

MISSION REPORT

SENEGAL

22 - 29 APRIL 2024



Swiss⁺ABILITY

WINNING THE BATTLE AGAINST LANDMINES

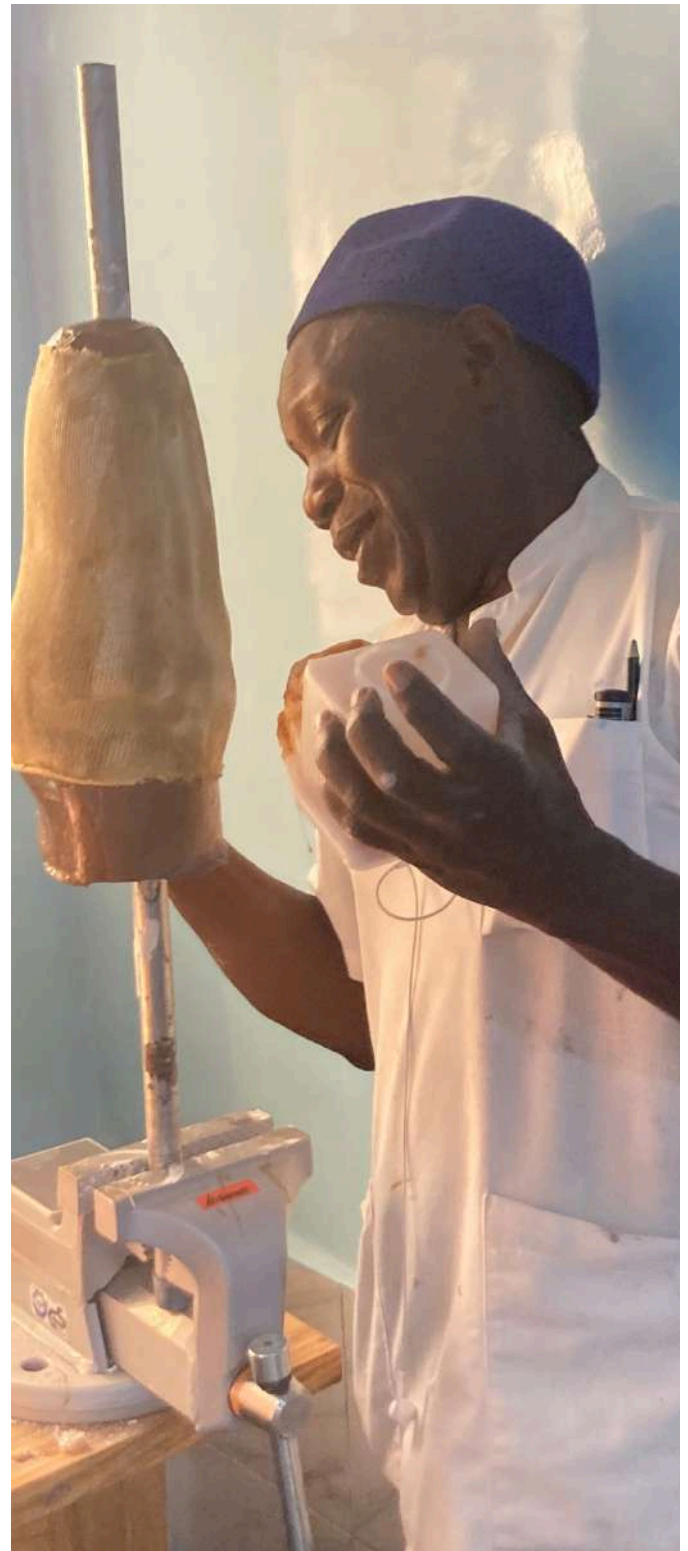
SwissABILITY is committed to see landmine victims in the Casamance region of Senegal, regain mobility and lead independent lives.

Sadly, the Casamance region still has a large number of landmines scattered in the area. Men, women, and children who walk, work, or play there are potential victims of these illegal devices. Often an unexpected explosion can be fatal but for the more 'fortunate', it can mean the loss of limbs.

Despite the high number of amputees, either victims of mines, accidents or due to illnesses, there was previously no functioning orthopedic centre in the region. If people needed a prosthesis they had to travel to neighbouring Guinea-Bissau, where the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) had an initiative to donate artificial limbs to amputees from Senegal. However, this program was closed in 2022, leaving amputees in Casamance stranded.

