

## TRIBUTE TO AMBROSE MGANDA

The Ifakara Health Institute and the Swiss Tropical Institute pay tribute to the late Ambrose Andreas Mganda, one of the Tanzanian founders of the Swiss Tropical Institute Field Laboratory (STIFL) which became the Ifakara Health Institute. Today the Ifakara Health Institute stands on the solid foundation laid by people such as Ambrose and He will always be remembered for his contribution to the well being of future generations. Ambrose was recruited together with Pius Helemens by the late Prof. Rudolf Geigy when he established the Swiss Tropical Institute Field Laboratory (STIFL) in 1957.



Ambrose was born in February 8, 1939, grew up in Ifakara and studied at St. Joseph, Ifakara Middle School up to standard five. He started working with Prof. Geigy during summer breaks to initiate the early research activities in Ifakara. Later, after completing primary school, he was recruited and trained as a driver. After working with STIFL under the supervision of Prof Geigy, Ambrose progressed from Driver to research Field Worker. He participated in the early research activities on tick-borne diseases, tsetse flies and mosquitoes.

His major contributions include his participation in an extensive survey of tsetse flies in the Serengeti area; Ambrose participated at all levels from catching and dissection Tsetse flies to inoculating hamsters. Over 40'000 Tsetse flies were dissected in the field and analyzed for the presence of human-pathogen trypanosomiasis. From there he developed more comprehensive skills in medical parasitology and entomology. There was hardly a test or procedure not know to him and he taught so many young Tanzanian in so many issues of medical parasitology and field work. Besides his broad expertise and experience, Ambros was a wonderful observer and also story-teller. Unforgettable are his skills as hunter and tracker, and his great sensitivity for ecology and the role of man in preserving the environment.

When he retired, he served as an administrator of the Ifakara Pharmacy Association. He always showed support to young people at early stages of their careers. Ambrose has seen the changes that have happened in Ifakara from a small laboratory to the current modern status. The institute would not have reached where it is today without the contribution of Ambrose Mganda and Pius Helemens. Pius died in 1999 and Ambrose died on Friday, June 19, 2009 at St. Francisco hospital. The two are remembered fondly by the IHI community. May they rest in peace.