Press release
Sénas, 22 April 2021

Fighting malaria in Djibouti: QISTA, a young French company, is launching its own entomology laboratory

Facing the worrying development of malaria on this territory, the National Office for Water and Sanitation in Djibouti (ONEAD), called upon QISTAs expertise to determine why the disease is dramatically increasing and persisting in the area. Their "QISTA lab" took up the challenge and has been carrying out a diagnosis of the entire city of Djibouti since early March.

Aiming at supporting local authorities' decision-making process in their fight against vector-borne diseases, QISTA, which already conceived an award-winning and booming environmentally friendly mosquito control solution, is thereby adding a further competence to its pool of technological skills. The company is launching **its own molecular parasitology and entomology lab called QISTA Lab**, to decode the way of life of the mosquitos caught, to identify and target their breeding places, and reckon the risk of vector-borne diseases.

This novelty is embodied through a first study carried out in Djibouti since March, jointly coordinated by the **Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria**, the **ONEAD** and Djibouti's **National Program to Fight Malaria (PNLP).** The **QISTA Lab** is mapping mosquitos' breeding places and conducts surveys on mosquito larvae in the capital city, in order to, in the coming months, make a diagnosis of the reasons why vector-borne diseases are skyrocketing in the country.

Indeed, as all eyes are on the Covid-19 pandemic, **mosquito-borne diseases** (malaria, dengue, zika, chikungunya…) are deadlier, causing every year – and it has been the case for a longtime - at least **830,000 deaths[1] in the world**. These diseases are a major sanitary issue, especially in Djibouti, currently facing a **double threat**. Djibouti is the first African country where ***Anopheles stephensi***, a species of malaria-carrying mosquito coming from Asia, was detected back in 2012. And this mosquito has kept thriving ever since. 24 malaria cases were confirmed in Djibouti in 2012, against 26 000 in 2018[2]. **90 %** of the cases are located in the area of the capital city[3]. Simultaneously, ***Aedes aegypti***, the chikungunya-carrying mosquito, is also thriving, especially with global warming favoring its development.

The project gave rise to a meeting between QISTA and the Prime Minister, **SEM Abdoulkader Kamil Mohamed,** and with **M. Abdi Khaireh Bouh,** coordinator at the Global Fund. The QISTA Lab team was warmly welcomed by the population and by all the stakeholders committed to the fight against mosquitos, which is very promising for the continuation of QISTA's work on the field.

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[1] Gates Notes – World's Deadliest Animals – Based on the data of IHME, OMG, CrocBITE, FAO, Norwegian Institute for Nature Research, International Shark Attack File, National Geographic, PBS, National Science Foundation, CDC, WWF, IRD, *Wilderness & Environmental Medecine*, *Nature*

[2] Sources: OMS et PNLP

[3] 25th edition of the « Actualités du Pharo » meeting (2019)

QISTA's diagnosis is making a reality of the cluster **"Djibouti, territory of innovation",** resulting from the will of Djibouti's authorities and from the commitment of French entrepreneurs developing innovative technologies in the field of water, sanitation, energy and public health. This diagnosis is also following the **decentralised cooperation agreement set on 12 February between Djibouti and the Sud region** (South of France), dealing with biodiversity conservation, water management and sustainable tourism.

« Beyond our mission with the Government of Djibouti, our presence there enabled us to meet with the Global Fund, with which we are setting up a project that consists in rolling up eco-friendly anti-mosquito traps over about twenty strategic areas, to go along with the actions already carried out by the Ministry of Health to fight malaria", explains **Pierre Bellagambi,** co-founder of QISTA. *"This also made it possible to launch the cluster "Djibouti, territory of innovation" alongside with its president, Pierre Terrier, who is also general delegate of the ADEME (Environment and Control of Energy Agency) international club".*

Besides, QISTA is expanding further in African countries suffering the most from malaria, with installations for instance in **Senegal**, **Côte d'Ivoire, Burkina Faso, Mozambique** and **Mali,** and pursues its efforts to expand in Asia and the United States as well, to amplify the fight against mosquito-borne diseases in these areas.

About Techno BAM and QISTA

Founded in 2014 and located in Aix-en-Provence (South of France), Techno BAM is specialised in eco-friendly mosquito control solutions and prevention of mosquito-borne diseases. The company currently employs about forty staff and generated a turnover of 3.9 million euros in 2020. Launched by Pierre Bellagambi and Simon Lillamand, the company designed QISTA, an eco-friendly mosquito-control solution consisting in traps that catch mosquitos, thereby protecting against mosquito bites and monitoring mosquito populations, to prevent mosquito-borne diseases. Air Liquide, France Industrie and TDH (Thierry Dassault Holding) entered the group's capital in 2017. In 2018, QISTA was awarded a prize at the CES in Las Vegas. QISTA operates today in more than 50 towns in 13 countries, with a total of more than 5,500 traps.

To know more about QISTA: https://QISTA.com/fr/, @qista_technobam and @Qistamosquito.
To know more about the QISTA Lab: https://qista.com/fr/lab

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