Vector competence and filariasis transmission in Malawi (Dr. Themba Mzilahowa)

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Lymphatic filariasis caused by a filarial nematode, Wuchereria bancrofti is highly endemic in Malawi. Despite its widespread nature, the disease shows differential endemicity. It is highly endemic in the lakeshore and low-lying district areas. Currently the entire population has received at least two annual doses of albendazole and ivermectin through mass drug administration (MDA) campaigns. Although major strides have been made to control and eventually eliminate LF in Malawi, very through MDAs little has been done to understand disease transmission dynamics and vectors that sustain disease transmission in the country. An understanding of the local vectors of the disease and their biology provides a vital and necessary piece of information required for lasting disease elimination programme. The present study aims to determine the role of various anthropophilic mosquito genera in LF disease transmission in Malawi. Working in three districts of Chikhwawa, Mchinji and Karonga across the country, the study has identified Culex sp, Mansonia sp, Anopheles gambiae s.l and An. funestus s.l to be common potential vectors. Using molecular techniques the various anopheline sibling species will be identified and infectivity rates determined.

Projektbeteiligte

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