



FATO Info

Feb. 2025 – Vol. 5



AFRICAN FEDERATION
OF REHABILITATION PROFESSIONALS



**CONGRESS OF THE AFRICAN
FEDERATION OF REHABILITATION
PROFESSIONALS.**

Theme:

Promoting equitable access
to rehabilitation services and assistive
technologies in Africa.



**VERY
SOON**



IMPERIAL RESORT
BEACH HOTEL
AT ENTEBBE,
(UGANDA).



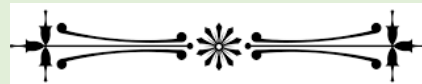
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EDITORIAL



STRENGTHENING REHABILITATION AND ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGIES



Africa is currently facing a period of increasing socioeconomic and health challenges. The growing need for rehabilitation and assistive technologies contrasts with the scarcity of resources, making a concerted and efficient approach more urgent than ever. In this context, the African Federation of Rehabilitation Professionals (FATO) reaffirms its commitment to revitalizing the

sector, relying on a strategy of pooling efforts and strengthening the capacities of national and regional stakeholders.

Faced with these challenges, a collective and structured response is required.

Equitable access to rehabilitation services and assistive technologies therefore remains essential to ensure the inclusion and empowerment of people with disabilities in Africa. However, many obstacles remain: fragmented initiatives, insufficient funding, and poor integration of rehabilitation policies into national health and social protection strategies. Indeed, FATO intends to address these challenges by consolidating its role as a catalyst. Far from limiting itself to institutional advocacy, our federation aims to be a driving force for concrete change, supporting national associations in their structuring and fostering synergy with decision-makers, service providers, industry, and, above all, users themselves.



The Next Congress: An Opportunity to Seize

The upcoming FATO Congress, scheduled for Uganda, will not only be an opportunity but also a key moment to jointly chart a sustainable and inclusive vision for rehabilitation in Africa. This meeting will bring together all relevant stakeholders—professionals, policymakers, industries, and beneficiaries—to co-construct solutions adapted to African realities. We must align our actions with Rehab 2030, a global WHO initiative aimed at strengthening rehabilitation systems through an integrated, multisectoral approach. We must also strive to ensure that our efforts contribute to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), with a focus on universal access to quality services and the socioeconomic inclusion of people in need of rehabilitation services and assistive technologies because, as we all know, not all rehabilitation service users are persons with disabilities, and not all persons with disabilities are rehabilitation service users.

For a Sustainable Impact, the pooling of Resources is essential

The effectiveness of our action depends on our ability to work together, to unite the continent's vital forces, and to optimize existing resources. Establishing strategic partnerships with international organizations, governments, the private sector, and civil society is essential to ensure concrete and lasting progress. FATO is committed to continuing this momentum by strengthening its influence on public policies and supporting the development of local skills. Every professional, every decision-maker, every partner has a role to play in this transformation. Together, let's make rehabilitation and assistive technologies major levers for a more inclusive and resilient Africa.

Timothée M. PAKOUYOWOU
President of FATO



Letter of Postponement of FATO Congress

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Ouagadougou, 18 February 2025

Subject: Ebola health crisis. Postponement of the FATO Congress in Uganda.

We hope this message finds you in good health.

In accordance with the recommendations of health authorities advising against non-essential travel due to the rise of the Ebola outbreak in Uganda, FATO wishes to express its deep solidarity with the Ugandan people and align itself with these directives. We commend the significant efforts being made to contain this crisis and bring it to a swift resolution.

In this emerging context, the FATO Executive Board, in agreement with the local organizing committee, has taken the decision to postpone the FATO Congress in order to guarantee an event that meets our common expectations without exposing participants to health risks. We are closely monitoring the development of the situation with our partners on site and will come back to you with new dates as soon as possible.

The scientific committee will however maintain the selected abstracts, and the participation process will resume as soon as the new dates are published. We remain convinced that this event will be a success, especially since many stakeholders in the region have shown great interest and have committed to participating.

