



Energy Assistance NEWSLETTER

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CONTENT

G. Mestrallet declaration	1
The Brussels 20 km on May 25	1
Light and refrigeration at <i>Tado</i> and water next	2
Consultancy mission at the <i>Rema</i> Hospital in <i>Ruyigi</i>	4
Thank you Tony !	6
Greetings cards	6
In Memoriam Benoit Cayron	6
Electrification of <i>Mutendeli</i> health centre	7
The final straight at Goma	8

Gérard Mestrallet supports the action of Energy Assistance

In his New Year address to the personnel of SES, Gérard Mestrallet, Chairman and CEO of Suez, warmly congratulated the members of our organisation and stressed the importance of these humanitarian missions, which make it possible for the most destitute to have access to energy.

He congratulated those who committed themselves to this action and who devoted time to this worthy undertaking. He said how proud he was to have men and women in the group who acted in the spirit of the values of Suez.

This mark of support was communicated at our latest Board meeting, and these words were highly appreciated within our organisation, and all the E.A. volunteers were very touched on hearing about them.



Energy Assistance at the Brussels 20 km on May 25

A sports and humanitarian challenge



The enthusiasm and the resounding success met by our first participation in 2007 encouraged us to register an Energy Assistance team again, to run in this year's 20 km, on 25 May 2008.

Personnel issued from the various businesses of the Suez Group in Belgium have been approached in order to run under the Energy Assistance banner.

The objectives of this project are many :

- forming an as numerous as possible team to support E.A.,
- using this event as an opportunity to increase the fame of our organisation,
- have each participant sponsored by colleagues, friends or family in the spirit of a "sponsored run" where each kilometre covered will benefit E.A. financially,
- taking up a sports and humanitarian challenge, in this case in a group, and

surpassing oneself whilst having a fun time with our colleagues.

Like in 2007 the initiative is sponsored by Emmanuel van Innis, Group Executive Vice-President – Human Resources. Furthermore, the companies have accepted to bear the registration costs of their personnel.

At the closure of the registrations on February 29th we recorded **485 participants**, compared to 215 in 2007. More than twice !

Come on 25 May 2008 and support those running for Energy Assistance !

Meet them at 13h45 at the entrance of the Institut Saint Stanislas, situated 226 Chaussée Saint-Pierre at Etterbeek, some 300m distant from the starting line.

For more information, please contact xavier.desmarests@suezenergyint.com

Light and refrigeration at *Tado* (Togo) and water next

In the *Adjas* kingdom

Back to Togo, three months after the *Agou Avédjé* mission (Newsletter # 19). This time we are in the east of the country, at *Tado*, a village near the Benin border, some 165 km distant from *Lomé*. *Tado* has a great past. In the 15th century it was the capital of the *Adjas* kingdom, which people later spread under various names in the regions around the Gulf of Guinea. Remains of pottery, mosaics and iron furnaces are witnesses of the kingdom's past. *Tado* is also considered the birthplace of voodoo. Very few traces of this glorious past are left today. Poverty is rife amongst a population of about 8 000, devoid of any resources except from subsistence farming and who have no access to electricity or water, except for the village's single manual well.

Some people wanted to make the effort to improve things and created the *AED-Togo* (*Action Enfance et Développement – Infancy and Development*) association that would work towards general development and education in particular. It also supports maternal and infant health initiatives and women who grouped themselves to produce and process agricultural products. Kouma Laurent Dekalikan, its founder, contacted Aqu

assistance and Energy Assistance to study how to provide the village with electricity and water.

E.A. – Aquassistance partnership

In December 2005, a joint mission of the two associations went to evaluate the situation in the field. E.A. was represented by Christian Cartucci, retired from *SMEG* (*Société Monégasque d'Electricité et de Gaz – Elyo Group*), an old hand in Togo and who is also the godfather of a Togolese girl.

As for electricity, the needs are immense, but E.A. can only do as best as it can, on account of the local community's limited resources and its own budget constraints. It was therefore decided to electrify the Health centre with solar photovoltaic panels (1 044 watt-peak) and install a 16 kVA diesel generator from which to power the future pump of Aquassistance and a communal refrigerator permitting to preserve food, the revenue generated by the latter hopefully offsetting the fuel costs of the generator. On the Aquassistance side, the process was longer and another reconnaissance visit proved necessary in order to test the capacity of the existing well and determine the locations for the stand-

pipes. Finally the implementation work was synchronized at the start of 2008.

