



MISSION REPORT – Bo, Sierra Leone

9 - 13 May 2022

- A **second training mission** kicks off a **new project** in Sierra Leone!
- **14 orthopedic technicians** trained
- Restored mobility of **18 amputees**

Index

01



The mission

02



Important meetings

03



Training times

04



Presentation of
certificates

05



The 14 participants

06



SwissLimbs' team

07



The beneficiaries

09



Repairs and waiting
list

09



The testimony of
Alex Sandy

The mission

The second training mission of SwissLimbs in Sierra Leone took place **from 9 to 13 May 2022**. In 2021, the training took place at the National Rehabilitation Center in Freetown, while in 2022, participants received a new round of training at **Bo Government Hospital**, in the Bo District.

14 orthopedic technicians from Freetown, Bo, Makeni and Kono participated in the training, including one assistant in training and 4 new technicians, who had not attended the training week in 2021. During the week, SwissLimbs restored the mobility of **18 patients**, a record! In addition, the technicians carried out repairs or guaranteed assistance to 4 other patients.

The SwissLimbs team that participated in the training was made up of the Executive Director **Roberto Agosta**, the Project Manager **Alessandra Aries**, the SwissLimbs Orthopedic Surgeon and Technical Advisor **Julian Lair**, the SwissLimbs Ambassador for Africa, Orthopedic Technician and Lead Trainer from Uganda **Emmanuel Kalanzi**, and **Claude Mushi**, manager of Mwanza Prosthetics & Orthotics Workshop MPOW and orthopedic technician from Tanzania.

For this mission we thank the generosity of the Lions Club of Merano and Dr. Julian Lair, who made the training possible.



From left: Claude Mushi, Roberto Agosta, Julian Lair, Alessandra Aries and Emmanuel Kalanzi.

Important meetings

Sierra Leone has nearly 8 million inhabitants, but only 5 rehabilitation centers in the whole country. In addition to the **scarcity of centers**, the country has to deal with the **lack of trained technicians**. Only one technician in Sierra Leone has in fact obtained full training with a five-year Bachelor of science and, apart from him, there are only four other technicians who have received training with a diploma (three years of study) and three others who received a year's training. Finally, the most obvious problem is the **scarcity of orthopedic materials** for the manufacturing of prostheses.

To remedy this deficiency, SwissLimbs has signed a **Declaration of Donation** with the **Ministry of Health and Sanitation**, represented by Mr. Morie Momoh, Permanent Secretary of the MOHS.

Through this statement, the government of Sierra Leone has guaranteed to engage in the supply of materials in partnership with SwissLimbs. In fact, in June 2022, a first load of materials for the production of prostheses will be sent, whose cost will be shared between the Ministry of Health and SwissLimbs. Through this donation of materials it will be possible to build up to 200 prostheses.



In this mission, SwissLimbs also visited the land where the **SLASA - Single Leg Amputee Sport Association** headquarters are located. There, SwissLimbs is helping SLASA with the realization of a new project. This project aims at the physical, social and economic rehabilitation of amputees, through three sub-projects: **creation of a rehabilitation center**, launch of a **sustainable agriculture** program with the recruitment of amputees and sale of agricultural and animal products, and creation of a **football field for SLASA members**. During the visit some improvements were thought to the design of the project and it was possible to meet the Program Coordinator Mambud Samai, the President of SLASA Aruna Thullah and the Secretary Albert Meinley Mustapha.



Training times

The training week was very intense and resulted in the production of **19 prostheses for 18 patients!** To allow all participants to work concretely and understand how a Monolimb is built, the trainers organized 5 groups, each consisting of 3 technicians. Each group then worked on the construction of two Monolimb, to which are added the prostheses built as a demonstration by the training technicians Emmanuel Kalanzi and Claude Mushi.

The first day of training was then devoted to a presentation of SwissLimbs and a practical demonstration. Over the course of the day, the technicians then casted all the recipients of transtibial prostheses.

On the second day, the work started the day before continued, while on Wednesday the first results were seen and the patients were able to try on their new prostheses.

In addition, on Wednesday 11th, Dr. Julian Lair gave a theoretical training on specific cases of orthopedic surgery.

On the fourth day of training, Claude Mushi demonstrated how prosthetic hands work: the cosmetic hand and the myoelectric hand. Casts of the 3 transfemoral amputated patients were also taken.

Finally, on the fifth and last day, the technicians took an exam and received the certificates of participation in the training week.