We thank the local committee for its remarkable work and the strong mobilization within the country. This 2025 Congress will give us the opportunity to celebrate rehabilitation and Assistive Technologies in Africa in optimal conditions, on the shores of Lake Victoria in Entebbe, once the situation has stabilized.

We thank you for your understanding and continued support. We will keep you informed of the next steps and remain available for any questions

Yours sincerely !



Timothee M. PAKOUYOWOU
FATO President

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Word from FATO 2025 National Organizing Committee



Dear FATO Members, Partners, and Stakeholders,

Warm greetings from the National Organizing Committee (NOC) of the 9th FATO Congress 2025!

It is with great excitement that we update you on our preparations for this landmark event. Uganda, the Pearl of Africa, is honored to host the 9th FATO Congress, providing a platform for knowledge exchange, networking, and advancing rehabilitation services across Africa. This congress promises to be an enriching experience, set against the backdrop of Uganda's breathtaking landscapes, vibrant culture, and renowned hospitality.

The NOC comprises the Ministry of Health, presidents of Uganda's rehabilitation professional bodies, alongside representatives from organizations for persons with disabilities and civil society. This diverse and experienced team is working diligently to ensure a well-organized, impactful, and memorable congress for all participants.

We sincerely appreciate the enthusiasm and commitment of all members who have already expressed interest in attending and supporting the organization of the 9th FATO Congress. Your active involvement is a testament to the significance of this event and reinforces our collective goal of enhancing rehabilitation services across the continent. Your continued support inspires us as we work to deliver a world-class congress.

As with any major international event, unforeseen challenges have arisen. The ongoing Ebola crisis and recent developments in the US government have impacted logistical arrangements and international participation. These factors have necessitated a revision of our initial plans, including rescheduling the congress to ensure the safety, inclusivity, and success of the event.

Our Commitment to a Remarkable Congress

Despite these setbacks, preparations remain on course. The NOC is actively engaging with key stakeholders, including government authorities, international partners, and service providers, to address these challenges and keep the event on track. We are working tirelessly behind the scenes to resolve logistical issues and ensure a



seamless experience for all participants. New dates for the congress will be announced by FATO soon.

Uganda Awaits You – A Unique Experience Beyond the Congress

Beyond the congress sessions, Uganda offers an unparalleled experience for visitors. Known as the Pearl of Africa, Uganda boasts breathtaking scenery, diverse wildlife, and a rich cultural heritage. From exploring the source of the Nile to embarking on a thrilling safari in our national parks, there will be plenty of opportunities to unwind, connect, and create lasting memories. This congress is not just about learning—it's about experiencing the warmth, beauty, and vibrancy of Uganda.



Stay Connected and Engaged

We appreciate your patience, support, and collaboration as we navigate these challenges. We will continue to provide timely updates, and we encourage you to



remain engaged as we work towards hosting an unforgettable congress. For any inquiries or further information, please feel free to reach out to the Organizing Committee.

We look forward to welcoming you to Uganda for an inspiring, impactful, and truly memorable 9th FATO Congress!

Best regards,

Ms. Carolyne Maholo Sserunkuma
Chair, National Organizing Committee (NOC)
9th FATO Congress 2025
Email: carolmaholo@gmail.com
Phone: +256772900461



Word from FATO 2025 scientific committee

Dear FATO Members, Partners, and Stakeholders,

As announced in the letter from the FATO President, the 9th FATO Congress has been postponed.

Since your submission has already been accepted, we assure you that it will be kept for the actual holding of the congress.

As soon as the new dates are announced, we will contact you again to provide details of the registration process and share the scientific program of the congress with you.

Best regards,

François FRIEDEL



A word from WHO on Rehabilitation

Rehabilitation has been recognized as a core component of the health care continuum since the Alma-Ata Declaration of 1978 but is still underprioritized in the African Region. Access to assistive technology services and products is not effectively implemented by Member States due to several challenges. They are mainly related to weak governance and inadequate domestic funding for assistive technology; weak promotion of public-private partnerships, insufficient regulatory capacity, and fragmented supply of assistive products, combined with the shortage of skilled personnel and insufficient service provision.

