



Vitreous and Retina

CHANGING TRENDS IN THE PREVALENCE
OF BLINDING EYE-DISEASES



Dr. Silvia Bopp
Foundation

Eye Health Care in Eastern Africa

Enormous progress has been made to treat cataract, the leading cause of blindness in developing countries. However, Africa already faces the next challenges: diabetic retinopathy, age-related macular degeneration and glaucoma present the main emerging diseases with prevalence rates comparable to anywhere in the world. Furthermore, lens complications and retinal detachments can accompany an unsuccessful cataract surgery. These developments have already been observed in China, India and the Middle Eastern countries. So far, Africa has given low priority to retinal diseases and is not prepared for the procedures and treatments. However, with the right training and equipment, these challenges can be tackled successfully.



Eye health care in East Africa

Diabetic Retinopathy

Diabetic Retinopathy is a disease resulting from complications of diabetes mellitus. It is defined by blood vessel damage in the retina resulting in further complications, such as new vessel formation, bleeding, retinal detachment and severe sight-threatening macular edema. This disease occurs frequently in diabetics who lack access to a nutritious diet and appropriate health care. It can be detected in dilated eye exams. Treatments include laser or later vitreoretinal surgery for which most regions in East Africa lack equipment as well as trained medical professionals. The majority of blind persons in East Africa could avoid their condition, if they had access to appropriate medical care.



Fig. 1 Proliferative diabetic retinopathy with neovascularizations and bleeding



Fig. 2 Diabetic maculopathy with massive edema and lipid exudation

Dr. Silvia Bopp Foundation (DSB)

PD Dr. med. Silvia Bopp's career started in medical and surgical ophthalmology and then focused on vitreoretinal diseases. She adopted an international reputation for her clinical and scientific work as well as educational activities. To round off her engagement in the field she founded the Dr. Silvia Bopp Foundation (DSB-Foundation) in 2008. The main goal of the foundation is to ultimately minimize the prevalence of avoidable blindness in Africa by increasing the number of practicing ophthalmologists in general and by promoting the practice and accessibility of vitreoretinal surgeries in particular.



PD Dr. med. Silvia Bopp,
founder of DSB-Foundation

"As I have found an excellent ophthalmology residency program, implementation of subspecialties, such as the vitreoretinal field, is the next step. As East Africa already faces the problem of increasing retinal diseases, I want to offer my support to establish vitreoretinal eye care in these countries."

LIGHT FOR THE WORLD

LIGHT FOR THE WORLD is a European confederation of national development NGOs committed to helping improve life in developing regions by providing access to specific services for persons with disabilities and by stimulating the consideration of accessibility for and inclusion of persons with disabilities in all areas of development.

Supporting disadvantaged regions in the world by offering tools and training to increase their medical self-sustainability is the basis of the collaboration between LIGHT FOR THE WORLD and the Dr. Silvia Bopp Foundation. Together, we are increasing the number of practicing ophthalmologists in Africa by offering ophthalmology scholarships and providing mobile eye-health facilities.



Our Goal: Sustainable ophthalmological care
provided by local professionals

The Scholarship Program

The severe shortage of practicing eye health professionals is mainly due to the lack of educational resources and funds. To increase the number of ophthalmology specialists, the Dr. Silvia Bopp Foundation and LIGHT FOR THE WORLD offer interested medical graduates financial aid, as well as guaranteed post-graduate tenure in an underprivileged region. Furthermore, we ensure access to English classes, training equipment and materials and monitor progress through annual project visits. Beyond financial aid, Dr. Silvia Bopp shows her support as one of several visiting specialists in the ophthalmology departments of our partner universities, giving students international insight on current issues and findings on the subject of eye health. These actions are made possible through collaboration with local universities such as University of Nairobi and Kilimanjaro Christian Medical Centre.



A practicing ophthalmology specialist

Examples of our scholars

Dr. Sarah Kweka



Dr. Sarah Kweka,
graduate student at Kilimanjaro
Christian Medical Centre
(2011–2015)

“Ophthalmology has been my dream, and I really am very grateful to see my dream becoming a reality in the next 2 years.

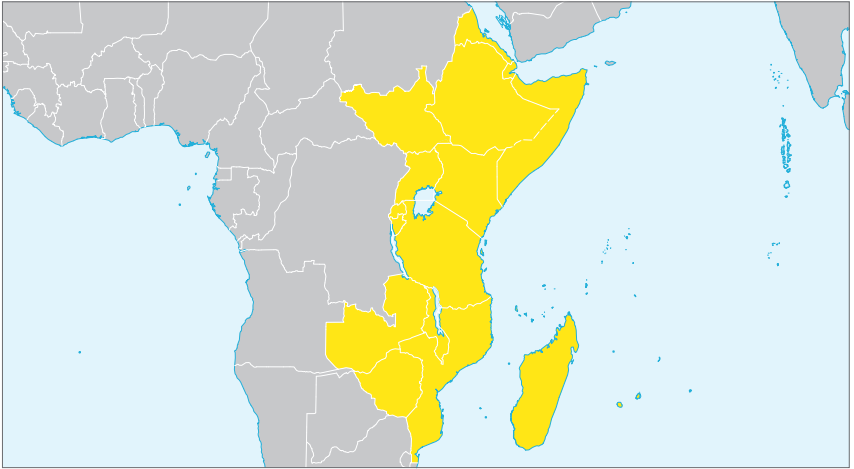
Very special thanks to Dr. Silvia Bopp and LIGHT FOR THE WORLD, for providing full sponsorship for my studies. Otherwise, it would have been very difficult, and almost impossible for me to undertake this course.”

Dr. Remezo Philbert



Dr. Remezo Philbert,
graduate student at University of
Nairobi (2011–2014)

“I am very happy to be one of the doctors to receive support from LIGHT FOR THE WORLD and I thank them sincerely, but I also want to particularly thank Dr. Bopp for granting me the funds that finally will enable me to become an ophthalmology specialist.”



For more information about LIGHT FOR THE WORLD
or the Dr. Silvia Bopp Foundation,
visit: www.light-for-the-world.org and www.dsb-foundation.com

LIGHT FOR THE WORLD

Niederhofstraße 26, 1120 Vienna, Austria

TEL +43 / 1 / 810 13 00 **E-MAIL** info@light-for-the-world.org

Dr. Silvia Bopp Foundation

Bischofsnel 6, 28195 Bremen, Germany

TEL +49 / 421 / 20 11 10 **E-MAIL** info@dsb-foundation.com

Publishing information: Editor and publisher: LIGHT FOR THE WORLD and Dr. Silvia Bopp Foundation – Responsible for content: Rupert Roniger (Austria) and Dr. Silvia Bopp – Photos: LIGHT FOR THE WORLD, Dr. Silvia Bopp Foundation
Graphic Design: Barbara Weingartshofer, www.nau-design.at