

MISSION REPORT, May 2017 - AFRICA



*"I'm very happy now with my new leg because I do not depend on the crutches anymore. I have now a lot of mobility and I couldn't believe to walk on my own feet again, thank you very much **SwissLimbs** and Ikonda Hospital."*

SwissLimbs is a not-for-profit organization based in Switzerland, specialized in capacity building of local professionals and organizations in the ortho-prosthetic field. We restore advanced mobility to disabled people who have unfavorable options and resources to secure their own rehabilitation.

We believe that **"mobility is a basic human right that should be accessible to everyone everywhere."**

www.swisslimbs.org



Uganda – Gulu Referral Hospital



Tanzania – Ikonda Hospital



TATCOT

IMPLEMENTOR: SwissLimbs Association, Mendrisio, Switzerland

DONOR: AVSI Foundation Uganda – The Trust Fund for Victims, Kammea Association and Private Donors.

PARTNER: Ministry of Health Uganda, Ikonda Hospital Tanzania, TATCOT - Tanzanian Training Center for Orthopaedic Technologists.

LOCATION: Gulu Regional Orthopaedic Workshop (GROW) at the Gulu Regional Referral Hospital, Gulu, Acholi Region, Northern Uganda; TATCOT workshop – Moshi Tanzania; and Ikonda Hospital – Njombe Tanzania.

TRAINED 9 Orthopaedic Technicians

RESTORED mobility to 12 Satisfied Patients – with 14 legs

INTRODUCED NEW SwissLimbs Above Knee and Modular Technologies



After introducing the Monolimb™ Technology to Ikonda Hospital - Tanzania and Gulu Referral Hospital - Uganda during 2016, the **SwissLimbs** team was invited back for a second technological transfer session and for a training demonstration to one of the most prominent ortho-prosthetic training schools in Tanzania - TATCOT. The first mission brought the Training Module Nr.1 – the affordable technology for the manufacturing of the innovative SwissLeg Monolimb below knee leg. This second mission brought Module Nr. 2, with a focus on innovation in two areas: the Modular adaptation for Trans-Tibia prostheses for a higher mobility and changeable alignment system, and the Trans-Femoral adaptation with 2 different types of knees especially designed for the developing nations and perfectly adaptable to the African terrain and climate.

THE ORTHOPEDIC TEAM



The Gulu Regional Referral Hospital – Orthopedic Workshop Team



The **SwissLimbs** Team
Bernardo Gomes, Senior Trainer
Roberto Agosta, Exe.Dir. **SwissLimbs**



5 technicians received their Certificate of participation for the training course **Module II**, which included the Above Knee Technology and the Modular **SwissLimbs** Technology.



**TATCOT team with patient
Orthopedic Workshop Moshi**



**The SwissLimbs team
Filippo Nishino, President SwissLimbs
Daniele Kläy, Senior Trainer**



**Ikonda Hospital team
Orthopedic Workshop Njombe**

The Trained Technicians



Emmanuel Kalanzi,
69, Ugandan, Chief
CPO, 38 years exp.



Hawa Muhumuza,
32, Ugandan CPO,
3 years experience



Nicholas Ben Kiiza, 30,
Ugandan CPO,
3 years experience



Bob Henry Obala,
23, Ugandan
Shoemaker 3 years
experience



Geoffrey Abongo,
36, Ugandan
Shoemaker, 12 years
experience



Davis Shirima,
Tanzanian, PO teacher
BSc PO



Exaud Kasegeya
Tanzanian, PO teacher
BSc PO



Tumaini Mathias Matandala
Tanzanian, PO in service
BSc PO



Stanlaus Francis Saria
Tanzanian, PO in service
BSc PO

THE BENEFICIARIES



Perfect balance - Excellent mobility - Cosmetic finishing

Francis Obeti, 26, Ugandan
Bi-lateral Below Knee Amputation



Oryon Lazombiel, 48
Left Above Knee with
affordable 4-bar knee joint



Sunday Odong, 32
Left Above Knee with
Innovative All Terrain Knee



Alterno Nokrach 55
Left Below Knee with
Monolimb™ Technology



Galdino Odongo, 45
Right BK with Modular
SwissLimbs Technology



Linus Sanga, 58
Right Above Knee with
Innovative All Terrain Knee



Doris Mkiva, 22
Right AFO



Dickson Theoflo Malle 70
Left Below Knee with
Monolimb™ Technology



Tamimu Saidi, 65
Bi-lateral BK amputation
with Monolimb™ Technology



Baraka Mwambeta, 35
Right Above Knee
with 4-bar knee joint



Windi Sintoro, 40
Right BK with Modular
SwissLimbs Technology



Ezekia Kaulogo, 25
Left BK, modular
SwissLimbs Tech.

