

# ANNUAL REPORT 2023



Swiss<sup>+</sup>ABILITY

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**Jonan is a 2-year-old Ugandan child. At just 3 months old, he lost both legs due to a road accident. Now he can walk and smile again.**

# GREETINGS FROM THE PRESIDENT



Dear donors, partners, collaborators, and friends,

SwissABILITY has concluded its first full calendar year. Similar to the few months of 2022, this year too has been filled with missions, events, and initiatives. All of these initiatives have been focused on our mission to empower people in the Global South through physical rehabilitation, construction of infrastructure, and support to self-sufficiency.

In August 2023, during a mission to Banjul, in The Gambia, I experienced an extraordinary event that profoundly transformed my view of our work. Not only did I have the opportunity to personally manufacture a Monolimb prosthesis, enriching myself with new knowledge, but I was also deeply touched by encounters with the local population, who left an indelible impression on me.

Those radiant faces will forever remain imprinted in my memory, as they vividly illustrate the valuable changes we can achieve together.

In partnership with you, we have achieved significant milestones and continued to uphold our commitment to those in need of our assistance.

I would like to express my sincerest thanks to all of you. None of this would be possible without your support and trust. Together, we have already accomplished so much, and I am deeply grateful for the opportunity to continue this journey with you.

Thank you.



**TOMISLAV MATIEVIĆ**

President

# 2023 IN BRIEF

## SATISFACTIONS, SUCCESSES AND REWARDS

This year of growth for SwissABILITY saw us reach incredible goals. Our aim was to reach as many people with disabilities and amputations as possible by responding to numerous requests for help from our partners in Africa. It was a great success!

We significantly expanded the number of countries where we provided support through the construction and rehabilitation of orthopedic centres, training missions, and the donation of orthopedic materials. We have projects in eight African countries at various levels, and wish to continue extending our operations to respond promptly and effectively where the need is most acute.

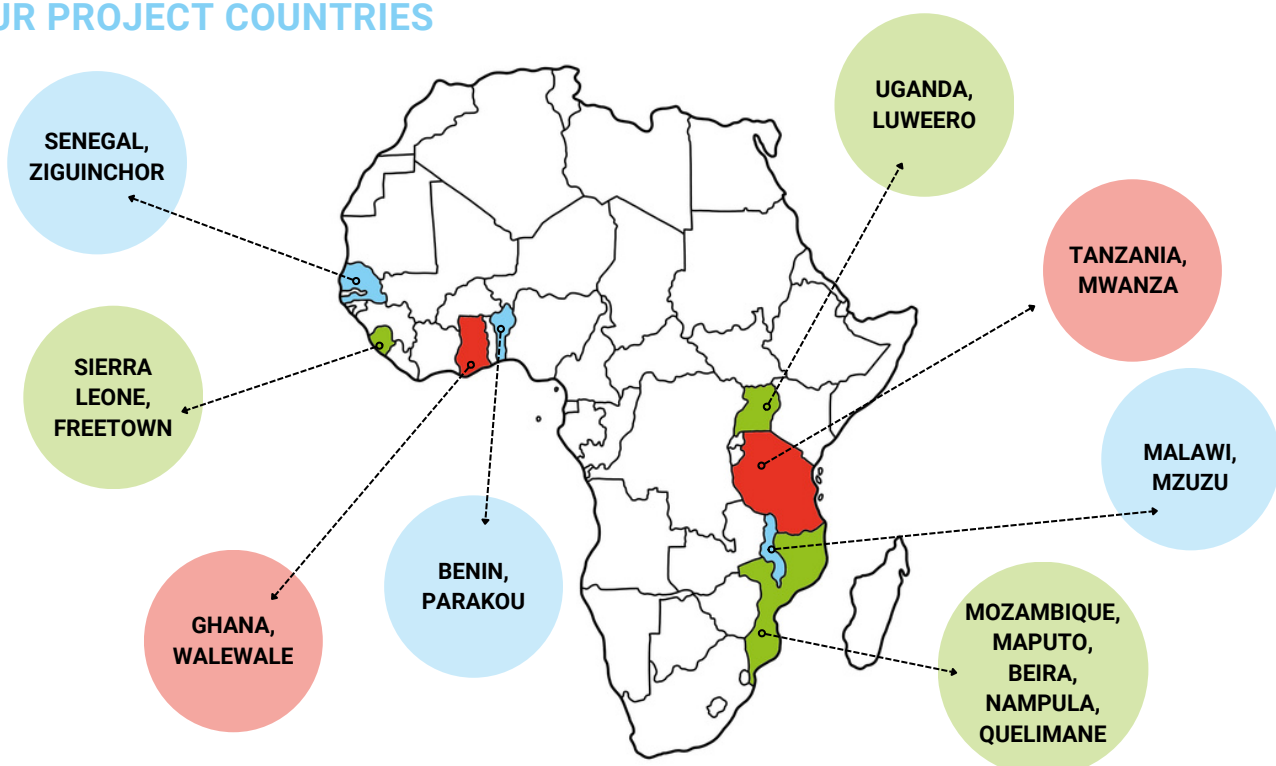
Our missions to train orthopedic technicians took us across thousands of kilometres and there are now over 70 technicians who are able to manufacture prostheses using our innovative low-cost technology that is suitable for the African context.