With the launch in 2017 of the Rehabilitation 2030 initiative WHO has reaffirmed the importance of rehabilitation and AT as a set of essential services within national health systems. Quality and affordable rehabilitation and AT services should be available to all persons in need, throughout the life course.

ATscale recently launched two Calls for Proposals (CFPs) focused on 'Program Management, Coordination, and Support to countries' governments for the implementation of joint vision and hearing programs for school-age children (2024–2027). This initiative would go a long way to provide funding to governments to improve rehabilitation and AT services in Ethiopia, Egypt, Nigeria, and The United Republic of Tanzania.

To strengthen rehabilitation and AT system, WHO is working with ministries of health, other relevant ministries and with a wide range of partners that include international and national non-government organizations. Collaboration with professional organizations like FATO are essential to tackle workforce and service delivery challenges in countries. The rehabilitation workforce comprises a broad



range of specialized profiles and skilled healthcare workers across all levels of care. Evidence-based, cost-effective, multidisciplinary rehabilitation service models adapted to local contexts are needed to fill the huge gaps in the region. Most rehabilitation and assistive technology needs can be met at the PHC level but challenges persist in addressing unmet needs.

At the 2024 FATO International Congress, WHO regional office for Africa will provide an update on the progress in implementing the regional AT framework by members states and the utilization of technical resources like the Training on Assistive Products (TAP).

In the wake of the 2023 World Health Assembly landmark resolution on rehabilitation and aiming to accelerate the regional implementation of the WHO “Rehabilitation 2030” initiative, an overview of WHO key technical tools guiding countries in the implementation of priority reforms and capacity building will be provided. This will include tools for workforce development such as the national rehabilitation workforce evaluation and the package of interventions for rehabilitation with focus on primary health care level interventions.

SWISSABILITY

We, at SwissABILITY, are glad to have a second opportunity to connect with you through this publication. As our name suggests, our offices are in Switzerland, but our hearts are focused on Africa. SwissABILITY has a three-pronged approach to improve the accessibility of prosthetic and orthotic solutions in Africa: To provide continued training for prosthetic technicians, to ensure orthopaedic workshops are well supplied and equipped and, if needed, to build specifically designed infrastructure where rehabilitation services can be offered.

In 2024 we had a successful year facilitating training in the Monolimb and other low-cost prosthetic technologies adapted to the African context in Kenya, Tanzania, Mozambique, Uganda, Senegal and Sierra Leone. In total, we have trained 218 P&O technicians since we began in 2022.

THE MONOLIMB PROSTHETIC LEG MANUFACTURING STEP BY STEP

The Advantages Of the MONOLIMB



- ✓ **BETTER**
 - Walk & Run
 - More durable
 - Integrated alignment
- ✓ **FASTER PRODUCTION**
 - 3-hour process
 - Same day service
 - Minimal maintenance
- ✓ **CHEAPER**
 - Fewer Components
 - Open Supply-chain
 - Simplified process

 SwissABILITY



The Monolimb is SwissABILITY's flagship technology. Able to be produced in just 3 hours, it is a lightweight (1.5 kg) mobility solution that is long lasting, has high mobility, is easy to learn and costs around USD 100 per (below knee) prosthetic. This innovative manufacturing process uses an integrated alignment system that perfectly distributes weight across its entire structure ensuring an optimal fit for comfortable walking and running.

