



AGROLAB GROUP

Your labs. Your service.



**AGROLAB donates
analytical device
to Tanzania**

The retired device will continue to be used for teaching and for the community in Tanzania



AGROLAB GC FID has been given a second life in Tanzania.



Building shell of the university laboratory; second floor not completed yet
In the background you can see the Kilimanjaro.

A piece of AGROLAB in Tanzania. Modern analytical technology at the Mwenge University in Moshi.

AGROLAB Agrar und Umwelt GmbH, in cooperation with OPCW, has donated a used GC FID to the university laboratory of Mwenge Catholic University in Moshi in the Kilimanjaro region of Tanzania.

In 2017 Maria Kreimeyer, site manager of AGROLAB Agrar und Umwelt GmbH, visited Mwenge University where she gave some lectures for students on chemical analysis and quality management. At that time, the university had just built a new laboratory, which was rather sparsely equipped. Mrs. Kreimeyer took this as an opportunity to think about how this process can be supported in the best way. In Germany, some laboratory equipment cannot be used due to different reasons. Those devices are often too slow for modern and fast routine laboratory-work : they are not able to analyze long series or the software cannot be updated anymore. However, those analytical instruments are often technologically state-of-the-art and in good condition. For that reason the idea was born to donate them to the university. After returning home to Germany it was time: a GC FID (Thermofischer) was no longer needed in AGROLAB Agrar und Umwelt GmbH and it was ready to be donated.

Thanks to the „Equipment Exchange Program“ of „Organisation of the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons“ in The Hague, the transport and training costs there could be covered. After all details were clarified, applications were made and all documentation for the equipment was prepared and the Kenyan company was found for the transport.



Employees of AGROLAB Agrar und Umwelt GmbH prepared the device for Tanzania

In Sarstedt, the analytical instrument was adjusted by the laboratory technicians Harri Mahr, Christoph Rößler and Patrick Körlin, who were willing to prepare the instrument and training materials in their free time. Thanks to above-average commitment of the company Axel Semrau, which donated suitable to the GC FID PAL autosampler, all existing software problems could be solved.

The transport of the GC was an adventure

The AGROLAB device was sent on a long journey by ship to Africa in March 2019 by the „Europe-Kenya Shipping Company“. In June the ship had arrived in Mombasa after more than two months. After customs clearance the device was picked up from Nairobi by „Nelson Johnson Dealers in: Service Repair“ and transported in a somewhat (for us) adventurous way on the roof of a bus to Tanzania. Even if you may not believe it, the device has traveled more than 7000 km without any bigger problems and arrived safely in Moshi (Kilimanjaro region).



Device is picked up in Sarstedt



Transport to Africa by ship



Transport through Africa on a bus roof



Device arrives at the university after a very long journey

Training of the university staff through AGROLAB laboratory technicians

In October 2019, Maria Kreimeyer, accompanied by laboratory technicians Harri Mahr and Patrick Körlin as trainers, traveled to Tanzania for a one-week training program.

The staff from Mwenge University was trained in sample preparation of hydrocarbons in soil, organic acids in manure and feed, as well as in measurement and instrument operation.

In the future, the device will be an integral part of the study program. In this way students get to know modern methods in instrumental analysis. In addition, the GC FID will be used for scientific work and services (measurements of organic acids for biogas plants, analysis of animal feed or for the determination of hydrocarbons in soil) for the community.

It was an incomparable experience for everyone involved. The laboratory technicians had been able to realize a unique trip to Africa and got impressions there which you don't get as a tourist.



Further programs are planned

Maria, the initiator of this fundraising campaign, has fulfilled a dream, but is still far from reaching her final goal and continues to inspire others to follow her example: „We are very happy that we could realize this idea. But we will continue to work together with OPCW with „Equipment Exchange Program“ and „Fellowship Program.“

This project gives students and employees of Mwenge University the opportunity to learn modern analytics - which will serve the community in the future.

In addition, it broadens our horizons, giving our employees a great opportunity to get socially involved and have that once in a lifetime experience. “

TRAINING OF EMPLOYEES IN AFRICA

The project was a great experience for everybody involved





THE CONVERSATION WITH MARIA KREIMEYER

“ I am always looking for older or retired equipment that is no longer needed by the laboratories.

”

Why are you socially involved? What is your intention?

I have the need to move something and to use unused potentials and Africa has so much (still) unused potential. I know, I cannot change the world, but I can, by even the smallest task, set in motion great change for the better.

What projects do you support?

So far I have supported projects in Germany, Poland and Africa. At first, for example, these were integration groups for women. But finally, my heart is in Africa, because I see there is a lot of unused potential there.

I also support start-up companies in Africa through consulting. Not everything leads to success, but I do not let bad experiences stop me.

One of the projects (with Poland-East Africa Economic Foundation) is currently working on biomass briquettes. These can be used for cooking in the future instead of charcoal, which is banned in Africa. We are already testing them in a few schools.

Furthermore, a human life can be positively influenced just by a few hours of work. I support students in applying for scholarships at universities, for example in America. For me these are only a few hours of work, for the person it might change the whole career.

Also some laboratory technicians in Sarstedt have participated in the last projects. How did it come to this?

In order to bring the equipment up to date, I needed specialists who were very familiar with the subject matter. Therefore I approached three laboratory technicians and found a great willingness to work on the project in their free time.

It was very nice to see how they grow beyond themselves and did not give up when problems occurred. In the end, the laboratory technicians gave lectures in Africa in English to 20 university employees. I am very proud of what we achieved and for everyone it was a great life experience.

Further projects are in planning

Recently we have prepared used computers and a NIR for delivery. We do not have any spare parts for the NIR, so it can no longer be used for routine applications in the AGROLAB laboratories. But in Africa they have a different mentality: repair and continue, instead of throwing away and giving up. If something breaks down, the Africans invent unique and creative solutions.

What do you wish for the future?

There is also a great demand for retired analytical instruments in other countries besides Tanzania. Therefore, I am always looking for used equipment that is no longer needed by the laboratories and is intended for disposal. I would be very pleased if AGROLAB would donate more equipment in the future.