But above all, we have provided mobility and hope to hundreds of people with disabilities, who - after our intervention - can look to the future with courage and optimism.

The SwissABILITY team was also active in the Ticino region, participating in meetings and activities. In particular, we organized an event in collaboration with the "Film Festival Diritti Umani Lugano", the "Fondazione Diritti Umani", and Amnesty International, to commemorate the International Day of Persons with Disabilities on 3rd December.

Certainly, 2023 was a year of breakthroughs which inspires us to continue our vision to offer assistance to those who hope for a brighter future.

## OUR PROJECT COUNTRIES



# OUR PROJECTS



## MOZAMBIQUE

### A home for all

In response to the severe floods and cyclones that regularly hit Mozambique, SwissABILITY has initiated this community development project in the province of Sofala. The goal is to build homes for vulnerable families. Together with our local partner OLAPA, we built 20 houses for as many families.



## MOZAMBIQUE

### Emergency aid

SwissABILITY and OLAPA supported 300 families through the distribution of emergency and agricultural kits, as well as the donation of bicycles, motorbikes and livestock to assist Mozambicans affected by poverty and impacted by cyclones. This assistance responds to a critical need to provide the vulnerable with the means to create a longterm sustainable livelihood for themselves and their families.



## MOZAMBIQUE

### A dream for tomorrow

This project supports children born with severe physical and cerebral disabilities, fighting against stigma and exclusion from society which they are victims since they are born. Collaborating with the "Obra Dom Orione" Institute in Maputo, SwissABILITY assists 40 children and adolescents in a residential facility by providing essential equipment needed for their care.



## MOZAMBIQUE

### Orthopedic training for local technicians

Rehabilitative care is one of the weakest sectors in the Mozambique's healthcare service. Patients with disabilities far exceed the capacity that existing centres are able to meet. The lack of personnel with sufficient skills is one of the main causes of this shortfall. For this reason, we facilitated two training sessions for professionals on innovative low-cost technologies, held in Nampula and Quelimane.

All in all, we provided 17 orthopedic technicians with essential skills to improve the services they offer their patients. In this process, 23 individuals received life changing prosthetics.



## GHANA

### Supply of an orthopedic centre and training

Despite the high demand for orthopedic care in Ghana, there are only four functioning orthopedic centres. Among them is the Orthopedic Training Center (OTC) in Nsawam, which serves as a reference point for rehabilitation in the country.

Nevertheless, OTC technicians regularly travel long distances to offer rehabilitative services in remote areas. SwissABILITY is partnering with OTC to build a new orthopedic centre in Walewale, in the far north of the country. This year we sent a container with machinery and orthopedic materials for the new centre, which will be inaugurated in January 2024.

In addition we facilitated a training at the OTC where 23 local professionals were trained in our Monolimb technology, providing prostheses to 10 amputees.





## SIERRA LEONE

### Orthopedic training for local technicians

The civil war in Sierra Leone resulted in tens of thousands of amputees, many of whom still lack prostheses today. Despite the high number of people with disabilities, the country lacks materials and qualified personnel for the production of the necessary prostheses for each patient. SwissABILITY has committed to organize a multi-year orthopedic training program to provide new skills to professionals. In 2023, we trained 11 professionals and donated prostheses to 14 beneficiaries.



