

Biovision

Newsletter December 2014

Cooperation on site
Combining individual strengths



A future for all, naturally

Mama Champion
Morogoro, Tanzania



“We earn money from collecting, separating and re-processing waste. At the same time, our efforts are recognized locally”.



Project: Bustani ya Tushikamane

• Start Date: January 2009

The farmer training centre is an innovative platform for organic agriculture. It encourages dynamic interaction between research, knowledge transfer and practical applications on the ground.

• Objectives Project Phase 2014 – 2016

- Provide practical training and encourage the effective dissemination of organic farming methods
- Expand and run the demonstration farm as a research and training centre
- Initiate partnerships between farming and research communities.

• Budget 2014 – 2016

CHF 180 000.00

• Account for donations:

PC 87-193093-4

Combining individual strengths

The project “Bustani ya Tushikamane” may have started off small but with the support of Biovision, it has become a major training centre for organic agriculture and ecology in Tanzania – with cumulating effect.

“Mama Champion” is a strong woman and mother to four children. Her second eldest Michael, now 27 years of age, has a slight mental disability and lives with his mother. Anne Champion provides loving care and encouragement, but at the same time relies on his help.

They both live in Morogoro, a small town 195 kilometres west of the Tanzanian capital of Dar es Salaam. Mrs Champion’s husband died in 1993 leaving her alone with four children. She found support in her local community group and 2013 she developed a niche business with that group – the collection, separation and recycling of waste.

Taka-ni-mali

Since 2013, the situation has changed considerably. The roads are now lined with different coloured plastic bags instead of untidy piles of rotting waste. The bags are collected regularly using a large push cart with several compartments for the different colours. Group members proudly wear their bright green T shirts with the “Swisscontact” logo and the words “Taka-ni-mali” printed on them. The latter is Swahili for “waste is valuable” and it really is because the waste provides the group with raw materials that they can then process and sell. Combustible materials are compressed to form briquettes, which are used instead of charcoal for cooking. Clear, soft material such as paper or textiles is used as filler for duvets and cushions. Organic waste is converted into high-quality compost and used in the community vegetable garden and tree nursery. Glass, cans and plastic – including PET – are sent for recycling: Tanzania has just started to pay

the group for this material although the prices are still subject to constant fluctuations.

Mama Champion and Michael each earn about 50,000 Tanzanian Shillings per month from the management of waste. This is the equivalent of about 30 Swiss Francs each and provides them with a valuable basic income, which is supplemented by the 60,000 Shillings that Michael earns at weekends providing transport services with his cart.

Fruitful cooperation


The Taka-ni-mali Project is run by Swisscontact, a Swiss NGO. As part of the project, local people are trained in the reprocessing of organic waste by a Tanzanian NGO, Sustainable Agriculture Tanzania (SAT). Biovision has supported SAT and its initial project Bustani ya Tushikamane (Garden of Solidarity) from its inception in 2009. Since then, SAT has developed into one of the most prestigious training centres for sustainable agriculture and a hub for ecological thinking and action in Tanzania. It offers a broad range of training covering 19 subject areas and comprising 69 different courses. They include basic training in organic agriculture, techniques for improving soil fertility, poultry farming (see cover picture) and the grafting of fruit trees.

The cooperation between individual organisations in Morogoro is an example of the successful application of synergies as promoted by Biovision in East Africa.


For more information:

www.biovision.ch/bustani-en





 In the Tanzanian district capital of Morogoro, Mama Champion (4th from left), her son Michael (2nd from left) and other members of the community group collect the different coloured refuse sacks.



 Hugo Kunguru, an experienced agriculture adviser from SAT (left) demonstrating budding and grafting during a course on the growing of fruit trees.

Comment

No farmers, no food

Food security in developing countries is mainly in the hands of a profession with a very low status, few development opportunities and minimal support. As a result, African farmers receive inadequate training and have little access to investment capital. No wonder, therefore, that many seek their fortune in towns. At the same time, agricultural countries such as Kenya – despite major efforts and even greater hopes – are a long way from creating enough jobs in sectors other than agriculture. TOF, our magazine for farmers in Kenya, is devoting an increasing amount of space to articles on topics such as adding value, storing agriculture produce and ideas for generating additional income. In so doing, the TOF editorial team is reacting to the needs of its readers, who are increasingly asking for reliable information on these issues. It also provides clear evidence of the continuing structural changes in agriculture.

