



**Olive Modestine  
MAKAM KOM**

**Home Country  
Cameroon**

**Degree  
PhD in Medical  
Physics**

**Expertise  
Medical Physics  
in Radiation Therapy**

**Research Focus  
Radiotherapy and  
Treatment  
Planning Systems**

**Host University  
Saarland University  
Hospital, Germany**

**Fellowship Awarded  
2006**

Olive Makam Kom was born the second child in a family of six in Bafoussam, Cameroon. She grew up with her grandmother in a small village where she attended primary and high school.

Olive moved to Dschang to attend university in 1997, and obtained her bachelor's degree in physics in 2001. At the University of Yaounde in Cameroon she earned her master's degree in physics in 2002. After teaching general physics for one year in high school, she moved to Douala to study in the Centre for Atomic Molecular Physics and Quantum Optics (CEPAMOQ) at the University of Douala, where she earned a master's degree in medical physics in 2005. CEPAMOQ is a centre of excellence affiliated with the International Centre of Theoretical Physics (ICTP) in Trieste, Italy. She is conducting part of her PhD research at the Saarland University Hospital in Germany.

Olive's research focus is on radiotherapy, one of the most important modes of cancer treatment. Radiotherapy involves radiationbased treatment using complex and sophisticated technology. She is particularly interested in helping develop a quality management program for Treatment Planning Systems (TPS).

A TPS is a computer dedicated to planning the radiation dose received by a patient. Most accidental exposures occur due to improper planning or to lack of commissioning or quality assurance procedures. Commissioning (initial testing) means all procedures, data input and verification checks that are needed to get the system ready for clinical use. It is also essential to maintain an ongoing quality management program which must not impose an unrealistic commitment on resources and time. Quality assurance procedures can prevent treatment errors and exposure of staff and can help ensure accuracy in the radiation therapy process.

When she completes her studies, Olive plans to teach at the University of Douala and to work in clinical medical physics practices in Douala.