



**SWISSLIMBS CAPACITY BUILDING WORKSHOP TO PROSTHETIC
& ORTHOTIC STAFF OF ARUA REGIONAL REFERRAL HOSPITAL:
8th to 12th May 2023**

Introduction:

Between 8th and 12th May 2023, AVSI together with Swisslimbs organized a refresher training for three Prosthetic and Orthotic technicians of Arua Regional Referral Hospital. The training took place at New Hope Rehabilitation centre, Bidibidi, Yumbe district. This was a follow up refresher training for the staff of Arua Regional Orthopaedic workshop after the March 2020 capacity enhancement workshop. The training which was practical was facilitated by Emmanuel Kalanzi, Swisslimbs Ambassador Africa, who is an AVSI expert technician in the field of prosthetics and orthotics. Clients who benefitted from the workshop were both primary and secondary amputees, either from host communities or the settlement. A total of 08(02 female, 06 male) clients were fitted on prostheses and five discharged within the training week.

Training Objective:

To enhance skills of the technicians working in Arua Regional Orthopaedic Workshop in Arua Regional Referral Hospital.



What the trainees had to say

Canikare Jangwen- The In charge Arua Orthopaedic workshop: *“This has been an exposure to us as we met different categories of amputees compared to the first training. This was also an opportunity for us to share ideas with other technicians and learn new skills and appreciate how other technicians work around prostheses production processes”.*



William Ocitti- Orthopaedic Technician at Arua Regional Referral Hospital: *“The training has exposed us to work with different machines used in production of prostheses; some of which we had never used before”.*



Peter Acamun, an orthopaedic Technician at Arua Regional Referral Hospital: *"I am getting acquainted with the new technology. I like it because it uses less component compared to the technology we used to employ and with this new technology, it is easier for a primary user to adapt to and also us the technician to produce and discharge more clients within the shortest time".*

Words from the beneficiaries/stories:



A child of 7 years old and a twin born in a family of three siblings was among the beneficiaries fitted during the training. The child **Ejaa Kizito** from Arua city sustained a fracture on his right leg when a stationary bicycle fell on him while he was one year three months old. The fracture was later managed from the hospital but as fate might have it, the leg later developed gangrene and the cast fell off together with the now gangrened portion of the leg according to Ejaa's mother. Brenda, the mother of Kizito would later learn from Kizito's teacher about the rehabilitation centre in Bidi bidi and sought for rehabilitation for her son who had been on crutches since the incident that crippled the child. Kizito's happy mother had this to say in her own words *" I am excited that my child can now walk on his legs again"*.



Joseph Taban, a 48 years old Sudanese national expressed his happiness in receiving an artificial limb. Joseph sustained gunshots wound that resulted in amputation of one of his legs. *"This new leg will help me to walk around. The crutches I have been using give me a lot of pain in my armpit"*.



One of the clients, **Margaret Poni** is a **62 years** old Sudanese national who had received her first limb in 2020 during the Arua training benefited from a limb replacement as her stump had already developed atrophy and needed a replacement of a new limb. Poni had lost her leg to landmine back in her country in Sudan as she was collecting firewood. *“My first leg supported me to be mobile and carry on with cultivation while living in the settlement.*

I am happy that although it got spoilt, I have got another one”.



Another male client, **Matata Malis**, **57 years** old reported for a second limb replacement. Malis hails from South Sudan and shared how the first leg he received has supported him to dig for his family and looks forward to getting active in cultivation with his new limb. Malis had reportedly suffered from gunshot that led to losing his left leg above the knee.



Aliku Safi, a **44 years** old client who is a businessman, a Ugandan national who hails from Yumbe district received his 3rd prosthesis. According to Safi, his first and second limb he had acquired from Gulu Regional Orthopedic workshop; with the socket of the second limb becoming large, Safi was challenged in using the prosthesis. Safi who lost his left leg below the knee to landmine is happy that he no longer has to travel long distance in search of a workshop for replacement of his artificial limb.



Juma Lias, **78 years** old South Sudanese national received an artificial limb for the first time. Juma’s leg developed gangrene and was later amputated in July 2022.



Meanwhile, [James Taban, 60 years](#) old South Sudanese national who had brutally lost his limb when he was cut on the head and leg by the rebels back in his country Sudan was among the clients who benefited from the training. James was all smiles as he was given a prosthesis and walked on his new leg for the first time in seven years since the incidence that led to his amputation on his left leg below

the knee. James appreciated service as he was able to get a leg this time. *“I was taken to Gulu by AMREF in 2019 but could not be supported as there was no materials. I also reached Arua Hospital; my leg was casted but lack of materials made me not to get a leg again. I am very grateful to God that Now I have a leg. This leg will help me to clean my compound, dig and go to the market unlike before when I was dependent on others”.*

[Nasia Zaituni, a 32 years](#) old lady ([photo missing](#)), a national of South Sudan was casted to benefit from prosthesis for the first time after having been involved in a road traffic accident five years ago, leaving her with physical disability.

Personal Observation:

New Hope Rehabilitation centre is strategically located and serving the communities within and without in all her capacities. The staff are committed and passionate in their various roles. However, rehabilitation being a long term and sometimes a tough journey both to the multidisciplinary team and the clients (and their caregivers) comes with its own tests. In the centre, there seems to be limited or not readily available accommodation for the clients and caregivers as they undergo week long rehabilitation that might require one to be within the centre. A provisional space for accommodation would facilitate the rehabilitation processes such that the staff work under manageable pressure and be able to deliver quality services to the beneficiaries.

During my interaction with the beneficiaries and some of the staff at the New Hope Rehabilitation centre, I noticed that clients seem to be faced with different challenges (emotional and psychological distresses). It is worth remembering that our past life experiences influence our present emotions. One of the reasons that we might feel sad or lonely or afraid or angry or even hopeless sometimes in our lives could be because of memories and feelings about what happened to us in the past. Psychological counselling in this instance helps to reduce stress,

creates space for emotional safety and gives an opportunity for one to talk about confidential issues.

Thus, in future, a presence of a mental health staff working alongside the rehabilitation team would provide an opportunity to the clients to learn about themselves, learn skills for strengthening self, be able to know/understand what is happening in their lives and use better coping strategies that would eventually lead to successful rehabilitation outcome.

LINK: To Training photos:

<https://1drv.ms/f/s!AumEf3fwZ2LqjX3VLBaz00dszQYI?e=2DI5ZQ>

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