

In a follow-up to studies of school-children's medical knowledge among the rural Luo of western Kenya, seven mothers were asked for their knowledge of plant medicine, and the 91 plant remedies mentioned by them were collected, 74 of these remedies were identified as 69 different species (in 13 cases, the material did not allow identification of the species, in two cases, only the family could be identified, and in two, not even this was possible). The results of this survey and some comments on Luo illness concepts are presented below and briefly discussed in relation to the earlier work on school-children and to another survey of Luo plant medicine in the same district. The article concludes that the consensual core of Luo plant medicine is known by ordinary mothers and their children as well as by recognised healers. It is a shared resource, that is used by women, mainly in the care for their children, and it is not an expert domain of knowledge, as is often, in studies of herbal or 'traditional' medicine are studied. The medicinal plants, upon which many mothers as well as healers agree should be examined further pharmacologically in order to assess their efficacy against the common infectious and parasitic diseases found in this area of western Kenya.