Here are some photos from the training week.



Presentation of certificates

The technicians participating in the training week took a **test** on the new technologies presented. After successfully passing it, the technicians received a **certificate of participation**, delivered by the Executive Director Roberto Agosta and the trainer Emmanuel Kalanzi, in the presence of Dr. Julian Lair and **Ismaila Kebbie**, General Manager of the Nation Rehabilitation Center.



The 14 participants



Abdulrahman Dumbuya
NRC Freetown



Nathaniel S. Kargbo
NRC Freetown



Aimran Sesay
NRC Freetown



James A. Fofanah
NRC Freetown



Momoh Konneh
NRC Freetown



Ishmael Sesay
Makeni Hospital



Edward S. Kanu
Koidu Hospital



Joseph Sesay
Koidu Hospital



Prince Kailie
Bo Government Hospital



Mary Kamara
SLASA - Apprendista



Bashiru Conteh
Bo Government Hospital



Alhaji Bangura
Bo Government Hospital



Bademba Sow
Makeni Hospital



Philip S. Mansaray
Makeni Hospital

SwissLimbs' team



Roberto Agosta - Executive Director

Roberto was born in Lugano, Switzerland and trained in business administration. He worked for a swiss bank for 4 years then spent 12 years working with humanitarian projects in Africa and 8 years working in training for development in non-profit in Switzerland.

Mr. Agosta holds a Master in Advanced Studies in Humanitarian Logistics and Management (MASHLM) from USI (Università della Svizzera Italiana) and a Certificate in Advanced Studies in Cooperation and Development from SUPSI (University of Applied Sciences and Arts of Southern Switzerland).



Dr. Julian Lair - Orthopedic surgeon and technical advisor to SwissLimbs

Dr. Lair is an Austrian orthopedic surgeon residing in Italy, who started his career as an orthopedic technician and then studied medicine in Innsbruck, becoming a specialist surgeon in the field. He currently works with private and public facilities in South Tyrol, with a particular focus on paediatric orthopedic surgery and hip and knee replacements.

Through a German doctor working also in the field of development, became involved with SwissLimbs, becoming a technical advisor in 2021.



Alessandra Aries - Project Manager

Alessandra was born in Varese, Italy, and she holds a Bachelor's degree in Languages and International Relations from UCSC in Milan and a Master degree in International Organisation from Leiden University, in the Netherlands. She also holds a Specialization Diploma in Project management for International Cooperation and several courses in the humanitarian and gender equality field.

In 2019, she joined a volunteer program in Zanzibar (TZN) and in 2020, she spent few months in an Center of Extraordinary Reception for migrants in Varese, writing her Master thesis. Since 2021, she works for SwissLimbs.



**Emmanuel Kalanzi -
SwissLimbs Ambassador for Africa, CPO & Chief Trainer – Uganda**

Emmanuel is a highly experienced Certified Prosthetist and Orthotist, committed and passionate to humanitarian causes and projects. He works for AVSI Foundation Uganda at Gulu Regional Orthopedic Workshop "GROW", and has over 40 years of experience in the profession.

He is SwissLimbs representative in Africa and responsible for the implementation of training modules to CPOs on the field. He is fluent in English, Luganda and speaks also Swahili and Acholi.



**Claude Mushi -
MPOW Manager and Certified Prosthetist and Orthotist CPO – Tanzania**

Claude holds a Bachelor degree in Prosthetics and Orthotics from Kilimanjaro Christian Medical University College, in Tanzania. He has a background in project management, marketing and administration. He has worked in several companies for the past four years and he is now the manager of the Mwanza Prosthetics & Orthotics Workshop MPOW, which was rehabilitated by SwissLimbs in 2018.

The beneficiaries



Philip Lamin

Philip is 42 years old, he comes from Bo and he's a transtibial amputee. Like many of his compatriots, he lost his right leg during the civil war and received his third prosthesis from SwissLimbs.



Foday Kallon

Foday is 40, from Kenema and he's a transtibial amputee. SwissLimbs gave him his fourth prosthesis, much lighter than the others and which allows him to work and support his family.



Vandy Jusu

Vandy is 38, from Kailahun and he's a transtibial amputee since 1993, when he was shot by rebels during the civil war. He received his second prosthesis.



Sia Jeneba Lahai

Sia is 12 years old and she was born without her right leg and with a malformation in her hand. She has never had a prosthesis and received a modular leg that can be modified as she grows.