Never seen such hard cement ...

Once the equipment (solar equipment and diesel generator) had arrived at its port of destination, was customs cleared and transported to the village



Local volunteers

by the efficient care of *AED-Togo* and that the pictures were received of the diesel generator power house erected by a local contractor, the project implementation mission was launched. On January 5th our volunteers Christian Cartucci and Christoph Heymann (*Netmanagement Eupen*) landed in *Lomé* for a two-week mission.

Their first contact with the local reality is positive : the equipment was stored correctly, the power house was constructed very well and the trench intended for the cable (350 m) to the future pump was impeccable. The picture becomes a little bit less bright when our men discover how poor the quality is of the equipment to be installed inside the building, which had been ordered locally and was of Chinese origin. A messenger had to be despatched on a motorbike to *Lomé* to find the necessary, better quality equipment. Another snag, upon opening of the solar equipment crates it was discovered that one of the panels had been accidentally broken and would be useless.



Christoph, Christian and local volunteers in front of the Health centre

Courageously our friends start installing the health centre equipment, with the help of ten willing villagers (whose number dropped to four by the end of the mission). They find the building strongly constructed of cement blocks which the builder had « reinforced » with iron chippings originating from the ancient iron furnaces and that were strewn all over the ground in the village. Using the power drill (its Li-ion batteries rechargeable via an inverter) proves indispensable. Every time they hit iron the drill bits get worn in no time, prompting another motorbike ride to *Lomé* to buy more bits. The villagers are nice but not a great help. Not even being familiar with how to use a screwdriver, there is no point in asking them to use a power drill. In turn, they are good measurers and therefore they are the « tracers ». It goes without saying that in such circumstances the Togolese experience of Christian works wonders.

... and the living conditions

The work progresses slowly, also due to the intense heat (over 30°C) and because the *harmattan* (dust-laden desert wind) blows relentlessly. Fortunately our volunteers were clever enough to purchase plenty of mineral water before leaving *Lomé* for the site. Concerning gastronomy, the meals are prepared by the village

women using the local resources, giving the opportunity to Christian to make Christoph discover the delights of the cane rat (locally called *agouti*), a large rodent (4 to 8 kg) that is bred for food and is always eaten with maize. For a change from the ordinary, they were able to buy a cockerel at the weekly market. As for the accommodation, it was quite exotic. Christoph will take some time to forget the night he woke up suddenly (thankfully at the end of the mission) by the commotion caused by a fight between the cockroaches living on his mattress and a pack of mice...



How to get to the roof...

Finally, there was light !

After a bit more than a week the photovoltaic system (panels, regulator

and batteries), the lighting of the dispensary and the nurses' accommodation, as well as the refrigerator for the vaccines were installed. This left enough time to train the persons responsible for the Health centre and the «electrician » appointed by *AED-Togo* in the operation and maintenance.

Christoph also put to use his nurse's complementary training by making some recommendations: don't throw the syringes haphazardly in a cabinet, keep contagious patients sufficiently separate from the other patients, chase away the bats living in the roof because their droppings can enter the premises through the false ceilings... All good advice that was welcomed by the chief nurse.

Now it was time to install the diesel generator and the related equipment : fuel-oil tank, smoke stack, general LV switchboard. Two public lighting points are also installed, one near the diesel generator and one near a future standpipe. The local electrician had already pre-wired the room (lighting and power sockets), but at the first test the protections tripped and all had to be re-checked. Finally the diesel generator is running and the population cheers when the light comes on. The communal fridge has been connected a bit later and, obviously it is not until our friends of Aquassistance can complete their work that the generator can exercise its prime task of powering the pump that will supply water to the Health centre and five standpipes located at various places in the village.

Christian and Christoph can be proud of completing successfully a mission under difficult conditions and of having contributed to changing the life of thousands of people. At the Health centre the care and the delivery of babies no longer have to stop at dusk or done by the light of oil lamps. Soon the women will have access to water within a radius of 300 m and will be able to store their produce or purchases from the market in the communal refrigerator.