## SENEGAL

### Construction of an orthopedic centre and training

The Casamance region has been the scene of a bloody conflict that has lasted for more than 30 years, leaving the land littered with landmines. This increases the number of amputees, yet there is no functioning rehabilitation centre to assist them. Together with our local partner, we are building an orthopedic centre in Ziguinchor, which will be inaugurated in April 2024.

We also facilitated a training session in The Gambia for 21 professionals, donating prostheses to 15 patients.



## MALAWI, UGANDA, BENIN, TANZANIA

### Supply of orthopedic materials

The absence of materials for the production of prostheses is one of the main reasons of the lack of rehabilitative services in Africa. We have committed to send materials to orthopedic centres in Malawi, Uganda, Benin, and Tanzania to provide subsidized services to at least 350 of the most vulnerable amputees who cannot afford to purchase a prosthesis.



# OUR NUMBERS

Thanks to the projects initiated and completed in 2023, we achieved extraordinary results in support of the most vulnerable people with disabilities. In addition to projects dedicated to physical rehabilitation, our work extends to other areas, allowing us to reach beneficiaries in need of assistance in various contexts.

Thanks to hard work and the invaluable support of donors and friends, we surpassed our set objectives.

SwissABILITY's ambition is to become a cornerstone of rehabilitation throughout Africa.



Beneficiaries who received a prosthesis



Training missions organized



Pediatric wheelchairs donated



Rehabilitation professionals trained



Orthopedic centres supplied



Orthopedic centres built



Exploratory missions held



Beneficiaries who received care services



Bicycles/motorbikes donated



Family houses built



Livestock animals donated



Families who received emergency kits

# A YEAR-LONG JOURNEY WALKING TOGETHER

## JANUARY



Shortly after the stroke of midnight on New Years eve, Roberto was at the airport awaiting his flight to Haiti to visit the hospital in Cap Haïtien operated by our partner, Hope Health Action.

The need for prostheses in the country is enormous, due in part to damaged infrastructure. During an intense week Roberto witnessed extreme poverty amidst a volatile social situation. Despite the challenges and uncertainties related to the situation in the country, SwssABILITY has developed plans for the creation of an orthopedic centre that will be established as soon as conditions allow.

## FEBRUARY

In February, we traveled to Senegal to negotiate agreements with our partners from both local and national institutions, in order to start the construction of a new orthopedic centre in Ziguinchor, Casamance, a region heavily affected by wars and landmines.

During this time, the fist brick was laid, commemorating the start of the building project. The works progressed at an excellent pace throughout the year, and the centre will become operational as from April 2024.

Subsequently, Roberto visited the rehabilitation centre in Banjul, The Gambia, to prepare for the orthopedic training scheduled for August in collaboration with our partner, Legs4Africa.



## MARCH



In March, our team undertook multiple engagements in Ticino, from creating and managing projects to fundraising activities. During the Easter period, we sold around a hundred traditional cakes thanks to our collaboration with Pasticceria Aries, which donated 25% of the proceeds to benefit our projects in Africa.



On Easter Sunday 2023, we had the opportunity to appear on television alongside a large group of volunteers, supporters, and friends. We were guests of Carla Norghauer on the "Domenica" program on RSI La1 channel. It was an opportunity to present SwissABILITY and its projects to a wide audience in Ticino.

## APRIL

On 15th April 2023 we held our first Annual General Meeting. We had a lovely evening with our members celebrating the conclusion of our first year and presenting current and future projects and activities.

Over thirty people, made up of ordinary and sympathizing members, attended the event with much enthusiasm. This was the SwissABILITY's first official event and operational team and the Board of Directors did well with their various presentations.

Feeling the support, closeness, and desire to change the world for the better together, inspired us to continue our tireless efforts to grow SwissABILITY.



## MAY

In May, another mission enriched the work of SwissABILITY. Alessandra and Roberto, together with the Vice-president Dr. Julian Lair flew to Sierra Leone, where the team has already conducted several training workshops.

In one week, they restored mobility to 14 amputees, while casts were taken for another eight, leaving the components for technicians to complete the prostheses at a later time.

