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Nursing staff in Lugala, Tanzania

## Well trained.

# Editorial



## Persuasive work.

«Seeing is believing»: this figure of speech was first recorded in 1639. Members of the SolidarMed board wished to see with their own eyes how the Lesotho programme was progressing. Some of the progress would indeed have been unbelievable, had it not been witnessed locally (page 8). Like the nursing staff, which – thanks to SolidarMed’s support – competently cares for patients at remote health centres. Meanwhile in Lugala (Tanzania), ever more nurses are completing their training. Thanks to SolidarMed, they can attain a recognised nursing diploma in their remote home district. The whole population benefits from their work at Lugala Hospital (page 3).

Once, Nik Hartmann travelled to Moçambique to visit a SolidarMed project as part of the Swiss TV and radio show «jeder Rappen zählt» (Every Cent Counts). His experiences on that journey never let him go. He regularly makes the impact of SolidarMed in Africa visible and comprehensible to those at home (page 7). Defining experiences like these are what motivate SolidarMed to stand up for what we have seen in Africa. For many of our current and former colleagues, this commitment lasts a lifetime – and with a bequest, even beyond.

My heartfelt thanks for your support of SolidarMed. Every donation means health for people in Africa, I have seen this for myself!

Dr. med. Svend Capol, President of SolidarMed



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SolidarMed, Obergrundstrasse 97, CH-6005 Luzern  
Phone +41 41 310 66 60, contact@solidarmed.ch, www.solidarmed.ch

**Editorial Team:** Murielle Drack, Benjamin Gross, Joel Meir  
**Texts:** Benjamin Gross **Layout:** Murielle Drack

**Cover photo:** Marten Brill

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# Well-trained and urgently needed.

More than half of the health staff required are missing in the hospitals of rural Tanzania. This affects the quality and availability of medical help in the region. Finally, a couple of months ago, the first well-trained nurses could complete their training at Lugala Nursing School. SolidarMed now ensures that the school helps mitigate the personnel crisis in the long term and so makes better treatment quality possible.

At 7.30am on the dot, Mary Kasumi, wearing her white coat, is ready for duty on the male ward. This is where she cares for patients who have suffered accidents. Patients like Mr Charles, who fell off a coconut palm. «He was lucky that he only broke his foot and one arm, and not his back. Now I do physiotherapy with him». During her time at Lugala Nursing School, Mary also received training in this area. The young nurse began her training in Lugala in 2011 and received her nursing diploma last August. She is one of the first well-trained nurses from Lugala. Just a few years ago, graduates had to start their work at the hospital after

only one year of training, and were badly prepared for what faced them. The training programme was much too short to prepare learners for the multitude of possible diseases and injuries. In response, SolidarMed completely overhauled the training programme and adapted it to the official Tanzanian guidelines, to ensure that students are appropriately prepared for their work. →

«Thanks to SolidarMed, there is now skills lab where students can put their theory into practise using dummies.»

*Photo: Marten Brill*





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## Twice as many training places

The expansion of the training programme from one to two years meant that there were suddenly twice as many students needing a place to study, eat and sleep. In the past four years, with SolidarMed's help, dormitories, sanitary facilities, an urgently needed administration building, a school kitchen and a food store were built. In addition, the dining hall was expanded to seat all the students. Also constructed were a second classroom, a library and a skills lab.

«In contrast to the students that came before me, I could really benefit from the better school and learning environment that SolidarMed made possible» Mary confirms, whilst shaking out the patient bed sheets and smoothing them down. «I prepare for the round and inform the patients that the doctor is coming». He tells her what she needs to bear in mind about individual patients. Mary dispenses medicines, changes infusions, renews bandages and prepares patients for surgery.

It is not even three years ago that the confident nurse travelled from Mbeya to Lugala. Mary stayed on after completing her training and now competently cares for the patients. The work of a trained nurse is very valuable to the hospital, as it is extremely difficult to find well-trained personnel at a remote place like Lugala.



