



■ BioVision Projekt No. 5210-01 **From Dream to Reality**

In 2003 the 'Yeka Kifle Ketema Womens Group' received a deforested eucalyptus plantation the size of a football field in the slums of Addis Ababa (Ethiopia), on lease from the city administration. 200 women from the slum took on the ruined earth with picks and shovels. Five months

later the area was unrecognisable. Half of the leached soil shone in the luminous green of many vegetable varieties. For the women, mostly single mothers, it was a dream come true when they could take the first crop back to their huts. They had received the necessary knowledge and practical instruction in improving soil, preparation of compost, organic cultivation methods and economical irrigation from the Eco-Trainers of 'Bio Economy Association', a local partner organisation of BioVision. „I am happy that I could harvest vegetables already in the first year of the project, but unfortunately that is not enough to live on,” reckoned Yeshe Deyo one of the participators in Project Half-time anxiously. Those responsible for the project had thought in advance and already planned a shop and restaurant at a good location, for the

sale of surplus vegetables: „Hopefully everything will get better with the income from the sale of vegetables.”

Advancing despite setbacks

In the following year the rest of the area was tilled and irrigation equipment of buckets and perforated plastic tubes was installed. Thanks to supplementary credit from BioVision, a lockable shelter for tools and materials could be built, as well as a safety fence against vegetable thieves and wild animals. An important measure, which at first one might not consider. Then suddenly: a spanner in the works. The building license for the vegetable shop and restaurant had not been passed. „I had the papers on my desk three times”, recalls the tireless project co-ordina-

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Editorial



Do you know the story of the man by the banks of the Ebbe, who saved fish one at a time by collecting them and throwing them back into the sea? He was asked what use that was, when thousands of creatures died on the coasts daily anyway. –That’s right, the man answered, but to every fish that he throws back, it means everything.

In the past year I have often had to remind myself of this allegory. How hard the forces of nature struck, and threw millions of people into the abyss. What use is the work of small organisations like BioVision in the face of such gigantic catastrophies?

The metaphor of the man with the fish reassures me. I think of the women, men and children who have a chance through our projects. Behind every face there is a whole world, unique and endlessly precious. We are powerless against the big catastrophies. What we can do is fight the causes of the everyday catastrophes of poverty, disease and hunger, so that, with our help, those affected can do something to change their world. For them that is much more than a drop in the ocean.

*Hans Rudolf Herren
President of the
BioVision Foundation*

From left: Tsebuinesh Admussu and Weynitu Araya. - Zenebech Bekele: “Luckily I can count well. I am looking forward to working as a salesperson.”



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tor Getachew Tikubet, “and three times it was revoked because of influential squabblers who feared the competition and took the wind out of the process.” As well as that there came delays in the delivery of seedlings, sand plugged up the water pipes, there were difficulties with data collection and differences within the women’s group. Finally on the 4th June 2005 the license was finally there, valid and unrevoked.

Already the next morning there stood a troop of builders at the site, who began the construction of a two-winged building with kitchen, restaurant, WC, shop and office. Some women of the group followed the work enthusiastically. „I am very happy”, said fifty year old Weynitu Araya, „I am going to work even harder in the garden, since I am very strong.” Her colleague Tsehuinesh Admussu laughs mischievously: „I have sold vegetables once before, and I will stay behind the sales counter.”

Within a five-day training course the ladies cooked and served 100 meals daily, and on the 10th September there was a big party for the opening of the shop and restaurant.

Since then the guests have been spoiled with the Ethiopian national dish, Injera, a round, flat dough cake garnished with meat and vegetables.

But things are still not perfect. The setting up of different infrastructures such as the electricity and water supply, or the installation of a new cooker, have had to be postponed. In addition, the scientific accompaniment is not yet concluded. The systematic analysis of all data will help to repeat the change from destroyed ground to blooming garden in other slums. There is still much to be done. There is certainly no lack of willing, hardworking hands on the outskirts of Addis Ababa.



■ A Day In The Life Of **Hans Rudolf Herren, President of the BioVision Foundation and Director of the Millennium Institute.**

I often awake somewhere between dream and reality, because my limbs have gone to sleep in my narrow bed. Aeroplane seats are not heavenly beds, though they may float over the clouds. Night flights have been part of my career for many years. Before take off I connect my laptop to the net and download new emails, at least 150 a day. While in flight I plough through the mountain of issues.

On a normal workday, at 6 in the morning I am already working through the flood of mail with some coffee and muesli. By 7.30 I am at the workplace and the internal meetings, telephone conferences and interviews with international organisations and decision makers the world over begin at 8. My duties as director of the Millennium Institute also include writing reports and developing visions and strategies.

I was chosen as president of this established international institute in Washington DC 8 months ago. Saying goodbye to my co-workers at ICIPE in Nairobi was not easy. There were tears and many damp eyes. The tenure of the ICIPE director is limited to a maximum of ten years, and in my case that was overdrawn by nearly a year. Since I am used to change and new challenges, I accepted the departure to new shores as a chance not to be missed.