Tragically, Sierra Leone remains known for the devastating civil war that ravaged the country from 1991 to 2002, causing unimaginable suffering and incalculable loss of human lives. The number of people who have undergone amputations is among the highest in the world.

However, at the end of the week, they witnessed the triumph of hope, with 22 beneficiaries and 11 rehabilitation professionals receiving certification and returning to their respective workplaces with new skills and great enthusiasm to apply what they have learned.



## JUNE

In June, Nicole and Roberto traveled to Mozambique for an orthopedic training in Nampula, aimed at teaching innovative technologies to nine orthopedic professionals. Thanks to this training program, 13 prostheses were made for as many beneficiaries.

Among them is Joselina, our youngest patient to date. Only a year old and born with a congenital disease, she came to the training with her mother who had recently fled their home in the north because of armed conflict. Our tiniest Monolimb ever produced will offer her the ability to live and walk with a prosthesis from an early age.



## JULY



In July Roberto and Nicole went to Nsawam, Ghana where SwissABILITY has a long-term commitment. The mission trained a total of 23 orthopedic technicians and donated prostheses to 10 patients, most of whom had lost limbs due to osteomyelitis, a condition that, combined with the lack of adequate healthcare services, often makes amputation inevitable.

Our team was impressed by the skills of the technicians, who showed great passion for their work and truly cared about the needs of their patients.

## AUGUST

SwissABILITY ran two missions in August. While Nicole, Roberto, and our president Tomislav travelled to The Gambia, Nelson, our senior training technician, organized a training session in Uganda.

The training in The Gambia, was intended to benefit technicians from various countries in West Africa, but due to political unrest the contingent from Senegal were not able to attend. Nevertheless, we were able to provide training to 21 professionals from three countries and donated prostheses to 15 amputees. Read more about Tomislav's impression of his first time to be a team member in his report on page 2.



Also in August, we had a mission in Uganda organised by our partner Nelson Mubiru. During this mission, Nelson trained 5 orthopedic technicians and while fitting ten amputees with a donated prosthetic.

## SEPTEMBER

In between our international missions, SwissABILITY's also promoted its presence locally. But first, we had to celebrate: September 4th was SwissABILITY's first birthday! Along with friends and supporters joyfully gathered for a time of grateful reflection on what we had achieved and imagined what could be done in the future.

Following the celebrations, each weekend in September was dedicated to a different activity. We had meetings, events where we made new acquaintances. On September 23rd, around fifty courageous supporters took part in the StraLugano4Charity, a solidarity race whose proceeds are donated to charity. It was a wonderful time of solidarity and unity that will remain etched in our memory.



## OCTOBER, NOVEMBER, DECEMBER

The last months of the year didn't mark any slowdown in SwissABILITY's activities. On Sunday, December 3rd, on the occasion of the International Day of Persons with Disabilities, we organized our first major event. We screened the documentary "Downstream to Kinshasa," which tells the personal stories of amputees in the Democratic Republic of Congo and their challenges. The screening was followed by a debate on disability in Switzerland and abroad at the Cinema LUX in Massagno, with the participation of a large audience.

Besides the activities in Ticino, SwissABILITY undertook our last mission of the year to 3 locations in Mozambique. Alessandra and Roberto organized training for orthopedic technicians in Quelimane and visited the community development projects in Beira and Maputo. It was an opportunity to meet all the beneficiaries, hear about their stories, and share their joy about the new homes and their prospects for the future.

We also delivered a van adapted for wheelchair transport to Obra Dom Orione in Maputo, thanks to generous donors. Finally, the children at the institute will be able to go out and discover the world.



During the festive season we sold 50 packs of Christmas biscuits which were kindly donated to us by the Kammea Foundation, as well as 242 boxes of beers from Mómò, a local brewery, who donated 25% of the proceeds to our projects.

**2023 has been a long and exciting journey, but we are hugely satisfied by the results of our work. We look forward to the future with great excitement.**

# THE VOLUNTEERS

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## BEATRICE, WITH THE HEARTH IN SIERRA LEONE

My journey to Sierra Leone was an adventure that has remains engraved in my heart. Together with the SwissABILITY team of Roberto, Julian, and Alessandra, I visited an orthopedic centre, to offer people hope through through fitting them with a leg prostheses. The photographs I captured depict poignant moments, bright smiles and tell stories of resilience.

