociale et Préventive - Faculté de Médecine de l'Université de Genève. Bertrand.Graz@unige.ch

Merlin Wilcox. Clinical researcher, Department of Primary Health Care, University of Oxford. Honorary Secretary of Research Initiative for Traditional Antimalarial Methods (RITAM) merlinwillcox@doctors.org.uk

Sergio Giani. Pharmacien, Chargé des programmes, *Aidemet* Ong. Bamako. aidemet@sotelma.net.ml

Drissa Diallo. Prof. de Pharmacognosie à la FMPOS, Université de Bamako. Chef du Département Médecine Traditionnelle de l'INRSP. dri.diallo@yahoo.fr

Chiaka Diakité. MD, MPH. Chef du Service Médical du Département Médecine Traditionnelle de l'INRSP. chiaka86@hotmail.com