In response, SwissABILITY - together with local partner ISAD (Initiative Solidaire des Actions de Développement, formerly known as Association des victimes de mines) - formed a partnership to build an orthopedic centre in Ziguinchor that now serves the amputees in the region.

The orthopedic centre, equipped with machinery and sufficient materials to last three years was built during 2023. After an intense week of training, the centre was officially inaugurated on Monday, April 29, 2024, with Senegalese authorities, the SwissABILITY team, and numerous local supporters in attendance.



A TRAINING TO INAUGURATE THE NEW CENTRE

The construction of SwissABILITY's new orthopedic centre in Ziguinchor was celebrated with a training workshop, focused on low-cost technological innovations and aimed at local orthopedic professionals and students.

Three years ago, the Institut Supérieur d'Etudes Paramédicales Mbour (ISEM MBOUR) was established in Mbour which specializes in training aspiring Senegalese orthopedic technicians. Prior to their final exam, SwissABILITY invited their students, to participate in its training so that they might apply the theoretical knowledge they had acquired. In addition to these students, orthopedic technicians from Senegal, The Gambia, Guinea-Bissau, and Liberia also participated, thereby strengthening the network of rehabilitation professionals in West Africa.

Thanks to the valued expertise of the orthopedic technician and trainer Bernardo Gomes, 19 participants had the opportunity to attend the training and manufacture prosthetics for both lower and upper limbs. At the end of the training week, 16 amputees benefitted from a new prosthesis, taking their first steps towards a brighter future.



Most, but not all the beneficiaries of the training lost their limbs due to a landmine incident.

Take for example, Youssoune, a nine year old with an unfortunate and tragic tale. Youssoune was picking fruit from a tree when he fell, fracturing his arm. Unable to afford proper medical treatment, his parents consulted a traditional healer. As is often the case, the herbal poultices applied to his arm had an adverse effect on the wound. When his parents finally sought medical help, his arm was so infected, they had to amputate. Thanks to this mission, Youssoune received an artificial arm to regain his manual skills.





ISAD: AN ASSOCIATION HELPING PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES



Initiative Solidaire des Actions de Développement is an association based in Ziguinchor that has been operating for over ten years in the field of anti-landmine interventions and in support of the reintegration of landmine victims into society. ISAD helps the most vulnerable individuals regain an active role in society, enabling them to live a dignified and self-sufficient life.

As most of the members of the ISAD team are themselves amputees or disabled, they fully comprehend the needs of the landmine victims they support. The remarkable work they perform underlines their relevance and passion in serving the community they exist to serve.



Nobody understands the needs of the beneficiaries better than the coordinator of ISAD, Sarani Diatta, who himself is an amputee.

At just 12 years old, while playing with his friends in the courtyard in front of the school, he accidentally stepped on a landmine. The explosion ripped off his left leg below the knee.

However, Sarani did not let this setback define him and decided to make it his life mission to help amputees and people with disabilities.

A DREAM CAME TRUE: A NEW ORTHOPEDIC CENTRE IN CASAMANCE

The new orthopedic centre is the result of a partnership that culminated in establishing a much-needed service to the disabled in Ziguinchor.

In 2021, Sarani was one of the beneficiaries of the Monolimb prosthesis, which he still wears today, on training mission in Guinea-Bissau facilitated by the SwissABILITY's director, Roberto Agosta. During that time, Sarani took the opportunity to explain the challenges facing amputees in the Casamance region.

Throughout the week, Roberto and Sarani outlined the first draft of what, three years later, would become a Centre of Physical Re-adaption in the city of Ziguinchor. Thanks to the perseverance and determination of ISAD and SwissABILITY and the numerous supporters who believed in the project, the center that began as an ambitious dream, became a reality.





On Monday, April 29, 2024, the "Centre de réadaptation physique de Ziguinchor" officially inaugurated its activities. The opening ceremony, attended by Senegalese authorities, numerous supporters, friends, and beneficiaries, was celebrated with a great festivity.

During the ceremony, speeches were given by Roberto Agosta and Sarani Diatta, as well as Madame Arame Pop Sene, National Director of Social Services at the Ministry of Health and Social Services, and representatives from the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), Humanity & Inclusion, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), the American Jewish World, and the Catholic Relief Service. Everyone expressed enthusiasm for the project and pledged full support to the centre and its operations.





