



TSETSE FLIES

Hope becomes reality

The people in the small settlement close to the Gibe river in Ethiopia look forward to the rainy season with some trepidation, since it usually brings in its wake a plague of tsetse flies. The flies carry nagama, a disease that is fatal to cattle. When the disease strikes there is less milk for the families and village ploughs begin to stand idle. This year, however, turned out to be different.

„I thank God in the name of our village for the help He has sent us from Switzerland. May God bless the families of all those involved.“ The gratitude expressed by Girma Amsir, a village elder, is directed towards everyone who has given financial support to BioVision and also towards the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) in Bern which, last autumn, enabled a project to be set up to fight the tsetse fly and nagana (see Newsletter No. 4, June 2003). The tragic decline of Luke began in



1985 when nagana arrived in the village. Girma Amsir was one of many villagers who lost nearly all his livestock. However, last autumn things began to look more hopeful when the younger farmers, on the advice of

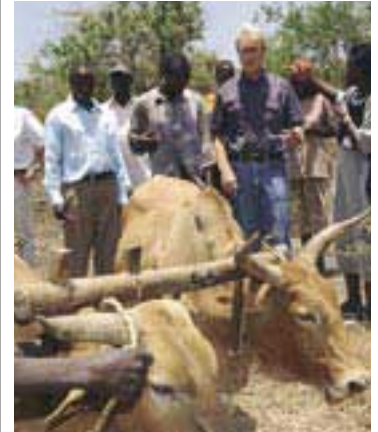
ICIPE, set traps to catch the tsetse flies. Girma Amsir and the Council of Elders declared themselves solidly behind the project: „We support cooperation with the Eco-Trainers and assure them that we shall carry the project through.“

At the end of the first full year, Dr Johann Baumgaertner, ICIPE member and project supervisor, considers the results: „I am absolutely delighted that the use of ecological research arising from North-South cooperation has produced such speedy results.“ Last January, each trap caught an average of 38 tsetse flies a week, but in June there were none to catch. The great tsetse fly invasion of the rainy season did not happen and this brought measurable results. Blood tests showed a 30 per cent decrease in diseased cattle. This meant an average increase in the

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Editorial

Good News



Last year's BioVision campaign title New Hope for Ethiopia has been fulfilled. Living conditions in the village of Luke have considerably improved since the fight against the Tsetse fly by ecological methods. Each family now gets four litres of milk a day, instead of two; ploughed areas have increased twelve-fold. These are convincing signs of change for the better. It is the first improvement this village, lying alongside the Gibe river, has seen for the last 25 years. Such results are encouraging.

Encouragement comes also in the form of a letter from Bern, from Federal Councillor Micheline Calmy-Rey, printed on the last page of this newsletter. The support of which the Director of the Department for Foreign Affairs speaks is already very real. Much of the finance for insect research at ICIPE and for the Tsetse Project in Ethiopia has been donated by the Directorate for Development and Cooperation (DEZA) which is part of Micheline Calmy-Rey's Department.

We are very grateful for the provision of this valuable assistance for Africa.

Hans Rudolf Herren

President BioVision/Director ICIPE Kenya

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number of cattle per household, up from 2.3 to 6.3. The milk supply increased from approximately 1.17 liters to 4.2 per household. Even the draught oxen had more energy, and the amount of cultivated land went up from 0.25 hectares to 3 hectares per household.

Dr Baumgaertner noted with satisfaction that nutritional standards of the Luke villagers had also risen. „Combating the tsetse flies has shown us clearly that we have found a useful basis for progressively improving the living conditions of the local people in a holistic way. We are confident that we can further improve the people's desperate situation with our plans for fighting malaria and developing sustainable agricultural production methods.“ Baumgaertner particularly stressed the importance of close cooperation between Ethiopian and Swiss teams and the cooperation of the villagers. „This has given us a foretaste of how we can improve people's health and reduce poverty in a comprehensive way.“



■ BEE-KEEPING Help for an orphanage

Charles M. Mully has a large family. About seven hundred Kenyan children call him ‚Father‘. They are not his own children, but orphans to whom Charles Mully has been giving shelter for many years. Mully explains: „My wife, the helpers and I want to give these children some of the warmth security of a family.“ As part of the education of the orphans and street children of the Mully Children's Family Program, the older children now also learn bee-keeping and honey production so that they can earn something towards their living. Mully says: „This preparation for life outside, when they leave our family, is very important.“ The honey programme is doing well in the Machakos district of Kenya. The honey, produced in cooperation with BioVision ecological advisers, not only fetches a good price at the market; the orphans like it too!

BioVision-Projekt Nr.5206

■ TRANSFERRING KNOWLEDGE Sharing environmental understanding at African universities.

When we consider the range of species in the world it is easy to forget that insects make up the lion's share and comprise the largest number of species. „In view of this fact, our knowledge and research in this area of biology is still extraordinarily small“, says Dr Onesmo K. ole-MoiYoi, Director of Research and Education at ICIPE. The ICIPE Institute has been working consistently for many years to bring useful knowledge from other worlds to African universities. For example, African students at ICIPE have already completed over 160 doctoral dissertations. 90 per cent of these young academics are working in Africa today. The networking and dissemination of research results will remain an important task for the Institute in the coming years. Dr ole-MoiYoi adds: „We are in contact with 30 universities across the whole continent. As part of BioVision's Environmental Advisors In Africa programme we will continue to promote the education of young African researchers.“

BioVision-Projekt Nr. 5202

■ COMPUTERS FOR AFRICA Swiss television station DSR supports eco-trainers

Four years ago, the editorial office of the programme Menschen, Technik, Wissenschaft (People, Technology, Science) at the Swiss television station DRS received a new generation of computers. Erik Thurnherr, who was the presenter at the time, immediately put together a shipment of the discarded computers for BioVision's Environmental Advisors Department in Africa. BioVision's president, Dr Hans Herren, gratefully accepted the consignment when it arrived at Kloten Airport (Zurich). SwissAir then transported them free of charge to Kenya, where they have been doing invaluable work ever since (see page 3).



