



Origin

anamed international

Vision and Mission

anamed (Action for Natural Medicine) was initiated by the German pharmacist Hans-Martin Hirt and African healers. In the course of time they have been joined by many other active people in many countries of Africa and other continents. In 1994 the organisation “anamed international” was registered in Germany as the German equivalent of a charitable trust with its HQ in Winnenden to support the activities of anamed.

Since then:

- A new concept of “Natural Medicine” has been developed.
- Natural medicines have been produced from tropical medicinal plants. Reproducible recipes have been collected, developed and evaluated.
- Together with Bindanda M'Pia, Hans-Martin Hirt wrote the now well-known book “Natural Medicine in the Tropics I: Foundation Text”, which is now available in seven languages.
- An imaginative programme for week-long training seminars in Natural Medicine has been developed. These are held regularly in many African countries for doctors, nurses, healers and community leaders.
- Research in the use of *Artemisia annua* tea for the treatment of malaria and HIV/AIDS patients has been conducted and supported across the world.
- anamed has developed as a lean, practice orientated and efficient organisation, and enjoys a very good reputation with the churches and development workers in many countries.

These activities have saved the lives of thousands of people in tropical countries, and many people have been healed from their diseases irrespective of the colour of their skin, gender and religion.

The motivation for our work from social and economic realities

- The extent of poverty in Africa and Asia. In spite of all the talk and the Millennium goals, poverty continues to increase. The incidence of both malaria and HIV/AIDS is increasing, particularly in Sub Saharan Africa.
- Every day children die from preventable diseases, for example about 5000 die daily from diarrhoea. By means of simple preventive measures and treatment almost all these deaths could be prevented.
- The global economic system has no real interest in improving the health of the poorest people. Instead of giving the urgently needed help, many products that are exported to Africa damage both the health of the people and their economies. For example, toxic products for lightening the colour of the skin, commercial drinks with a high sugar content, baby milk and vitamin drinks as well as the dumping of outdated medicines, food surpluses, toxic waste and second-hand clothing.
- The big projects of the World Bank and even development aid benefit mainly only a minority, and often disadvantage the poorer majority. IMF loans are often coupled with demands to greatly reduce public spending, e.g. education and health. The World Trade Organisation makes trade rules that mainly benefit northern countries. The World Health Organisation appears to affirm traditional medicine, but seems to have its hands tied by the pharmaceutical companies. As a result, the gap between the rich and the poor continues to widen, and the health needs of the poorest remain neglected.
- The brain drain of Africa's educated people provides Europe and North America with many highly qualified people, especially doctors and nurses, whilst the health services in African countries are under resourced.
- Specialism amongst medics has led to a breakdown of holistic care, and the feeling in the population that doctors are responsible for their health, and not they themselves.
- The majority of political leaders in Africa are far more interested in their own personal wealth and power than the welfare of their countrymen. Not infrequently they benefit from the taxes levied on imported medicines and possibly also the connected back-handers. This inhibits the development of local self-reliance.

Market forces will never deliver a good health system to the poorest. Natural Medicine offers a positive alternative,

in which the skills and resources available locally can be positively exploited.

The motivation for our work from our Christian faith

- “God created the world and saw that it was good”. We received fruits to eat and leaves for healing. The words of the Bible give humankind the responsibility to engage in the ongoing work of creation. We have largely failed in this commission:
 - Many plants and animals are threatened with extinction.
 - Climate change threatens entire ecosystems, and, on account of reduced and more unpredictable rainfall in many regions, the very survival of the people who live there.
 - Many people prefer to buy, even under difficult economic conditions, commercially produced foodstuffs and medicines, rather than growing and using food and medicine from their own gardens and regions.
- The prophets in the Old Testament condemned those in positions of power and responsibility who accumulated wealth at the expenses of the poor and made luxury their God. In the same way today's political leaders (both in the North and the South), as well as international corporations, are primarily concerned with their profits (which are often protected through a system of patents) and seldom concern themselves with the needs of the poorest.
- In his life and ministry Jesus showed us a new way of living and working, which was characterised by love and truth, being practically engaged and reconciling people with each other and with God.
- Healing formed a significant part of Jesus' ministry. He healed people irrespective of their ethnic group or their social or political status. With each “patient” he established a personal relationship and he met them at the deepest point of their need.

Our vision

We dream of a world in which even those people living in the most simple circumstances meet their own health needs, by using their own skills and abilities to utilise their own locally available resources, and by working in cooperation with others. Families, communities and health centres in the Tropics and even entire regions take responsibility for their own health and thereby become virtually independent from imported products.

In practice, in such a world:

- Each religious centre and each health centre would have a garden of fruit, vegetables and healing plants.
- Each community would have a reliable supply of clean drinking water, and good toilets are built, maintained and used.
- Many people would develop knowledge of good nutrition and the production of natural medicines from the medicinal plants in their gardens, as well as how to treat common diseases and medical complaints.
- This knowledge would be taught in schools, religious centres and health centres.
- Doctors, nurses, teachers and healers would prescribe and use these natural medicines. They would establish good relationships between themselves in order to maximise the exchange of knowledge and experiences.
- National and international networks would be formed for the exchange of information and experiences between those committed to Natural Medicine.
- In every tropical country democratic and long-term groups are would be formed which are committed to the aims and principles of anamed.

Our main activities

- We run week-long seminars in the Tropics. Thus people are trained who subsequently train others and local Natural Medicine networks are developed.
- We run seminars also in Europe to train and challenge missionaries and development workers.
- We promote the cultivation and use of *Artemisia annua*, particularly for the treatment of malaria.
- We write and publish books about Natural Medicine and constantly amend and improve them.
- We coordinate and support groups in tropical countries that practice Natural Medicine.
- We take part in workshops, both in the North and the South, to spread our message to others.
- We support agricultural and pharmacological research into healing plants.

We hope that through our work we contribute to the realisation of our vision. We invite you to work

with us and to support us!

Hans-Martin Hirt and the anamed international group in Germany, November 2012