THE AVSI GULU TEAM – The Fantastic 4



Joyce Laker
Program Manager
(Trust Fund for Victimes)



Harriete Adoch
Social Worker



Patrick Omwony
Database Officer



Benard Rackara
Social worker

OTHER VIPs



Padre Alessandro Nava
Hospital Director
Missione Consolata



Mr. Longini Basil Mtalo
Acting Principal
TATCOT

TRAINING MOMENTS



SwissLimbs

THE HUMANITARIAN SOLUTION FOR GLOBAL MOBILITY



TESTIMONIAL – Francis Obeti - Uganda



Francis Obeti is a 26 years old Ugandan man from Arua. He lives in Nyaravur near Nebbi in the Western Nile region. He is a bi-lateral, below-knee amputee.

This is his story:

“I lost my legs when I was 2 years old and never found out why. My mother died when I was 7 and this issue is a taboo in my family. My life has been a constant preoccupation, wondering, “Where will I get my next legs? How will I be able to pay for them?”

“I have no memory of myself ever walking on my own legs. My earliest memory was when my mother was bathing me. Looking at my body I realized for the very first time that something was missing; I had no legs like the other boys! I must have been about 4 or 5 when I asked my mother, “Why don’t I have legs?” My mother started crying. I know now that she expected that question but was not prepared to give me an answer, so she said nothing and I never raised the question again.

“An Italian Organization (Cuamm, Doctors with Africa) found me crawling along in the streets of Nyaravur, and send me to Mulago hospital in the capital Kampala where I could receive my first legs at age 7. Before that, I was crawling or was carried on someone’s back. I was very grateful and loved so much being able to walk. It even allowed me to work in the garden, dig holes and push a wheel barrel.

“But as the years went by and my two little stumps grew, families and friends had to collect major funding to help me get my next set of legs. Now that I am an adult, I must find the funding myself and pay over \$300 (US) each. The government is supposed to give me free prosthetics, but the technicians at the medical departments demand payment (bribes). Besides that, I had to travel throughout the country just to find a facility with a technician and the materials. Through the years I went from east to west in search for the next workshop, all in all being fitted 15 times. But prosthetic legs brake all the time and I need replacements about every 2 years. And I had to stay away from home for months at a time, missing much time in school.

“I started studying to become a Medical Records Officer, I have 2 more years to go, but I had to quit my studies to travel to find where I can get my next set of legs.

“Now I can’t express how grateful I am to AVSI and to **SwissLimbs** for fitting me with a pair of new legs. Thanks to them I received the best legs I’ve ever had.”

What is your dream Francis?

With a shy look which slowly turns into a huge, bright smile reveals the dreams and hopes any young man would have for his future....



“I want to finish my studies, find a good job, get my own place, and then (big smile) get married and have my own family”

Francis was fitted with two Modular **SwissLimbs** Protheses during the Gulu Misison May 2017

TESTIMONIAL – Alterno Nokrach - Uganda



Alterno Nokrach is a 55 years old man from Lamo, he lives in Kiryandongo district, Uganda, with his wife and 7 children (2 boys and 5 girls aged from 5 to 24 years old).

“My leg was amputated 12 years ago, I never received a prosthesis, this is my very first artificial leg! I am so happy that I can walk again and now I can work and help my wife providing for our family”

“Back in 1997, the fighting was so intense in my village that the Government came to protect the civilians and put us all in a camp. I lived there for 7 years! One day, I went outside the camp for just a short while, but I ran into an ambush. The rebels chased me and I ran as fast as I could but stumbled upon a rock and broke my leg very badly and was left there.

Word got to my brother who came with his bicycle to take me to Kitgum hospital for urgent medical care. There was nothing they could do there, so I was transferred to the Lacor Hospital in Gulu where they were able to help me, but had to cut off my leg.

When I returned home, I could go back to my village and together with my family we could start to rebuild our home. But I was very dependent on her, I could not work or help in any significant way, and I could only move slowly on crutches.

People ask me why I never got an artificial leg for all those years (12), and although I knew they existed I had no idea there could be done in Uganda. It was my brother who heard about the Gulu Orthopedic workshop, and I could finally go there.

I am so happy that I can walk again and now I can work and help my wife providing for our family.”

