



Request for Support

On the 9th of September 2022, Collins Muhadia Bisia, a PhD student from Kenya who received a scholarship from ATSAF Academy, was diagnosed with stomach cancer. He has consulted with oncologists and the best course of action is to start intensive chemotherapy as soon as possible. He will start this in Nairobi next week.

Fortunately, International Livestock Research Institution (ILRI) was able to support Collins with insurance that will cover some of the cancer treatments, but will not cover all. He needs support to cover co-pays, treatments related to chemo-therapy side effects, and some specific tests that will inform treatments, transportation to and from the hospital in the coming months. Therefore, we humbly request your assistance to help cover these costs, estimated to be about 8,000 Euro.

Biography

Collins was raised in Matunda, Kakamega County, in Kenya in a family of 6 children. From a young age, he was a science enthusiast and was keen to learn about scientific findings in the universe. His childhood dream of becoming a scientist motivated him to excel in his studies, and after high school, he pursued a Bachelor of Science degree in Soil Water and Environmental Engineering at the Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology in Kenya, where he graduated in 2016. In his Bachelors' studies, he gained a wholistic understanding of the Earth as a global system that needs to be protected. Learning this made Collins to seek avenues to advance his studies in environmental



sciences, and in 2017, he was awarded a fellowship by the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Netherlands Fellowship Programme), to pursue his Master of Science degree. He completed this degree in 2019 from IHE Delft Institute of Water Education in Environmental Science. His MSc thesis research was on faecal contamination and water quality problems in water pans in Kenya, and his thesis awarded a very high mark based on the interdisciplinary approach to research. This led to his participation in teaching other MSc students, an interview and podcast at IHE, and the development of a scientific publication. This, together with his interest in earth system science and global environmental problems, led him to pursue a PhD with the ultimate goal to be involved in global environmental agendas such as mitigating climate change, and to contribute to capacity development

in Kenya as an educator and researcher. In 2021, he was awarded a fellowship from ATSAF Academy to pursue this dream.

Collins's current research and supervision

The title of Collins's PhD is "Water pans as multifunctional components of climate smart landscapes in semi-arid regions." Water pans are shallow-dug holes designed to collect surface-water runoff and are essential sources of drinking water for livestock, people, and wildlife, especially in pastoral landscapes in semi-arid and arid regions. He works to understand how people use these water pans, their water quality risks to people and wildlife, and their potential contribution to climate change through greenhouse gas emissions. Ultimately, he wants this research to promote sustainable establishment and management of water pans to improve both water and food security for communities, and to assess and minimize their climate change impacts.



Collins is jointly supervised by Prof. Dr. Klaus Butterbach-Bahl (Karlsruher Institute of Technologie, Institute of Meteorology and Climate Research (KIT/IMK-IFU) and Albert-Ludwigs-University Freiburg, Germany), Dr. Sonja Leitner (International Livestock Research Institute), and Assoc. Prof. Dr. Gretchen Gettel (IHE Delft, Institute for Water Education, Netherlands).

This is a plea initiated by Collins's supervisors, Klaus Butterbach-Bahl, Sonja Leitner, and Gretchen Gettel. All additional information on how Collins will cope, what else can be done and anything else, need to be directed to his supervisors. ATSAF is providing the means to reach out, but his supervisors can update you with further information.

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