Roland Rosseel
Project manager



Christoph, volunteers and children of Tado

Consultancy mission at the *Rema* Hospital in *Ruyigi* (Burundi)

The outcome of a long, trustful relationship

A lasting partnership

Energy Assistance follows since several years the evolution in the projects and achievements of Marguerite Barankitse at *Ruyigi* in Burundi. Maggy, “*the woman with 10 000 children*”, leaves no one indifferent, by her personality and her enthusiasm, her belief and her achievements ... But also, and not in the least, because we are truly concerned with the distress and despair of the mothers and children who endured rebellions, wars, rape, aids.

After a first mission by E.A. in April 2006 (Newsletter 13), Marc Van Gelder and Patrick Pirson went on an inspection visit in 2007, amongst the housing of the sibship villages, where they previously installed solar photovoltaic panels to light the small community centres. As they were there, Maggy took advantage to « attract » them to her new site, the construction of a hospital devoted to *Mother and Child*, an extension of her work...

Maggy, after the construction of a first building to welcome « *Mother and Child* » by Belgian military personnel, had decided to expand the capacity of the care provided to pregnant women and their children.

Following the report of our two « commandos », we contacted Maggy on one of her flying visits to Belgium and we also met Véronique Mairlot, the animator of one of her main partners and sponsors, the « *Jean François Peterbroeck Foundation* »

Taking control of a construction that was going wrong

After that, everything went very fast. Jacques Haumont (of Axima Services) visits *Ruyigi* a first time, on 25, 26 and 27 June to see what has to be done regarding the electrical installations. At the same time we ask him to take a look at the wastewater drainage

system and the site organisation in general. Back at base, his report paints a quite catastrophic picture...

At Maggy's and Véronique's request, Jacques Bérard travels to the site in order to evaluate the needs and supervise the construction work, and also to establish a work relationship with two French volunteers (the two « Jean-Pierre ») who were working on the electrical installation. Jacques Bérard takes control of construction supervision, Maggy and her hospital manager decide a change of architect and of design bureau, and the site progress quickly picks up... Admittedly the deadlines are very short, all having to be ready by 22 January 2008, the date scheduled for the inauguration of the first phase (the maternity).

After a coordination meeting between all the parties involved, at ... Zaventem airport, Jacques Haumont, Dario Torini and Benoit Cayron, all three of Axima services, travel back to the site on 4 November, for a fortnight in which to complete and secure the electrical installations. Things are getting done efficiently and lead to a remarkable technical success : the electrical installations meet the most stringent safety and reliability requirements for a hospital, the networks (normal and emergency) are fully identified and all the switchboards (general LV switchboard and distribution switchboard) are clearly marked following the tests.

With support from “*Ingenieurs zonder Grenzen*” (Engineers without Borders)

Jacques Bérard returns on 6 December to continue the construction work supervision, finalise the water supply



Training by Benoit Cayron



Jacques Haumont and the kids

system from the wells and check the execution of the site follow-up (5 pages of items to be corrected).

The construction has also to be speeded up and the many design errors for the buildings have to be put right. During this mission Jacques is accompanied by Paul Declercq, from Engineers without Borders, who assists him concerning the site drainage part, the incinerator and the finishes to its power supply.

Last visit as far as phase 1 is con-

cerned, from 16 to 23 January 2008, with a superb and touching inauguration ceremony on the 22nd ... Two meetings with the Burundian architect and the sponsors, in order to approve the drawings of the phases 2 and 3 buildings, determine the construction methods, evaluate the budgets, have a coordination meeting at the site with the owner and the contractor ...

Love is stronger than anything ...

A few words on the inauguration. All

was superbly organised and proved perfect despite the rain, the political tensions, the shooting that went on the previous days and despite all the difficulties ... The children, the Mothers, the villagers, the authorities, the Belgian and Luxembourg sponsors, the Belgian Ambassador to Burundi, the European Union representative celebrated with emotion, joy and good humour a resounding success...

Maggy said and repeated that « *Love is strongest and will always win* ». It takes her beliefs and her influencing skills to accomplish the construction of a hospital, in a difficult period and at times surrounded by people who proved to lack the capabilities to pull off such a project. It takes her beliefs and courage to attract to its projects such a range of different personalities issued from various circles but that she instils with a same passion : helping, efficiently, the people who need it most.

