



MISSION REPORT – Malawi, Mzuzu 23-27 August 2021

- **Malawi** becomes our newest project nation
- **11 orthopedic technicians** trained
- Mobility of **9 amputee patients** restored

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The mission

From 23 to 27 August 2021, SwissLimbs facilitated its first training mission to Malawi.

The training took place in the orthopedic center of the **central hospital in Mzuzu**. The SwissLimbs team consisted of Roberto Agosta (Executive Director), Claude Mushi (Orthopedic technician of the Mwanza Prosthetics & Orthotics Workshop in Tanzania) Enea Agosta (volunteer) and Nsengiyumva Magogwa, an Orthopedic technician from Bukoba, Tanzania, who will start working at the SwissLimbs hospital in Kibaha once it opens later this year.

The training was attended by **11 orthopedic technicians** from Lilongwe, Blantyre and Mzuzu, the only three operational orthopedic centers in the nation. During this time, **9 patients** were fitted with new prostheses, combining their need for improved mobility with SwissLimbs need to have patients to showcase their training.

Each training mission begins with a presentation of SwissLimbs work followed by some theoretical training. The participants were divided into four groups which enabled them to practice all the newly acquired technological knowledge. By means of creating a competition between the four groups, a new record was set whereby on the second day of training the 4 teams had each created a Monolimb prosthetic!

The last challenge for the participants was a written exam, which all participants passed with flying colours. The week ended with each orthopedic technician receiving a certificate of attendance.



In the photo the SwissLimbs team in front of the orthopedic center of the central hospital in Mzuzu.
From left: Enea Agosta, Roberto Agosta, Nsengi Magogwa and Claude Mushi.

Significant meetings

During the training week, Roberto Agosta met Benadeta Singini, the director of the orthopedic center at Mzuzu's Central Hospital and Dr. Benson, an orthopedic surgeon. Together they discussed the possibility that SwissLimbs supply orthopedic materials to the center at Mzuzu as well as the need to create a new orthopedic center in Zomba, a town 600 km away, in order to guarantee care and assistance to a wider sector of the Malawian population.



Training times

Some images giving an overview of the training week in Malawi.



"The Monolimb competition"

On this mission it was decided to motivate the participants by creating competition between the various teams. After being taught the theory, each group was assigned a patient who required the fitting of a transtibial prosthesis. While being closely guided by the trainers, each group's completed product was judged on 3 elements: the quality of the prosthesis (alignment, patient comfort), aesthetics and time spent.

The result was more than satisfactory, and the winners were awarded with Swisslimbs t-shirts and Swiss chocolate.



Winners of the "Monolimb competition".

Presentation of certificates

At the end of the training week, the 11 participants averaged a score of 88.5% on their final exam. Saving the best for last, all the technicians received the certificate of participation for attending the training.



The SwissLimbs technicians



Claude Mushi – Orthopedic technician and manager of the Mwanza Prosthetics & Orthotics Workshop (MPOW)

Claude holds a bachelor's degree in prosthetics and orthotics from Kilimanjaro Christian Medical University College in Tanzania. He has a background in project management, marketing, and administration.

He is a SwissLimbs trainer in new technologies and the manager of MPOW, which SwissLimbs established in 2018.



Nsengiyumva Magogwa – Orthopedic technician from Bukoba, Tanzania

Nsengiyuma graduated with a degree in prosthetics and orthotics from TATCOT (Tanzania Training Center for Orthopedic Technology) in Moshi in Tanzania in 2014. He has worked in the field of prosthetics and orthoses and in the conservative management of orthopedic cases for seven years, both in hospitals and rehabilitation centers in Tanzania.

From August

2021 he will be employed as an orthopedic technician at the SwissLimbs rehabilitation hospital in Kibaha, Tanzania.



The 11 participants



Samuel Mkomera
27, Lilongwe



Peter P Chilewani
31, Lilongwe



Patrick Govati
55, Blantyre



Mark Ndagonera
35, Lilongwe



Wilson Nanungu
51, Blantyre



Benadetae Singini
31, Mzuzu



George Milani
41, Blantyre



Kandodo Mkwezalamba
56, Blantyre



Clifford Ronald Finye
40, Mzuzu



Evness Nkumba
40, Mzuzu



Clinstone Kamanga
33, Mzuzu

The beneficiaries

Felix Phiri, 27 years old, transtibial amputee since 2002



Felix is a bricklayer from Chintheche near Nkhata-bay, He is married and has 3 children, aged between 7 years and 3 months old. At the age of 8 his leg was broken when, in a fit of anger, his aunt threw a heavy mortar (used for grinding corn). At the clinic where he was treated, they bandaged his wound and sent him home. When the wound had still not healed a long while later, they realized that his leg would need to be amputated.