Mary completed her training at Lugala Nursing School in 2013 and now cares for patients like Mr Charles on the male ward.

*Photo: SolidarMed*

## Better teaching quality

In her daily work, Mary can see the value of good training. She proudly explains that students who began this year receive even better training than she did. «Thanks to SolidarMed, there is now a well-equipped skills lab where students can practise their theoretical skills on dummies. That wasn't possible in my time. Also there is now finally a small library and a large enough classroom. Last year, lessons still took place in the church with two stacked chairs functioning as a desk.»

*«Only four years after its founding, Lugala Nursing School is an established institution which reliably produces certified nursing staff. The school has made a significant contribution to reducing the enormous lack of nursing staff at Lugala Hospital»*

Elisabeth Rotzetter, Country Coordinator and Project Manager in Tanzania





The school library,  
equipped by SolidarMed.

*Photo: Marten Bril*

### Guaranteeing quality in the long-term

With the support of SolidarMed, in the past four years the necessary buildings were constructed in Lugala to make nursing training possible. However, a lot is still missing. Only a couple of months ago, a competent principal could be hired who will further increase the quality of the teaching. Trained personnel like Mary are now prepared for their work at Lugala Hospital. By improving the teaching quality even further, nursing staff could take on yet more responsibilities. A further challenge is the maintenance of the built infrastructure. SolidarMed is aware that it is not enough to simply build the structures. In the coming project phase, a system will be introduced to both guarantee the quality of the teaching and to ensure the buildings are maintained in the long-term.

Mary's working day ends at 3.30pm. Tired, she starts on her journey home. Soon, another class will complete their training at Lugala Nursing School and Mary will receive more support at the hospital. This will ease her burden – and benefit the patients.

#### Further information:

[www.solidarmed.ch](http://www.solidarmed.ch) → Topics → Health staff

## This is how SolidarMed is helping Lugala Nursing School in 2014:

### Improving infrastructure

- Renovating old dormitories, toilets and showers
- Purchasing final pieces of furniture for the dormitories, the library and the dining hall
- Completing the staff house for two teachers (built in 2013)
- Service and maintenance system for the nursing school

### Increasing teaching quality

- Hiring an additional tutor as deputy for the principal
- Improving practical training at the hospital by training two nurses as clinical instructors
- Procuring learning material and books for the growing numbers of students
- Maintenance of the computer and solar power systems
- Financial support for the principal until the complex hiring formalities of the Tanzanian government are complete

### Supporting the school leadership

- Advice on and improvement of the financial management
- Support for the development and maintenance of a website
- Construction of a piggery and chicken run as a future source of income for the school
- Professional exchange with a well-functioning nursing school

## Legacies and inheritances

# Be well remembered

**Some people leave part of their assets to a charitable organisation. They have given early thought to their will and ensured that their estate will do good - beyond their own lifetime. A very personal subject, treated with the necessary respect by Eliane Jenny at SolidarMed.**

**SolidarMed: Many aid organisations regularly suggest making a will in good time. Why?**

Eliane Jenny: Without a will, one's estate is divided in accordance with the legal guidelines, which is not always in line with the actual wishes of the deceased. It is thus worth one's while to define, in writing, what should happen to one's assets. Many people are not aware that they can include a charitable organisation in their will. Legacies and inheritances for charitable organisations are exempt from inheritance tax. The chosen organisation thus receives the full amount stated in the will.

**So SolidarMed wants to «inherit» too?**

Estate planning is a very personal decision and I completely understand if people only consider their families and friends in their will. For me it is important to show people that SolidarMed can be a beneficiary of a legacy or a will, and what kind of impact this will have.

When SolidarMed receives a legacy or is remembered in a will, I am very happy about it – irrespective of the amount. In southern Africa, millions of children and their parents are exposed to deadly diseases and do not receive the medical care they need. A legacy or inheritance for SolidarMed means better medical care for these people, and saves lives.