And E.A. was part of this... On behalf of the *Maison Shalom* NGO and the *Rema* hospital, many thanks to our courageous volunteers and to all who support our organisation.

Jacques Bérard
Project manager



Training by our lamented Benoît Cayron

Thank you Tony, welcome Marie-France !

After having been the mainstay of our Newsletter for four years, our friend Tony Moens de Hase wished to hand over this task in order to devote more time to his new extra-professional activities. (see : www.myplanet.be).



The collection of texts in three languages, the selection of photos and contents of the boxes, and above all the page lay-out, were all part of the job he gladly took on, be it ever so hectic at times when text came in late. He spared no effort to ensure that the deadline for publishing an issue was met, so that the Newsletter was distributed with clockwise precision at the end of every quarter. On top of that he displayed unflagging creativity as he was adamant that the next issue should always be better than the previous one. No wonder that Tony could have left a large gap, which fortunately can be filled by a long-standing friend of Energy Assistance : Marie-France Lavoye, who



is a communication professional and who responded to our call, accepting to take over.

Our warmest thanks, Tony, you can leave us without remorse, we are confident your baby is in good hands.

Jean Bouckaert
Chairman of E.A.

Greetings cards 2007

The success in 2006 encouraged us to repeat the greetings cards operation in 2007.

In Belgium, Isabelle André contacted some of her graphic artist friends in order to create, together, the new cards. Our thanks to Valérie Ducoeur, Clotilde Lepièce, Samir Willems and Romuald Gobin who got down to the job with passion and creativity. Not later than at the end of November, several card selling teams were deployed at the headquarters of Fluxys, Tractebel-Engineering, Suez, SEI, Electrabel (headquarters, Markets & Sales, Tihange nuclear power station) and the site of Laborelec at Linkebeek, and at Elyo and Ineo.

SEI and Synatom used our cards to send their season's greetings. Like last year, Marie-France Lavoye made arrangements to use the greetings cards for the invitations sent for the annual meeting of the EX-TRs.

In all **more than 9,000 cards** were sold. A resounding success !

In France, E.A.F. launched its own project on photos of its missions. 3,000 cards were sold via the works councils and 14,000 cards were used by Elyo for the company's greetings. Also, Ineo referred to EA on its own greetings cards. The profits of those sales will be applied to the financing of our projects, while the sales campaigns at the various companies of the Group definitely raised the visibility and fame of E.A.

E.A.'s communication team can already announce to you that a new greetings cards operation is planned for the end of this year.

Xavier Desmarets



IN MEMORIAM Benoît CAYRON

Benoît left us on February 22nd, 2008 at 40 years of age.

He was a member of the Axima Services personnel since 1990, exercising a function of technical expert at its electricity department.

Benoît took part in the EA mission to the Rema (Ruyigi 2) hospital in Rwanda in November 2007. His technical experience and his human qualities were highly appreciated during that mission.

We present our deepest sympathy to his family and his colleagues.



Electrification of *Mutendeli* health centre

A string of missions

Mutendeli is a small village situated in the extreme southeast of Rwanda, in the *Kibungo* district. In December 2006 our friends Johan Baert and Axel Lefèvre, who were then carrying out two other projects in Rwanda, visited the village to make a first assessment of the needs. This first contact made them aware of the necessity to do something that would help the local health centre, and they were confident the help wouldn't be in vain, considering the enthusiasm and consciousness of the people they met.

The village of *Mutendeli* is not con-

disappeared, were positive signs when considering whether or not to erect more substantial electrical installations.

Back home, Johan and Axel easily passed on their enthusiasm to E.A., convincing all of us that this project needed our urgent support. Johan again showed his efficiency and creativity as he designed and determined in the most minute detail a complete photovoltaic installation (30 additional PV panels sized 87 watt peak each) with 220 volt distribution for the entire centre. He even added a small electrical sterilizer (400 watt) to replace the ancient apparatus which operated on charcoal.

than be quick, since after *Kibungo*, they had to go back to *Kabgayi* as promised in 2006, to renew the electrical installation of the staff cooperative. Fortunately, around these latitudes the sun rises and sets every day at six a.m. and six p.m., so work is actually stopped for the 12-hour period without daylight. Otherwise, faced with the very tight deadlines our friends would have been tempted to work practically round the clock. Thankfully, the installations having been well designed and their erection carefully prepared, there were no snags or unexpected problems and the deadlines could be met just by working 12-hour days.