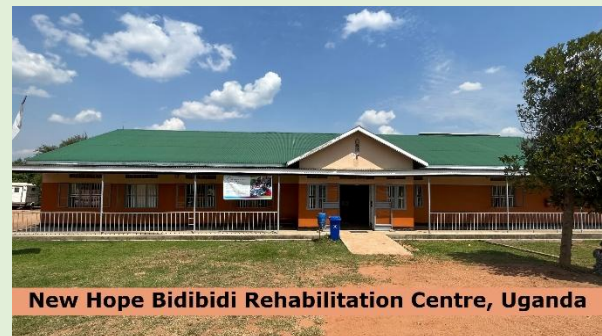


During the 5-day training events, P&O technicians are trained by African specialists who are recruited by SwissABILITY for their exceptional skills in combination with their passion to equip their fellow colleagues to meet the needs of their patients, at a price they can afford. More training missions are in the planning for 2025.

Since our initiation in 2022, in partnership with other NGO's we have built rehabilitation centres in Senegal and Uganda.



Ziguinchor, Senegal



New Hope Bidibidi Rehabilitation Centre, Uganda

Presently, SwissABILITY is coordinating the shipment and distribution of orthopaedic materials to Tanzania. Across the country, 19 orthopaedic workshops will be able to subsidise a total of 200 Monolimbs to patients in their care.

(Roberto Agosta, Executive Director, SwissABILITY)



Swiss⁺ABILITY

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www.swissability.org

MOTIVATION



Helping to build Kenya's Future

Personal mobility is a right, and under that right around 100,000 people in Kenya are entitled to a wheelchair, services and support. But 95% do not have access. Even fewer have access to an appropriate wheelchair and services to provide the right fit, support, safety and durability.

Until now, Kenya has mainly needed to rely on imported and donated wheelchairs and has had too few community workers and wheelchair therapists to refer, assess, prescribe and fit chairs to each users' needs. But that is changing.

A Kenyan Wheelchair for Kenya



The Made AT Kenya project, led by [Motivation](#), is creating a national Kenyan solution that supports our economy, builds our skills, and addresses disabled people's rights.

The project is pioneering national wheelchair manufacturing, reducing our reliance on imports and ensuring that disabled people can access high-quality, well-designed mobility aids. By producing wheelchairs right here in Kenya, the initiative strengthens our economy and ensures quality, availability and affordability.



Introducing the Imara Wheelchair

This project's centre is the Imara wheelchair, explicitly designed for Kenyan terrain and daily life. Unlike some imported models, the Imara is built for strength, comfort and durability... and we're told it looks great too. With the knowledgeable and frank feedback from our network of Peer Mentors (all skilled and experienced wheelchair users), the Made AT Kenya team has created a product that users can be proud of.

Empowering Our Workforce Through Training

But the project is not only about the Imara. This year, we are working to build a workforce of Kenyans who can assemble, maintain and repair the wheelchairs. This will maximise the lifetime of safe performance and minimise waste. Embedding these practical skills in existing technical and vocation training courses builds Kenyan expertise and livelihoods. With investment in training and technology, we are growing local industry while improving lives.

Raising Standards in Wheelchair Service Provision

Another critical initiative is the Skills Development project in a partnership with Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology. This work focuses on embedding wheelchair provision training in undergraduate physio- and occupational-therapist courses. By equipping healthcare professionals with technical and clinical skills, the project improves wheelchair procurement, distribution, and maintenance, ensuring users receive proper assessment, fitting, training and follow-up support. There is a model wheelchair service on site, so students get practical hand-on learning and experience, and disabled people get high-quality services.

By developing a skilled workforce, the project raises service standards, improves quality of life, and fosters inclusion for disabled people in Kenya.



Driving Economic Growth and Inclusion

Both 'Made AT Kenya' and the Skills Development project are about more than just a product or service – they are about social inclusion and economic empowerment. Wheelchair users gain mobility and so many related rights, independence and opportunities. By keeping production and expertise within Kenya, we create sustainable jobs, develop technical knowledge, and ensure better access to high-quality wheelchair provision. More importantly, we are offering a model that could reduce dependency on imports with a thriving local industry and workforce.

With these groundbreaking initiatives, Kenya sets a new standard for wheelchair provision and mobility support. By investing in national production, skills development, and high-quality mobility solutions, we are changing lives and strengthening our healthcare and manufacturing sectors. This is Kenya's time to lead, innovate, and ensure that everyone can live independently and with dignity regardless of mobility.