**Can you give an example?**

Last year we received a very generous bequest of 16'000 Swiss Francs. This was the amount still missing to expand the maternal- and neonatal ward at Lugala Hospital in Tanzania. The small, dark and badly ventilated rooms of the current maternity ward were renovated and reorganised. Now this remote hospital has a maternity ward which meets the needs of mothers and newborn babies.

**Will you be leaving something to a charitable organisation in your will?**

Yes, but currently this would be quite a modest sum (laughs). But if one considers that 30 Swiss Francs are enough to

equip a community health worker with a first-aid-box, even the small bequests are worth it. It is important to me to set down early on what should happen with my money after I am gone. It is a nice thought – that it will help sick and injured people in Africa.

**Eliane Jenny:**

«I am gladly available to you for a no-obligation personal chat, or can arrange for independent legal advice. I look forward to hearing from you.»

Telephone: 041 310 66 60

E-Mail: [e.jenny@solidarmed.ch](mailto:e.jenny@solidarmed.ch)

[www.solidarmed.ch](http://www.solidarmed.ch)



### The inheritance

It is possible to designate a charitable organisation or a person close to you as an heir. As a co-heir, the organisation is on equal terms with the other heirs. Those who do not have legally protected heirs can designate a charitable organisation that is close to their heart as their sole heir.

### The legacy (or bequest)

If one wishes to leave a person or an institution something upon one's death, but does not wish to make this person or institution an heir, one could leave them a legacy in the form of a fixed amount in one's will. This legacy cannot affect the obligatory portions, so has to lie within the freely disposable amount.



Photo: Eric Anderegg

## Slideshow with Nik Hartmann

# «A doctor is rarer than the «Big Five».»

It was an impressive mixture of serious and happy pictures which Nik Hartmann brought back from his trip to Zambia. In his role as goodwill ambassador for SolidarMed, the well-known radio host presented his striking photos in Schaan, Luzern and Thun and told the audience about his experiences in rural Africa.

«I am not a doctor, I can't even put on a decent bandage, but I can tell these people's stories here in Switzerland and Liechtenstein and help raise money, so that SolidarMed can do the important work.»

Nik Hartmann focussed on Medical Licentiates (MLs). The training of these associate clinicians is a promising response to the acute lack of medical staff in Zambia. Hartmann compared his journey into rural health facilities with a safari and noted quite aptly that a doctor in Zambia is probably harder to find than the famous «Big Five» animals. In actual fact, the country lacks more than half of the health staff it needs.

Photo: Nik Hartmann

Since 2002, the Ministry of Health has been producing non-university trained but surgically/clinically active emergency doctors who go on to take over the responsibility for a rural health centre. Thanks to SolidarMed, in the past three years, twice as many MLs have been trained than in the years before.



## A closer look at Lesotho

Every two years, the members of the SolidarMed board undertake and privately pay for a visit to a project region in order to see the situation on the ground for themselves. Last November, the journey went into the mountains of Lesotho, where the board had the opportunity to maintain contact with partners and colleagues in Lesotho.

«We are very aware that we are only witnessing a snapshot in time» board member Kathi Jungen emphasized in retrospect. «Nevertheless, what we saw during our journey will have an influence on the future strategic decisions for SolidarMed». Their journey included stops at the mountain hospitals of Butha Buthe and Thaba Tseka. The group could also form impressions of decentralised health care in the

hard to access, remote health centres of St. Peter and Sehong Hong. Time and again, there were exciting discussions with local partners who were able to communicate their gratitude and raise issues at the highest level.

Together with the Archbishop, the president of SolidarMed Svend Capol officially opened the three new rooms of the mother-child department in Thaba Tseka. These have replaced the previous small room and have made better care possible.

*Photo: Sabine Heinrich*



### Agenda

→ Friday, 25th of April 2014: World Malaria Day → Tuesday, 14th of May 2014: Sting day! Attention – Malaria in Chur. → Saturday, 24th May 2014: SolidarMed Annual General Meeting on the Sonnenberg in Lucerne. Invitation to members to follow.