



Ethnobotanical study of medicinal plants used to treat influenza and measles

«Case of the Kimwenza district in the urban-rural commune of Mont-Ngafula / Kinshasa in the Democratic Republic of Congo».

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ABSTRACT

Objective : To make an ethnobotanical inventory of plants that treat influenza and measles

Methodology and Results: The ethnobotanical survey of medicinal plants used to treat influenza and measles in the Kimwenza district, Mont Ngafula commune, in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), identified 42 plant species distributed across 29 families and 20 orders, with 4 clades. The Lamiaceae family is predominant, with four species: *Ocimum gratissimum* L., *Ocimum basilicum* L., *Tetradenia riparia* (Hochst.) Codd, and *Hyptis nepetifolia* R. Br. The study reveals that the population of the Kimwenza district has more knowledge about influenza than measles, two recurrent childhood diseases in Kinshasa. The data show that 21 species are specific for treating influenza, 11 species for measles, and 10 species are common to both diseases. The species capable of treating both diseases include: *Ocimum gratissimum* L., *Dysphania ambrosioides* (L.) Mosyakin & Clemants, *Morinda lucida* Benth., *Carica papaya* L., *Morinda morindoides* (Bak.) Milne-Redhead, *Camellia sinensis* L., *Elaeis guineensis* Jacq., *Eremospatha haullevilleana* De Wild., *Brillantaisia owariensis* P. Beauv., *Ocimum basilicum* L., and *Cymbopogon citratus* (DC.) Stapf.

Conclusion and Application of results: This study demonstrates the abundance of medicinal flora in the DRC in general and in Kinshasa in particular, showcasing plants useful in traditional phytotherapy. This botanical wealth should be leveraged to enhance the potential of the local pharmacopeia and to discover active biomolecules capable of developing new drugs for both traditional and modern medicine.

Keywords: Medicinal plants, influenza, measles, Mont Ngafula, Kinshasa, DRC.