The UN International Year of Family Farming comes to an end in December 2014. However, millions and millions of small farming families throughout the world are still waiting for the value of their work to be recognised and for improvements to basic conditions – particularly in the Global South. They not only need that, but it is also in the interest of all of us.



Andi Schriber
Joint Founder and CEO Biovision



Structural change in agriculture underestimated

Kenya is also experiencing structural change with a trend towards agriculture as a secondary rather than primary income.

If you ask experts how many Kenyans earn their living from small farms, they will give a figure that is frequently twice as high as the reality. Global structural change is often underestimated.

In the last 50 years, global food production has increased two and a half times, the amount of food available per head of population has increased and the number of those with insufficient food has fallen slightly despite increases in population. However in agriculture, the price of this success has been high: Environmental degradation, greater use of fossil fuels, problems with food quality and ongoing rural poverty are just a few of the headline problems. In addition, there are major new challenges such as climate change and in particular the growing global demand for meat and milk generated by changing consumption patterns in emerging markets with high population growth.

Small-scale farming is crucial

It took the publication in 2008 of the IAASTD report (International Assessment of Agriculture, Science and Technology) before it was realised that the challenges facing the world could not be resolved by simply adopting the same old remedies of rationalisation. There was a need for a greater focus on

the global importance of small-scale farming. Some 40% of the world's population earn at least some of their income from this sector and about 40% of small farmers live in poverty. Overall, small-scale farming accounts for some 40% of cultivated land and produces at least 25% of global food production. If we are to solve the upcoming economic, social and environmental challenges, the direction taken by small-scale farming will be crucial. After almost 30 years of criminal neglect, this sector is once again moving centre stage and its importance in development politics and practical work is being recognized.

Miscalculation by experts

Coming back to the question we asked at the start of this article, most experts would say that 60% – 70% of the Kenyan population earn their living mainly from agriculture. However, an analysis of the 2009 census figures showed that this holds true for only 33% of the 14.3 million who make up the economically active population between 15 and

64 years of age – and that includes pastoralists and farming in towns and the urban fringe. If we had asked the same question 20 or 30 years ago, the answer given by the experts would have been correct but not now.

Structural change in Kenya

Today some 67% of Kenyans earn their main income from a sector other than small-scale farming. However, only 23% of them are in the formal sector – in other words registered for statistical and tax purposes, have a job with a contract of employment and are covered by social security. In contrast, some 44% work in the black economy where there is little regulation. If we compare these figures with the fact that almost one in two households still keep cattle (46%), it is clear that a structural change is taking place and that agriculture is becoming a second income in many cases. This trend is more marked in the less fertile and marginal lands than in Kenya's fertile uplands.

Sub-division in the small-scale farming sector

These observations point to the rapid development of a structural sub-division in small-scale farming. On the one hand, there is a trend towards market-focussed specialisation and professionalisation combined with a sharp reduction in the subsistence element. This shows that small-scale farmers can be highly innovative if the general framework, e.g. reliable access to markets and resources, is right. On the other hand, some farmers are sticking with traditional subsistence methods whilst simultaneously seeking income-generating opportunities outside agriculture – particularly in the informal sector. Alternatively, they rely on contributions from relatives. This trend often goes hand in hand with continued poverty and the shortage of jobs in agriculture.

Tailored approaches

In Kenya, we are more likely to find the former in the fertile uplands whereas the latter is more prevalent in the more marginal regions. However, both can also be found alongside one another. This is true not just in Kenya but in much of the Global South. To increase the contribution made by small farmers to solving existing and future challenges we need different solutions for each. As

the two trends exist in parallel, the approach adopted must be tailored to the specific situation. In addition, there needs to be a greater awareness of the speed of structural change.