*The beginning of a success story:
In 1999 Erik Thurnherr presented computers
from the Swiss television station DRS
to BioVision president Dr Hans Rudolf Herren.*

■ A DAY IN THE LIFE OF

Teame Hagos, eco-trainer in Ethiopia



My day begins at 4 am with prayers. As a Coptic Christian I believe in the Bible and that its prophecies will be fulfilled. Later, as the town wakes up, I fight my way through the morning rush hour to ICIPE headquarters at the outskirts of Addis Ababa. I have worked doing anything that's needed ever since my retirement. I am the office manager and general organizer, I deal with customs formalities and I'm also the driver and an eco-trainer.

In 1965, when I was 22, I came to Addis Ababa University from my village in Tigray and became a teacher. I really enjoyed teaching. But I wanted to do more. I studied to become a veterinary surgeon and quickly found work. Later I became head of the Agricultural Office in my local area and in Ambo. Then came the high point of my life. I went to Havana to train to be a meat inspector. Havana was enchanting! I love that city and those people. The Cubans were always happy and ready for anything, even though they hardly had any money. How we partied, all of us! ... I danced the salsa for whole nights!

Back in Ethiopia I was made meat inspector and manager of the Quarantine Station at the Airport. Once I had enough security to raise a family, I could at last marry. We have three children, a son and two daughters. They are all still at school.

When I was working at the airport I met people from ICIPE. When I retired I was able to get a job there. That was very lucky, as I could not have fed and educated my children on my pension.

The fact that I have worked as a veterinary surgeon is useful at ICIPE. I know how to work with animals, give injections, and take and analyse blood samples. And as an ex-manager of the Agricultural Office I understand some of the difficulties they face and I know the people there. I feel I have landed in the right place at ICIPE where I can do useful and valuable work. I am happy if I can help these poor villagers. The farmers have to struggle so hard to survive in this tsetse fly infested area and I feel so sorry for them. Twenty years ago many of them were moved from the dry part of the country to the fertile lowlands. They left everything, family, house, friends and land, hoping to find a better life. No one had told them that they would find tsetse flies and malaria in their new home. Now they are ill and have lost nearly everything. They try so desperately to save some of what they have, but once the oxen die that is it. This is why my work at ICIPE is so important to me. As an eco-trainer I can really make a difference.

Transcribed by Peter Lüthi

■ FURTHER EDUCATION VIA THE INTERNET

From Lake Victoria to Pennsylvania University



Aloice Ndiege at work as an eco-trainer in Kenya.

In the summer of 2002, Aloice Ndiege, eco-trainer with ICIPE at Mbita Point on Lake Victoria, wrote to BioVision: „Farmers often ask me questions about animal health that I cannot answer, because I don't know enough. I would therefore like to have more training. The University of Pennsylvania (USA) has a distance-learning course on the Internet for veterinary medicine which I would very much like to take.“

The computers at ICIPE in Mbita were connected to the Internet (see page 2), but the course fees were almost \$1,000, an impossible sum even for the highly motivated eco-trainer. BioVision filled the gap and funded part of the course. Not long ago we received the following message from Aloice Ndiege in Mbita: „The money for my course has not been wasted – quite the opposite! I finished the course with an average of 82 marks out of a 100. And I am the first member of the ICIPE staff to have completed a distant learning course via the Internet!“

BioVision-Projekt Nr. 5202

■ Olma A brilliant supporter



Swiss TV personality David Jans, editor and presenter of Menschen, Technik, Wissenschaft (MTW) from the Swiss TV station DRS, gave important publicity to the BioVision project in Africa during his live show broadcast from the olma, the Swiss agricultural fair. David

won SFr 1000 during a TV quiz and spontaneously donated it to BioVision. Such generosity deserves a very special thank you.

Thank you for your wonderful donations! PC-Account 87-408333-2

Our work is only possible with the support of the Swiss Department of Foreign Affairs and private donations. I am deeply grateful for your generous help.

Dr Hans Rudolf Herren



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■ MAIL FROM BERN Congratulations from Federal Councillor Micheline Calmy-Rey

Bern, 9 May 2003

Dear Dr Herren,

I was delighted to hear that you have been awarded the Tyler Prize for Environmental Achievement for 2003. Many heartfelt congratulations.

Your work in the field of biology has enabled great advances in ecological pest control. At the same time, you have always included the needs of the local people in your work and have greatly improved their situation. Your work is thus a guiding light in the field of ecological development. For me too, the cause of ecological development is a key plank in the development of Swiss Foreign Policy.

My department will continue to follow and support your work with the greatest interest. I wish you continuing success in your activities.

Respectfully yours
Micheline Calmy-Rey



With your contribution BioVision can render help for self-help and support environmentally friendly projects.