Felix needed a new prosthetic, because the one he had was ill fitting and the foot was broken. With his new prosthetic he has regained the mobility he needs to return to work.

David Kumwenda, 49 years old, transtibial amputee since 2012



David is from Rumpfi, he is married and has 2 children, aged 17 and 5. He lost his leg when the car he was travelling in with his father, was hit by another vehicle that had lost control. David's leg was amputated while his father had to undergo 9 operations over a period of 2 years before he was sufficiently recovered.

David is very happy with the new SwissLimbs leg, claiming that is lighter and more comfortable as well as more resistant than his previous one. He also benefited from an "Amparo" prosthesis, which is an alternate method to the Monolimb technology, that was demonstrated to the participants during the training.

Towera Nkhwazi, 54 years old, transtibial amputee since 2015



Towera, from Mzimba, is married and has two adult children. Her leg was amputated after a wound that caused the loss of sensation in her toes, spread to her entire foot. "I thought I would never walk again, and became depressed, confused and bewildered. I wondered why I should suffer this injustice and had low morale. Thankfully, thanks to many sessions of Christian counselling I was able to see the light at the end of the tunnel. I found new courage and convinced myself that it would not be the end of the world. This prosthesis allowed me to resume walking like a normal person. I am very happy now. "

Towera received a new tibial prosthesis from SwissLimbs in exchange for a heavier, less comfortable prosthetic.

Shida Nyirenda, years old, a transtibial amputee since 2006



Shida is from Nkhata-Bay. She is married and has two young children. It took a lot of convincing from the doctors before Shida had enough courage to allow them to amputate the foot in which she had lost all sensitivity. As hard as it was for her to understand, she was assured that with a prosthetic she would have more mobility.

Shida did walk with her old prosthetic, but with a bad limp and only if she wore multiple layers of bandages and stockings to stop the prosthetic from slipping off. With the new comfortably fitted SwissLimbs prosthesis, she no longer needs to worry about "losing her leg", which also means that her posture and walk improved considerably.

Khumbo Sichinga, 34 years old, transfemoral amputee since 2019



When Khumbo came to be fitted, he was wearing a second-hand leg, made to measure... for someone else! He lost his leg when the truck was travelling in had a head-in collision with a car that had drifted onto their side of the road. Asleep at the time, he was flung from the vehicle. Stemming the flow of blood for himself, he saved his own life that day.

Khumbo now has a leg made to measure the stump he held onto so bravely 2 years ago. He comes from Lilongwe, is married and has two children aged 2 and 5. He is a truck driver.

Malingose Moyo, 38 years old, transfemoral amputee since 2015



Malingose's problems began when a wound caused by a thorn became infected. The infection spread to such an extent that her leg needed to be amputated above the knee.

The leg she received during this training mission replaces a worn-out leg that had a blocked knee joint and caused her much pain to wear.

Malingose is thrilled to have a new SwissLimbs prosthesis which has a knee that bends.

Richard Ngulube, 63 years old, amputated at the wrist with a congenital disarticulation



Richard was fitted with a myo-electric hand that can respond to impulses from the muscles in his forearm to perform 5 basic hand movements. His previous prosthesis was a worn-out static version that was partially broken.

He is very happy to have a prosthesis closer in shape and function to a real hand as for much of his childhood he was teased for being 'different'. Richard is married and lives in Mzimba with his wife. He has 6 children aged from 7 to 29 years old.

Eliza Kwemani, 47 years old, transradial amputee since 2018



Eliza is from Mzimba and has been a widow since 2019. She has 6 children aged from 14 to 28 years old.

She lost her hand in an accident with a mechanical grinder. A year later she lost her husband, who died due to a liver problem.

This is Eliza's first prosthesis, a myo-electric hand which gives it the ability to control the movements through sensors. Her joy was indescribable: "Now I can do many more things for my family".

Mphatso Mwase, 21 years old, transradial amputee since birth



Mphatso is from Nkhata-bay and lives at home with 5 other brothers. He was born without a limb and had his first prosthesis at the age of 12. During the mission he was fitted with cosmetic hand which is a much more comfortable fit than the one he came with.

Children, teenagers and young adults need to be re-fitted regularly as they grow out of their prosthetics.



Roberto Agosta, Claude Mushi, Nsengi Magogwa and Enea Agosta at the end of the training mission in Malawi