Alterno arrived at the Gulu Orthopedic Center in crutches, slowly moving and with a very sad expression. When he first tried his leg on, he was teary, excited and his smile returned. This leg, he said, will change his life forever.

He is learning to walk again after 12 years of being amputated. His new leg is fitting him perfectly, and has regained his full independent mobility.

Alterno received a Left Below Knee Monolimb™ prostheses from SwissLimbs May 2017.

TESTIMONIAL – Sunday Odong - Uganda



“I was abducted by the LRA¹ when I was 12 and was forced to fight for them for 7 years. My liberation came at a high cost when the Government forces bombed our camp blowing my leg away”

The LRA took us to their camps and made us do unspeakable things. I was trapped in their camp, we were living in the bush and living like prisoners. One day the UPDF² attacked the camp where we were hiding killing and maiming many of us, including many civilians.

The LRA fled and dead and the injured were left behind. I was taken to Gulu at the Lacor hospital who saved my life, but could not save my leg. My injuries were so severe that they had to patch me up everywhere and I stayed in the hospital for 2 years!

At age 21 I was brought to a rehabilitation center for ex-child soldiers where they helped me deal with the severe war trauma I went through, the memories were just too painful and I stayed there for 8 months.

An wonderful lady from AVSI, Joyce Laker, saw me there and spoke to me about the possibility of receiving a leg from the Gulu Orthopedic workshop. She helped me get my very first leg and I was just so happy when I realized I could walk again. The leg just helped me get out of my helpless state and start becoming independent with some farming work. I now can tend to my own little farm and earn enough money to support my family.

It wasn't easy going back to my own village. There was so much stigma around my physical and psychological condition. My own family rejected me thinking of me too damaged in my mind and body to be good for anything.

But I continued to live there and work my way into the community again. Today I am very blessed with a wife and my 2 ½ year old boy. This year I have been so privileged to be chosen to receive this new leg with a new very fancy knee. It's so amazing! The leg is light, comfortable and the knee so smooth to walk, sit, climb stairs and it's waterproof.

I am very thankful to the **SwissLimbs** team and the AVSI team for their gift and the wonderful way with which the technicians took care of me.

Sunday Odong is 32 years old from Te-Aceng, North Region of Uganda.

He received new SwissLimbs Trans-Femoral Prosthesis with the innovative All-Terrain knee, in May 6th, 2017

¹ The Lord's Resistance Army who fought against UNDF 1986-1996

² Ugandan People's Defense Forces

TESTIMONIAL – Baraka Mwambeta - Tanzania



“I was still conscious when I was below the bus, the tire did crush my leg below knee and I could see my tibia bone coming outside with a lot of blood, flesh, and muscles surrounding it “, Baraka - 35 years old from Mbeya, Tanzania.

Baraka is married and has 4 children, a 15 y.o. girl a 10 y.o. boy, 6 y.o. boy and a 3 y.o. boy. Eight years ago he was happy to finally find a job as money collector in a private bus line which route is from Mbeya town to Chunya District and worked there for 4 years when due to an accident at his job he lost his right leg. Baraka tells his story below:

“In a certain Monday during August 2013, I was collecting the bus fares outside the bus when by stepping inside the bus, the driver didn’t see me and started to move forward. I suddenly fell down and my right leg was below the tyre. It was at Chunya - Tanzania.

I was still conscious when I was below the bus, the tire did crush my leg below knee and I could see my tibia bone coming outside the leg with a lot of blood, flesh, and muscles surrounding it. At the exact moment, I was shocked not feeling any pain just looking at the fracture when a passenger took me with his own car to Mbeya Referral Hospital.

During the way to the hospital I lost my consciousness and when I awoke I was in the hospital and started to feel an intense pain. The doctors tried to save my leg by stitching it, but the wound didn’t heal and after 3 days the doctors decided to



amputate my leg above the knee. I remained one month in the Hospital. My wife, children, and relatives took care of myself during this period.

After this accident, I wasn't able to go back to work and lost my job. I always started to cry when I thought on my condition as disabled and was thinking in suicide many times. My former employer did not give any assistance and I even had to buy my own crutches.

After 4 monthes I finally started to make my first steps in front of my home. Then I rent a motorcycle to work as a Boda Boda driver, that is still my job occasionally and I have also my own corn farm.

I'm very happy now with my new leg because I do not depend on the crutches anymore. I have now a lot of mobility and I couldn't believe to walk on my own feet, thank you very much **SwissLimbs** and Ikonda Hospital."

SwissLimbs in collaboration with Ikonda Hospital donated him his first above knee prosthesis on May 4th, 2017.