On the last day, for the official inauguration of the installations, the health centre people had prepared a formal reception, with great pomp, and attended by the benefiting local population and all the local civil, medical and military authorities and dignitaries, who all expressed their gratitude to E.A. and our two volunteers. We were not able to check, but apparently their work was even reported on the national radio !

By telephone, a few weeks after they came back to Belgium, our two friends received confirmation that the installations continued to work impeccably under the vigilant eye of Jean-Paul Ibyimana, in charge of the health centre, and we can be confident that it will continue to do so for many years, bearing in mind how much conscientiousness and commitment the beneficiaries displayed.

And, now we have heard that several other health centres in the same district still have as little electricity as *Mutendeli* had before, it is very likely that in the future we will talk to you again about this beautiful region in Rwanda. Thanks, Johan ! Thanks, Axel ! Bye for now, but see you soon !

Gilles de Roubaix
Project manager



Johan and Axel assemble the PV panels

nected to the country's electricity distribution grid and there is no indication it could be connected in the coming years. During their first visit our two volunteers found that the centre didn't even have a generator set and the only electric equipment consisted of four old solar photovoltaic panels, just enough for some emergency lighting of a few rooms. The fact that the installation was still working after so many years, without breakdowns and without components of it having

12 hours of daylight, 12 hours of work

Once the equipment had been ordered and delivered to *Kigali*, our two volunteers had set their mind on one thing: returning to Rwanda to complete their mission. They went at the start of December last year. In nine days of highly intensive work, all was installed. They had no other choice

The final straight at Goma

In recent weeks, things picked up momentum at Goma.

Claude left on January 22nd in order to accelerate the customs clearance of the equipment that finally arrived on location, to check its condition and organise with SNEL the erection of the posts for the line and the installation work for the transformer station.

As SNEL didn't move it is finally « En Avant les Enfants » that accepted to take on that work.

Meanwhile, on February 5th the Mayor of Goma laid the foundation stone for the line in the presence of the various authorities and the sponsors of the Ngangi centre.

On February 26th SNEL woke up and really shifted into high gear, fitting the insulators and stringing the conductors.

On March 11th, Claude, accompanied by Dominique Keser, went back in order to install the transformer station and make



the latest connections with the help of EALE and SNEL.

On March 20th, the line was switched on and the Ngangi Centre finally connected to the grid.

In the coming June issue our Newsletter a special feature will be devoted to « Goma ».

Claude Gastout
Project manager

ENERGY ASSISTANCE needs its **MEMBERS'** support.

For Belgium The annual membership fee is **€ 20** for full members and **€ 5** for associated members. (Please send your contribution to our bank account number ING **310-1675876-93** - IBAN: BE98 3101 6758 7693 - BIC: BBRUBEBB).

IMPORTANT : In the message with your payment, please mention the amount being paid for membership (€ 20 or € 5) and/or the amount of the donation. The donation is tax-deductible and you will receive a tax certificate for any donation of **€ 30** or more. The membership form can be downloaded from the site (<http://www.energy-assistance.be>) or can be obtained from the association.

For France, Every one who would like to join EAF can do so by sending a subscription of **€20** by cheque made out to **ENERGY ASSISTANCE FRANCE** at 1, Place des Degrés, 92059 Paris La Défense. Please let us have your address details so that we can send you a tax receipt (all donations and subscriptions to EAF are tax deductible in France up to 60%).

Thank you in advance.

REMINDER: Please send any changes in your personal data (address, telephone number, e-mail) to the **ENERGY ASSISTANCE** secretariat.

ENERGY ASSISTANCE IS LOOKING FOR PROJECT COORDINATORS

To deal with the increasing number of projects being submitted to EA, we are looking for volunteers to join the Project Committee which studies, develops and follows up the implementation of the projects we approve.

Interested? Then please apply to J.P. Germeau



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