Socio-Economic Atlas of Kenya:

www.cde.unibe.ch

www.kenya-atlas.org



Professor Urs Wiesmann

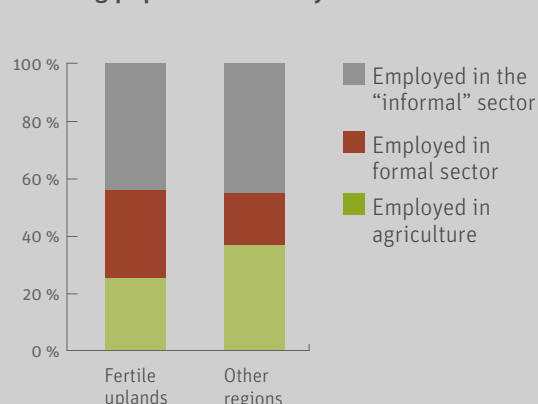
Professor at the Institute of Geography and President of the Board of the Centre for Development and Environment (CDE) at the University of Bern and one of the main authors of a recently published high-resolution atlas of Kenya



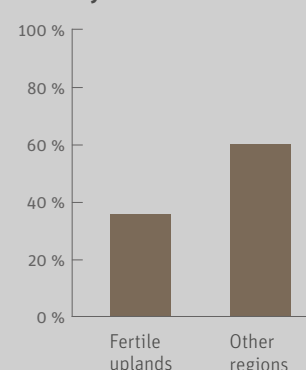
Small family farmers in Kenya's less fertile and more marginal areas are increasingly dependent on a second income earned outside agriculture or financial contributions from relatives living in urban areas or outside Kenya.

Small family farming in the Kenyan economy

Working population in Kenya



Households with livestock in Kenya



Source: 2009 Census Kenya, Wiesmann U., et al, 2014

Organic carrots and a “piki-piki” open doors

A story from the life of Pius and Moses Paulini from Towelo in Tanzania



In Africa, motorcycles are big business. Few can afford to buy a car for use as a taxi but many can manage a “piki-piki”, the Swahili word for motorcycle taxi. We can also see this trend amongst the mountain farmers in the Tanzanian village of Towelo. Located some 600 metres above the district capital of Morogoro in the Uluguru Mountains, the village is home to 20-year old Moses Paulini who lives with his parents and three sisters. Their life on the mountain is difficult. The plants growing on the steep slopes are very much at the mercy of nature and the small-scale farmers increasingly have to cope with the unpredictable effects of climate change.

In 2010, Pius – Moses’ father – and others in his farmer group received training in organic farming. The course was one day per week and was given by an expert adviser from “Sustainable Agriculture Tanzania” (SAT). The farmers learned how to cultivate the steep terraces to stop erosion, how to make

compost and plant-based liquid fertilizers and use non-polluting methods of pest control.

“I used to work with chemical fertilizers,” recalls Pius. “They were expensive and eventually leached the soil. My yields were poor”. Before the training, the land only produced one or two pepper crops per year, but years after the switch to organic Pius has increased that number to three or four.

On completion of the course, the ever resourceful Pius started to grow organic carrots. They have an excellent taste and have become a runaway success in the town’s market. Today, he sells 1200 kg of carrots each season, which brings in more than 500 Swiss Francs per year for the family. This was fortuitous, because in 2013, son Moses failed his school exams and so father and son took a chance and started a joint enterprise: Pius invested the equivalent of 500 Swiss Francs in a second-hand motorcycle

allowing Moses to work as a piki-piki rider with his own machine.

The taxi business did well from the start and the young man regained his confidence. Since then, he has earned about 13 Swiss Francs per day – 8 of which he gives to his father. The residents of Towelo have also benefited; the piki-piki service means that they can transport their cumbersome goods to the market in Morogoro in much less time.

All’s well that ends well then? Perhaps not for Pius Paulini. Father and son have already come to a new agreement. “Moses wants to return to education and train as a mechanic at a vocational college. He wants to fund the cost of the training himself,” smiles Pius mischievously adding that the fees would come from the daily contribution of 8 Swiss Francs previously handed over to dad.

www.biovision.ch/towelo-en



November 2007: the traditional Pokot dance group celebrate the opening of the Honey Collection Centre in Lomut.

“Cabesi” flies the nest

Since 2004, Biovision has helped former semi-nomads in West Pokot in Kenya to develop a profitable source of income. The Cabesi Project has now been handed over to local people.

The aims of the Cabesi Project were to bring about sustainable improvements in living standards, generate income and improve quality of life. During implementation it became clear that the time was not yet ripe for the introduction of camels or the production of wild silk in the Pokot region. Instead, it was realised that a focus on modern beekeeping and high-quality honey would provide a valuable source of income. Since then, the project has trained more than 1600 beekeepers who supply their produce to the six new Cabesi Collection Centres. These Centres process the honey, beeswax and propolis and the products are then sold in the new Cabesi Marketplace in Kapenguria. It opened in 2007 and is regarded as a reliable partner selling quality products. Cabesi honey is even offered on Kenya Airways flights!