Meaningful encounters filled our days, and what struck me most was that no one lacked a smile. Each brave individual, battled the day with hearts radiating with joy. Every step we took together left a mark of solidarity and human connection. This journey transformed not only the lives of those we met but also my perspective on the power of hope and solidarity.

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## MATTEO: A WONDERFUL GHANA EXPERIENCE

I volunteered for a training mission with SwissABILITY in July 2023 at the orthopedic centre in Nsawam, Ghana. Here, patients and orthopedic technicians warmly welcomed me into their workplace where I was struck by their passion to help amputees.

The effectiveness of the Monolimb prosthesis to benefit rehabilitation is impressive. Witnessing children walk for the first time with an artificial leg made in just a few hours was very moving. I realized the importance of a training mission led by SwissABILITY for a local orthopedic centre. The amputee football match I got to participate in, was an unforgettable experience!



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# TESTIMONIALS



## ANA MARIA, A SMILE TO FORGET THE WAR

Ana Maria lost her leg as a nine-year-old during the civil war that ravaged Mozambique at the time. While fleeing to Nampula, rebels opened fire on the convoy she was traveling in, along with her parents, two brothers, and other people fleeing. Along with many others, her entire family was killed. Several hours later, survivors of the attack took Ana Maria's lifeless body to the hospital. Due to the severity of her injuries the overwhelmed and under-resourced doctors decided to amputate her leg above the knee.

In just one day, a nine-year-old girl discovered how cruel the world can be but – despite a life filled with drama – Ana Maria has a permanent smile on her face and she is always joyful. Before getting to know SwissABILITY, Ana Maria wore a prosthesis that caused her a lot of pain. In June, she received a transfemoral prosthesis and a new hope: to start a different life, without pain but with much laughter.

## BASHIRU, A LITTLE BIG HERO

The first time the SwissABILITY team met Bashiru in Sierra Leone in 2022, we were deeply moved by his story. At that time, Bashiru was only seven years old, but life had already presented him with challenging obstacles: a congenital disease at birth had deprived him of his right leg above the knee, and a tumor had grown on the stump, preventing him from wearing a prosthesis.

The generosity of the Vice President of SwissABILITY allowed him to undergo surgery to remove the tumor, with the promise that – once healed – he too would receive a prosthesis, to run and play with his friends. In May of 2023, this promise became reality: for the first time in his life, Bashiru was able to walk. And he hasn't stopped since.



# FINANCIAL REPORT

## SwissABILITY Association

### BALANCE SHEET

For the year ending on 31.12.2023

All amounts are in CHF

<b>ASSETS</b>		<b>2022</b>	<b>2023</b>
Bi.A	Current assets		
	Cash	694'927.03	147'335.74
	Debtors	6'797.43	1'630.00
	Accounts receivables	6'041.59	-
	<b>Total current assets</b>	<b>707'766.05</b>	<b>148'965.74</b>
Bi.B	Fixed assets		
	Guarantees	-	3'200.00
	Furniture and equipment	-	-
	Properties	-	-
	<b>Total fixed assets</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>3'200.00</b>
	<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>707'766.05</b>	<b>152'165.74</b>
<b>LIABILITIES</b>		<b>2022</b>	<b>2023</b>
Bi.C	Third party short-term liabilities		
	Creditors	-	-
	Other short-term liabilities	2'459.60	12'662.55
	Accounts payable	391.70	21'000.00
	Allocations	-	200.00
	<b>Total third party short-term liabilities</b>	<b>2'851.30</b>	<b>33'862.55</b>
Bi.D	Liabilities of restricted funds		
	AMM restricted fund	276'245.36	-
	MOZAMBIQUE donation fund	-690.00	-
	YWAM project fund	-	2'360.00
	MAPUTO project fund	35'000.00	29'650.00
	OLAPA project fund	246'604.42	67'260.45
	PEMBA project fund	-	-
	SENEGAL project fund	50'000.00	11'690.37
	GHANA project fund	117'500.00	-11'598.00
	HAITI project fund	-428.84	0.00
	SIERRA LEONE project fund	17'500.00	-
	UGANDA project fund	-	-
	TANZANIA project fund	-	-
	BENIN project fund	-	-2'315.68
	<b>Total capital of restricted funds</b>	<b>741'730.94</b>	<b>97'047.14</b>
Bi.E	Equity		
	Capital	-	-
	Reserves	-	-
	Equity carried forward	-	-36'816.19
	Current year result / Profit (+) Loss (-)	-36'816.19	58'072.24
	<b>Total equity</b>	<b>-36'816.19</b>	<b>21'256.05</b>
	<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES</b>	<b>707'766.05</b>	<b>152'165.74</b>