Le Centre de Réadaptation Physique de Ziguinchor, construit et équipé avec l'appui des partenaires **(AJWS, SWISSABILITY, USAID/CRS)** a été inauguré par

M. le Gouverneur de Ziguinchor, Mor TALLA TINE sous la présence de **Madame la Directrice Générale de l'Action Sociale Dr Arame Top SENE** et de **Madame le Maire de Niaguis Victorine A. NDEY**

BOUTOUTE, LE 29 AVRIL 2024



WILLINGNESS AND ENTHUSIASM TO LEARN: 19 TECHNICIANS TRAINED



DJIBRIL BÂ

Orthopedic technician and ISEM trainer
Mbour



GABU JARJUE

Orthopedic technician
Banjul Orthopedic Center, The Gambia



MARTIN DOŁO

Orthopedic technician
Ganta Orthopedic Centre, Liberia



ALOÏSE DIOUF

Orthopedic technician and ISEM trainer
Mbour



FLORENCE DUMEZ

Orthopedic technician and ISEM trainer
Mbour



JOÃOZHINHO INDI

Orthopedic technician
Bissau, Guinea-Bissau



AGOSTINHO NANQUE

Orthopedic technical assistant
Centro Reabilitação Nacional, Guinea-Bissau



DENNEBA N'DIAÏE

Orthopedic technician
Centre d'Appareillage National, Ziguinchor



MALICK DIATTA

Orthopedic technical assistant
Centre d'Appareillage National, Ziguinchor



MAGUETTE BALDE

ISEM Student
Mbour



SAER DIOP

ISEM Student
Mbour



GRACIAS BETIANE MARTESE GNOMBO BEDI

ISEM Student
Mbour



MATAR NDOUR

ISEM Student
Mbour



ALIOUNE TRAORÉ

ISEM Student
Mbour



MAMADOU DIAWARA BÂ

ISEM Student
Mbour



JULBERTA CORINE DIEDHIYOU

ISEM Student
Mbour



IBRAHIMA SECK

ISEM Student
Mbour



OUMY BÂ

ISEM Student
Mbour



SIDNEY CONSTANTINO SUWA MANGA

ISEM Student
Mbour

A STEP FORWARD WITH A NEW PROSTHESIS

DOMINIQUE

45 years old, transtibial amputee due to a landmine



MONOLIMB PROSTHESIS

BOUBACAR BÂ

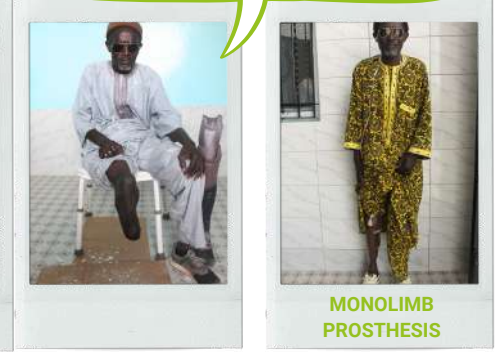
63 years old, transtibial amputee due to a landmine



MONOLIMB PROSTHESIS

KÊLOUNTANG

60 years old, transtibial amputee due to a landmine



MONOLIMB PROSTHESIS



THE STORY OF BRIGITTE



MONOLIMB PROSTHESIS

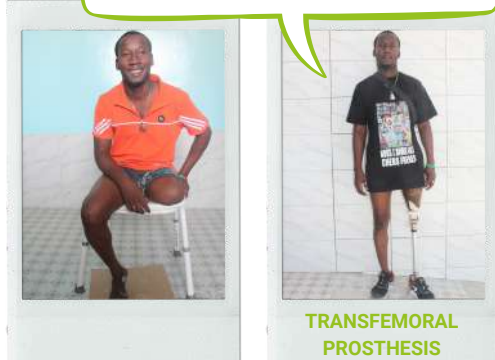
Brigitte has a radiant smile that lights up the entire room. Yet - like too many people from the Casamance region - she has an all-too-common story. In 2018, she was walking with friends when she accidentally stepped on an abandoned landmine. The explosion was devastating, leaving Brigitte without part of her right leg. Some people rushed to the scene of the accident, loaded Brigitte onto a cart, and transported her to the hospital.