Encouraging women in a male bastion

Getting women involved was one of the pre-conditions for participation in the project and so in the honey business. Pokot was traditionally a very patriarchal society. Women had few rights and a very low status. Cabesi has trained some 400 women as beekeepers. This has given them their own income and allowed them to participate in the decision-making process. The project has, therefore, improved the position of women in society. The most recent project phase included

further training and the recruitment of professional staff for administrative and financial functions. In June 2014, the Cabesi Marketplace was officially handed over to the government-approved Cabesi Self-Help Group.

Mercy Kiyapyap, who has been involved in the Cabesi Project from the outset, has been appointed Manager of the Marketplace. She has already set her sights on the next challenges. “We need to develop more products and transform Cabesi into an independent and competitive business venture. I have confidence in our potential and believe in a successful future for Cabesi”.

Further information:
www.biovision.ch/cabesi-en



Mercy Kiyapyap, for many years a project assistant and now Manager of the Marketplace.

Pioneering achievement

It was a bold idea: To set up a sustainable project using camels, bees and silk (CaBeSi) in a less developed area of Kenya. Rolf Gloor, the Swiss Project Manager, has spent 10 years developing Cabesi to the point where it can stand on its own feet. In 2015, Biovision plans to grant the project full independence. Although Gloor has mixed feelings about this step, he can be proud of what has been achieved. Cabesi is now part of the Cabesi Self-Help Group providing an income for 20 employees. It has appointed Mercy Kiyapyap – for many years an assistant on the project – as its manager. The honey and beeswax trade is thriving. At the start, nobody would have put money on the success of Cabesi – except of course Rolf Gloor who is both tenacious and resourceful. He managed to train a local team to underpin a project that provides sustainable help for self-help. It has not been without its problems: The production of silk was researched and tested but found to be unviable and so was abandoned. Similarly the use of camels for transport did not work but honey did and production has increased from 200 kg to 50 tonnes in 2013! Cabesi has won awards. It has provided training and knowledge to many. It has given women an independent income and for many children the money from the sale of honey has allowed them to go to school – invaluable in an area where illiteracy rates are about 90%! A project is only as good as the people involved in it. Cabesi is a shining example.



December 2006: **Rolf Gloor** welcoming the construction of the Cabesi Marketplace

Sincere thanks to our many partners!

In October, Biovision launched a campaign to support its Push-Pull Projects in Africa. The campaign has been extremely well received by both suppliers and partners. The supply of goods and services at a discount or in some cases at no cost whatsoever has significantly increased the total figure. Many, many thanks to our business partners in Switzerland and of course all our donors for their generous support!



The organic Push-Pull method for maize has tripled average yields in East Africa.
www.biovision.ch/push-pull-en

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Translations

Sue Coles (English)

Daniel Wermus (French)

Cover photo

Thanks to the training received as part of the Bustani ya Tushikamane project, Sabinus Ndolu from Fulwe (Tanzania) has improved his poultry farm.

Other photos

Peter Lüthi/Biovision, Page 4 Urs Wiesmann/CDE/Universität Bern, Page 6 left Samuel Ledermann/Biovision, Page 7 top Christoph Sonderegger

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Donations instead of Gifts

Children are the main beneficiaries of donations to a Biovision self-help project, e.g. this young girl from Towelo in Tanzania.

More and more families are opting to cut down on Christmas presents. They are giving presents to the children but the adults are giving a donation to a non-profit making organisation. In this way, they are supporting people in their daily struggle for survival.

Why not give a donation this Christmas! We shall be pleased to send you paying-in slips, information on our projects together with attractive greeting cards for the "recipients".

Of course, the "Donations instead of Gifts" campaign is also suitable for birthdays, weddings and jubilee celebrations.

If you have any questions or want to take part in the campaign "Donations instead of Gifts", please contact Sandra Menegol at the Biovision Foundation, Tel. 044 / 500 45 23 or email s.menegol@biovision.ch
Many thanks!

www.biovision.ch/donation



Biovision provides help for self-help in the fight against hunger and poverty. The training of farmers in sustainable methods of cultivation is, therefore a high priority. Our aim is enough food for all produced by healthy people in a healthy environment.



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