Despite moving to North America, it often seems to me that I have never left Africa. A part of me stays there. After all, I lived on that continent for over a quarter of a century! In my new capacity I have a lot to do with Africa, I travel regularly to my second home and often work together with my earlier research colleagues and government partners. The Millennium Institute supports governments and civil organisations, predominantly from developing countries, in the adjudication of efficient use of state funds and development aid,

with the goal of initiating sustainable development. To this end computers are being used to project different scenarios for the next 25 years. All facets of development are connected together like the cogs of a clock. When someone turns one cog, all the other cogs must turn. More money in one sector means less resources in another. Put simply: When road building is intensified, money is potentially lost in health care or agriculture. The computer projections make these connections apparent. That makes a focussed, integrated and participatory planning of investments and the cooperation of societal, economical and ecological interests possible, in awareness of the potential results.

As president of the Millennium Institute I can raise the bar to the level where big decisions are made and cash flow is controlled. In doing so I can build upon my longtime African experience. And thanks to my collaboration with BioVision, which is as important to me as ever, I maintain a close connection and necessary adherence to the small farmers of poor countries. Reciprocally, my sharpened view of the complex relationships also serves the work of BioVision.

I often have lunch at my work desk. So I make sure that I leave enough time after the office closes at seven to cook and have dinner. My speciality is all kinds of grilled foods. We often have guests and I enjoy the company of friends and acquaintances. On quiet evenings I immerse myself in scientific papers. Unfortunately I never get very far with books. Sometimes I get as far as the second chapter. Then I have to travel again and the book remains unread. As a rule I am in bed by midnight at the latest, and enjoy deep sleep free from turbulence and the attentions of flight attendants.

by Peter Lütthi



*The BioVision
Foundation Board:*

*Dr. Hans Rudolf Herren
Dr. Barbara Frei Haller
Mathis Zimmermann
Dr. Otto Stich
Prof. Rudolf Baumgartner*

■ Expertise and Commitment **The BioVision Foundation Board**

Two years ago the organisation BioVision, founded in 1998 became the foundation BioVision. This legal term offers the necessary stability and security for our partners, and for the projects in Africa. The members of the board all work unsalaried. Dr. Hans Rudolf Herren (Foundation President), Dr. Barbara Frei Haller, Pharmacologist and Ethnobotanist, and Mathis Zimmermann, lawyer and founding member of BioVision, as well as their deserving work on the management committee, also work on the foundation board. Dr. Otto

Stich, former member of the federal council, supported the principle of BioVision from the beginning, and in the course of the last year he also joined the foundation board. This November, ETH Professor Rudolf Baumgartner, Co- Head of Studies of the post graduate Study for Developing Countries was elected to this body. Professor Baumgartner is a declared expert in questions of development co-operation and can call upon much practical experience in developing countries.



■ Good Deed on Wedding Day Bridal Couple help BioVision

On 7th May 2005 the wedding bells rang for Regula and Martin Dietler-von Burg. Since the newlywed household was already complete and that the fight against poverty in Africa is close to their hearts, they invited their guests, instead of giving presents, to give a donation to BioVision. This raised nearly 8000 CHF. Many thanks for the generous gesture in support of BioVision. We wish the bridal couple all happiness in their future together.

■ BioVision in Fürstentum The most beautiful African animals

On the occasion of the second 'Africa Party' in Schaan in Liechtenstein in the middle of September, the BioVision Info-Stand was met with great interest. The enthusiasm of our little visitors was above all, for the competition 'Draw your most beautiful African animal'. Equipped with paper and colouring pencils they went to work with gusto and produced real masterpieces.

For the familiar and lovely atmosphere on this big occasion for Africa we must thank the great organisation of the Liechtenstein Development Service (LED). Ute Mayer, LED Project Leader for Africa and Public Relations: „In our opinion this years Africa-Party was a total success.“ BioVision is looking forward to next year's event.

■ Become a member of BioVision Build a foundation with us

BioVision's successful project work stands or falls with the support of people who campaign for a world without hunger and poverty. Many of our donors have taken a further step: with membership*, they give an additional yearly contribution to BioVision. That makes it possible for us to make long term plans and guarantee our project work, since donations, unlike memberships, are not always foreseeable. Members remain BioVision's solid basis for achieving help for self-help in Africa.

* A BioVision membership means: You support BioVision's work with a regular yearly contribution, which you yourself determine.

BioVision ensures that every donation is actively and efficiently used and that all projects and achievements are clearly communicated.

It's easy to become a member

www.biovision.ch - please click under 'become a member', or just call BioVision on: 044 341 9718.

As a welcoming gift every new member of BioVision receives an exclusive BioVision pocket-knife.

Please tell your friends and acquaintances and recommend a BioVision membership.

Hope for Africa



BIOVISION

Am Wasser 55, CH-8049 Zürich
Tel. +41 44 341 97 18
info@biovision.ch
www.biovision.ch

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