Unfortunately, the damage caused by the mine was too severe to be treated, and doctors had to amputate her leg below the knee. However, Brigitte did not let herself be defeated and courageously faces the world with her beautiful smile, now also proudly sporting her new colourful leg.



BOUBACAR DIALLO

24 years old, transfemoral amputee due to gunshot wound



TRANSFEMORAL PROSTHESIS

BOURAMA

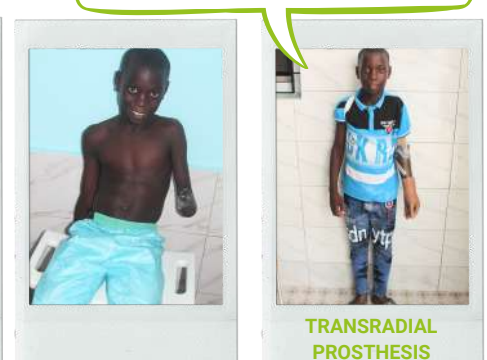
57 years old, transtibial amputee due to a landmine



MONOLIMB PROSTHESIS

YOUNOUSSE

9 years old, transradial amputee due to untreated fracture



TRANSRADIAL PROSTHESIS

LIBOIRE

30 years old, transtibial amputee due to a road accident



MODULAR PROSTHESIS

SOULEYMANE

37 years old, transtibial amputee due to a landmine



MONOLIMB PROSTHESIS

FOTOUBINTOU

33 years old, transtibial amputee due to a landmine



MODULAR PROSTHESIS



THE STORY OF RONALD



CHOPART PROSTHESIS

Ronald is a 28-year-old young man who, in August 2023, took part in demonstrations in the city of Ziguinchor in support of the then imprisoned opposition leader. The night after the protests, military personnel surrounded and entered his house with the intention of arresting him. However, they woke up Ronald's sister-in-law, who started screaming. A panicked Ronald was shot while he tried to escape through the window, losing part of his foot. Ronald had to make an emergency tourniquet with a belt while praying that his captors would take him to a hospital.

It was later discovered it was a case of mistaken identity, the military had been looking for someone else! Despite the adversities, Ronald continues to fight for a right world for everyone.



BOUBACAR SADIO

47 years old, transtibial amputee due to a fire



MODULAR PROSTHESIS

MOISE

58 years old, transtibial amputee due to diabetes



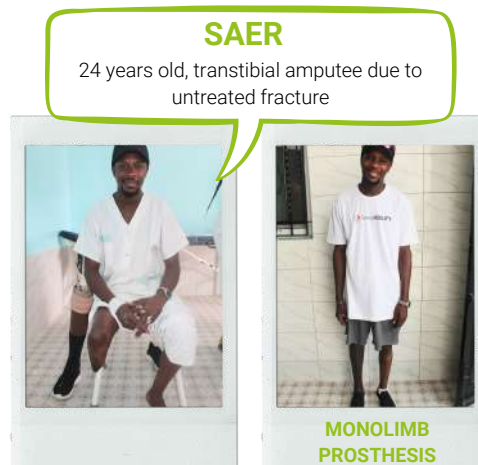
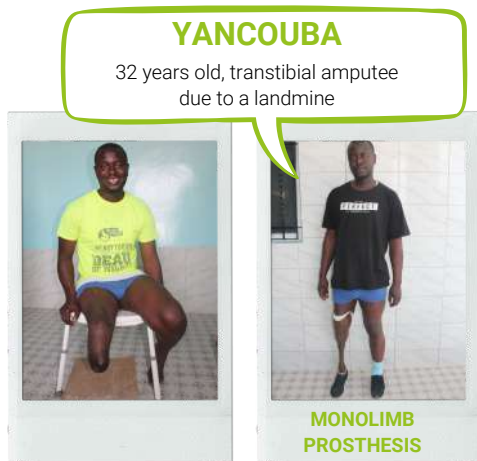
MONOLIMB PROSTHESIS

CHARLES

51 years old, transtibial amputee due to a landmine



MONOLIMB PROSTHESIS



OUR MISSION TEAM



ROBERTO AGOSTA

Executive Director



BERNARDO GOMES

Orthopedic technician and trainer



NICOLE ROSSI

Regional Director

THANK YOU SO MUCH

to all donors and supporters who made this mission possible and contributed to our project in Senegal!