

PROJECTS: KENYA

SCALING UP OF SILK PRODUCTION TO COMBAT POVERTY IN WEST KENYA



Project

At the International Centre for Insect Physiology and Ecology Institute *icipe* in Nairobi, research is undertaken into opportunities for the **commercial** yet sustainable and environmentally friendly **use of insects**. It has been shown that climatic conditions in West Kenya are suited to the breeding of silk worms, since the area is ideal for the integrated cultivation of mulberry trees – the main food source for silk worms.

In an *icipe* pilot project, women's groups were trained in the breeding of **silk worms**, maintenance of the cocoons as well as the mechanical **preparation of silk** and workings of the loom.

A violent storm and the political unrest following the presidential election at the beginning of 2008 brought the project to temporary standstill. The work of the project will be taken up again in 2009 with short-term aid from Biovision. A storm-resistant building is to be built for the silk centre and production of quality silk in Rachuonyo will continue.

Relevance

One of the greatest challenges in the advancement of sustainable development in Kenya is the improvement of the living conditions and social position of women. In rural life women have no access to resources and so are dependent and vulnerable. The goal of this project, funded with short-term aid from Biovision, is the improvement of the economic and social situation of marginalised women. Education and regular training in silk production and marketing are very effective means in **sustainable income generation for single mothers and widows**.

Beneficiaries

Kabando-Silk Self-help Group (75 active members, among them 51 women) and their families and farm/village communities (ca. 500 people), and 5 further women's self-help groups from the region, with a total of 122 members and their families. Selected persons with role model characteristics receive training in how to guide other community members in passing on their knowledge of wild silk worm breeding and silk production.

Project number:
BV EH-06

Project active since:
January 2009

Budget for 2009:
15'000 USD

Project coordinator:
Suresh Raina, Head of the
Commercial Insect Programme
icipe

Program responsibility:
Verena Albertin



The group members plant mulberry trees on their farms, the leaves of which they use to feed the silk worms.



Every member keeps the silk worms with them at home until they pupate at 28 days.

Development Goal

Sustainable improvement of the living conditions of marginalised women and their families in rural areas of the Rachuonyo district by generating income through the continuation of local silk production.

Goals

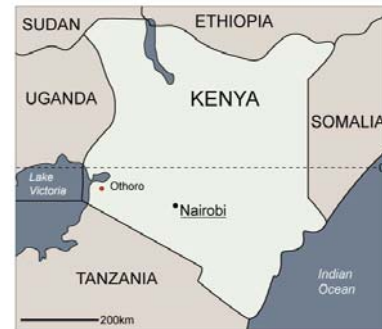
1. 10 **mulberry tree plantations**, each with 5000 trees are to be planted to serve regular feeding of the silk worms and other animals on the farms.
2. **Storm-resistant production facilities in the silk marketplace to manufacture silk** are to be constructed and/or renovated, among these 2 centrally-placed houses for breeding of the silk worms.
3. 5 persons will act as role models and be trained to educate other people in passing on their knowledge of the cultivation of mulberry tree plantations, the **breeding of silk worms**, care of **pupae** and finally the manufacture of **silk**. This concept of the „Trainer of Trainees“ (ToT) is very efficient, sustainable and effective, and guarantees that tried and tested knowledge can be disseminated in an improved way.

Partner Organisations

International Centre of Insect Physiology and Ecology *icipe* www.icipe.org; Kasipul Kabondo Constituency Development Fund; Kabondo Silk Project Group, Ministry of Agriculture, Viking Ltd.

Sustainability

Sustainability calls for a holistic vision: healthy people, animals and plants in a healthy environment. (4x Health, 4-H Strategy). Every project supported by Biovision effects considerable improvements in at least one of the four health areas. The key to effectively replicating the success of the project is the availability of specific information on the methods applied and the results achieved. With this approach and its ‚helix of effects‘, living conditions are improved and the poverty of the people is gradually overcome while the environment is protected.



The project area Othoro lies in the Rachuonyo district close to Lake Victoria.

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