Sheku Kanneh

Sheku is 22 and he comes from Bo. He is a transtibial amputee since rebels shot him during the war. He is very happy with his new prosthesis because it is very light.



Musa Koroma

Musa is 35 years old and comes from Kailahun. He is a transtibial amputee since 1995 and received his second prosthesis thanks to SwissLimbs.



Mohamed Barrie

Mohamed is 38 years old and from Bo. He lost both legs in 1996, due to the explosion of an antipersonnel mine during the civil war. He is delighted to have new prostheses, much lighter than the previous ones!



Hawa Sallu

Hawa is 27 years old and from Kenema. She's a transtibial amputee and received her first real leg from SwissLimbs! She used to wear a piece of worked wood.



James Ngobeh

James is 35 and from Kailahun. He lost his leg in a car accident and at the moment he has an open wound. He can start using his new prosthesis when the wound will be healed.



Edward Lansana

Edward is 37 years old and from Kenema. He's a transtibial amputee since 1996, when he was victim of a shooting caused by the rebels. SwissLimbs gave him his first leg!



Baindu Murray

Baindu is 33 years old and from Kenema. She is transtibial amputee and like many other beneficiaries she lost her leg during the civil war. She received her third leg thanks to SwissLimbs



Bainba Thunkara

Bainba is 35, from Bo, and he's a transtibial amputee since 1996 when he was shot by rebels. He is happy with the new prosthesis because the one he used to wear was very old.



Abdulrahman Sabu

Abdulrahman is 27 years old and comes from Bo. He had a car accident in 2017 that caused his amputation. SwissLimbs gave him his second prosthesis.



Hassan Kanneh

Hassan is 39 years old and from Kenema. He's a transradial amputee since 1999, when he was hit by a bullet during the civil war. SwissLimbs gave him a myoelectric hand.



Smart Muriba

Smart is 35 and from Kailahun. An explosion during the civil war in 1995 caused him an hand amputation and he received a cosmetic hand thanks to SwissLimbs.



Mary Kamara

Mary is 25 and from Freetown. She's transfemoral amputee since she was 3 years old. In addition to having participated in the training as an apprentice, she will receive a prosthesis as soon as the orthopedic center has received the suitable materials that are currently lacking.



Alie Mustapha

Alie is 20 years old and he is from Bo. He is a transfemoral amputee and plays in the SLASA and national football team for amputees. He lost his leg due to a motorcycle accident in 2019. He got his first leg from SwissLimbs!



Alex Sandy Cumber

Alex is 32 years old and he's a transfemoral amputee since 1996, when he was hit by a bullet during the civil war. He is excited to change his leg which he has had since 2007.

Repairs and waiting list



Sandu Zumbu

Sandu is 7 years old, from Pujehun District and when she was 1 year old she suffered an amputation due to a poorly treated infection. She was abandoned by her parents due to her disability and now she lives with her grandmother. She was advised to wait a few years before using a prosthesis and in the meantime her crutches were repaired and adjusted.



Micheal Rogers

Michael is 46 and lost his leg during the civil war. In 2021 he received his first leg from SwissLimbs, which was adjusted on the occasion of the new mission and whose foot was replaced.



Mahed Abu

Mahed is 28, from Bo and a transmeric amputee. He plays as a goalkeeper in the SLASA team and during the visit of SwissLimbs he received protection that allows him to play without harming himself.



Bashiru Sesay

Bashiru is 7 years old and from Bo. He was born without a leg and needs a prosthesis. In order to receive one, Bashiru had to undergo a minor surgery to remove a lump. The operation was funded by Dr. Julian Lair and now Bashiru is on the waiting list to receive a prosthesis from SwissLimbs.

The testimony of Alex Sandy



Alex is 32 years old and comes from Bo, the second largest city in Sierra Leone, in the southern province. In 1996, during the civil war that deeply affected the country, Alex was playing football with his friends, when he began to hear shots in the distance. The shots got closer and closer and, seized by fear, he started running away. While he was running, he was hit by a bullet and, as soon as he arrived at the hospital, the doctors decided to amputate his right leg above the knee. He has had a prosthesis since 2007 but it is old and heavy, so he is very excited that he was able to get a new one from SwissLimbs. Alex is ashamed to walk without his prosthesis and tries to never use crutches so as not to feel observed by people. Unfortunately, the disability influences his life a lot and he says he always tries not to argue with other people otherwise they start to make him feel uncomfortable about his situation and tell him that it is his fault that now he has no longer a leg.