## SwissABILITY Association

PROFIT AND LOSS STATEMENT  
For the year ending on 31.12.2023  
All amounts are in CHF

<b>INCOME</b>		<b>2022</b>	<b>2023</b>
CE.A1	Donations received	794'977.87	283'788.35
CE.A1.a	Unrestricted donations	7'951.45	27'359.33
CE.A1.b	Restricted donations	498'506.42	256'429.02
CE.A1.c	General donations association	288'520.00	-
CE.A2	Membership fees	1'630.00	1'900.00
CE.A3	Income from manifestations and events	-	-
CE.A4	Other income	-	-
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>		<b>796'607.87</b>	<b>285'688.35</b>
<b>EXPENSES</b>		<b>2022</b>	<b>2023</b>
Direct expenses for projects			
CE.B1	Project expenses	-21'855.85	-592'280.78
CE.B2	Administrative expenses	-67'724.24	-254'038.39
CE.B3	Awareness and information expenses	-	-
<b>Total direct expenses for projects</b>		<b>-89'580.09</b>	<b>-846'319.17</b>
Fundraising expenses			
CE.B4	General fundraising	-1'693.10	-3'150.45
CE.B5	Specific fundraising	-290.00	-2'473.83
<b>Total fundraising expenses</b>		<b>-1'983.10</b>	<b>-5'624.28</b>
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>		<b>-91'563.19</b>	<b>-851'943.45</b>
<b>Intermediate result</b>		<b>705'044.68</b>	<b>-566'255.10</b>
Financial result		-129.93	-356.46
<b>Result before variation in fund liabilities</b>		<b>704'914.75</b>	<b>-566'611.56</b>
Variation in fund liabilities		-741'730.94	624'683.80
<b>Annual result (before allocation to equity)</b>		<b>-36'816.19</b>	<b>58'072.24</b>
Reserves		-	-
Other uses		-	-
<b>Operating result</b>		<b>-36'816.19</b>	<b>58'072.24</b>

The Annual financial report was prepared according to the Swiss GAAP RPC 21 which have been audited by an external recognized auditing company.

The full annual accounts report is posted on our web site [www.swissability.org](http://www.swissability.org) complete with annexes and the audit report.



# WITH GRATITUDE

A year as successful as 2023 would have been unthinkable without the help and support of friends, supporters, and donors.

To our valued donors - especially those who prefer to remain anonymous - we want to say THANK YOU for every Franc donated to projects that truly change the lives of thousands of people.

To our collaborators, committee members, partners, and all the volunteers, we want to say THANK YOU for every hour spent in support of disabled and more vulnerable people.

## ON BEHALF OF ALL OF US, THANK YOU FROM THE BOTTOM OF OUR HEARTS!

### The board of directos



Tomislav Matiević  
President



Julian Lair  
Vice-president



Paolo Rossi  
Member

### The operational team



Roberto Agosta  
Executive Director



Nicole Rossi  
Regional Director



Alessandra Aries  
Program Manager

### The trainers team



Henrique Matsinhe  
Mozambique



Isabel Campos  
Mozambique



Bernardo Gomes  
Nigeria



Nelson Mubiru  
Uganda



Claude Mushi  
Tanzania



# Swiss<sup>+</sup>ABILITY

SwissABILITY is a Swiss non profit association that provides support to people with disabilities and offers others an opportunity to live a dignified life, in Africa and beyond.

Our mission is to provide ABILITY to people in the Global South through physical rehabilitation, the creation of infrastructure and provision to ensure that everyone can live a self-sufficient life.

SwissABILITY operates in numerous countries in the Global South and is committed to fostering synergies between the North and South for the benefit of its beneficiaries.



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