

**THE TANZANIA HEALTH PROJECT**  
**Overseas Development Administration/Technical Cooperation, The British Government, UK.**

This Project between the ODA of the British Government and the Tanzanian Government is now beginning to take shape, after a certain amount of delay due to administrative difficulties in the southern areas concerned, which are basically the regions of Lindi, Rvuma and Mtwara. Three more have been added, Rukwa, Mbeya and Iringa, though it is not yet entirely clear if these will benefit from the full coverage of the project, or specifically from TB/Leprosy control only. The Project was conceived in 1977, with a British Commitment of 2 years, with the option of extension, and funding from the British Government of over £8 million pounds sterling. The plan is basically for primary health care, with an upgraded referral hospital at Mbeya. Tuberculosis and leprosy are to be tackled together, under the overall direction of Dr Nkinda in the Tanzanian Ministry of Health. Dr Richard de Soldenhoff (UK) has recently been appointed from UK to coordinate work in the project area. Great emphasis has been placed on the proper provision of suitable microscopes from England; 1000 standard instruments will be provided for routine laboratory use, together with a further 8 special units for fluorescence microscopy. A microscope maintenance and repair centre is seen as an essential element at the outset. We await further news of the development of this important and ambitious project with great interest.

**NINE-BANDED ARMADILLOS (*Dasypus novemcinctus*, Linn.); breeding and conservation experiments in the Guernsey Zoo, The Channel Islands, UK, on armadillos bred in captivity, and imported from the USA.**

In May this year, the *Guernsey Evening News and Star* reported a remarkable initiative on the part of Dr David Jamison (who previously worked with Professor A. G. M. Weddell in the Department of Human Anatomy, Oxford) and the Director of the Zoo, Mr James Thomas. On 9 March, 1979, they acquired two male, nine-banded armadillos bred in captivity and imported from the United States, quarantined for 6 months in the United Kingdom, and believed to be 18 months of age on arrival. Their intention is to study these animals with a view to obtaining scientific information which may lead to the breeding of armadillos in captivity. Both animals settled down well on a diet of

dog food, raw eggs, tinned milk and added vitamins, and after initial housing in a small quarantine room, they were moved to permanent quarters, constructed of 6-inch concrete blocks and asbestos roof, heated by 6 tubular heaters to a thermostatically controlled temperature of 70°F. Two weeks after this change, one of the animals unfortunately developed features suggesting intestinal empaction, which was relieved by forcible feeding of liquid paraffin and glucose, but this recurred 10 days later, with failure to feed, leading to death. Autopsy revealed the cause of death as empaction of the small intestine, probably associated with the ingestion of excessive amounts of peat, used in bedding; examination of the other organs was completely normal.

These researchers intend to import 2 females in September, 1979, and possibly to expand the facilities to accommodate more animals in the future. The breeding of nine-banded armadillos in captivity is a matter of the utmost concern to WHO's IMMLEP and THELEP programmes, and it has not so far been confirmed by researchers working with this animal in the United States or South America. We wish Dr Jamison and Mr Thomas every possible success in this potentially very important project. [If other units in Europe, or in areas outside the Americas, are conducting similar studies on any aspect of armadillo physiology, we would be grateful to receive information for publication. This applies particularly to any conceptions and births which occur *in* captivity, as opposed to the taking in of pregnant females. *Editor*]