For more information visit [Made AT Kenya](#)

We acknowledge and thank the following partners.

- Kenyan Government
- Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology
- Pro Victimis Foundation
- ATScale
- UKAid
- GDI Hub

Peter Mbuguah, Motivation Regional Director, East Africa



PROTHEA CONGO

A Revolution in Prosthetics and Orthotics in the DRC

Prothea Congo, a new branch of Ugani Prosthetics, has revolutionized the prosthetics and orthotics sector in the Democratic Republic of Congo. Located on 14th Street in Limete, Kinshasa, this innovative workshop was launched in collaboration with the Diocesan Bureau of Medical Works of Kinshasa (BDOM).



The workshop uses cutting-edge technologies, such as 3D printing, to produce custom-made prosthetics and orthotics. Patients are scanned, and ISPO-certified

ortho-prosthetists model the devices before printing and assembling them on-site. The workshop consists of three prefabricated containers from Belgium: one for patient reception and scanning, one for 3D printing, and one serving as an assembly workshop.



Powered entirely by solar energy, the workshop is a self-sufficient facility, deployed in just three weeks in Kinshasa. With a production capacity of 200 prosthetics per month, Prothea Congo can quickly meet the needs of patients, even in remote areas. To date, provinces such as Congo Central, Kasai, and

North Kivu have benefited from the workshop's services. A prosthetist travels to scan patients in remote regions and sends the digital models to the workshop for printing. In less than 48 hours, the prosthetic is ready to be delivered and fitted.

Prothea Congo is a major step forward in making prosthetic and orthotic equipment more accessible in DR Congo, allowing many patients to regain a better quality of life.



ottobock.

OTTOBOCK KENYA P&O TRAINING CAMPS 2025

DATE	TOPICS	TARGET AUDIENCE
Feb 2025	Module 1 Transtibial Fittings	Prosthetist/Orthotists & Orthopaedic Technicians
June 2025	Module 3 TransRadial Fittings	Prosthetist/Orthotists & Orthopaedic Technicians
April 2025	Module 2 TransFemoral Fittings	Prosthetist/Orthotists & Orthopaedic Technicians
August 2025	Module 4 TransHumeral Fittings	Prosthetist/Orthotists & Orthopaedic Technicians



REGISTRATION

Only 4 training slots available per module

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OTTOBOCK KENYA WEBINARS 2025

TOPICS	DATE AND TIME	TARGET AUDIENCE
OTTOBOCK PROSTHETIC FEET	16 TH JAN 3PM	O&P
WINNING COMBINATION TT	13TH FEB 3PM	O&P
WINNING COMBINATION TF	13TH MARCH 3PM	O&P
OTTOBOCK MECHANICAL JOINTS	10TH APRIL 3PM	O&P
MATERIAL SCIENCE	8TH MAY 3PM	O&P
PROSTHETIC ALIGNMENT TT & TF	12 June 3:00 PM	O&P
PROSTHETIC REHABILITATION	10 July 3:00 PM	O&P, PHYSIOTHERAPIST
UPPER LIMB INTRODUCTION	14TH AUG 3-4PM	O&P, PHYSIOTHERAPIST , OT
UPPER LIMB COMPONENT SELECTION	11TH SEPT 3PM	O&P
WINNING COMBINATION LINER	09 Oct 3:00 PM	O&P
VAROS	13 Nov 3:00 PM	O&P
ORTHOTICS	11TH DEC 3PM	O&P

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ORGANISATION AFRICAINE POUR LE DÉVELOPPEMENT DES CENTRES POUR PERSONNES HANDICAPÉES

Une Solution Unique en Afrique pour l'Accès aux Technologies d'Assistance !





An Unique Solution in Africa for Access to Assistive Technologies

PARTENAIRES / PARTNERS





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Une Solution Unique en l'Accès aux Technologies d'Assistance



An Unique Solution in Africa for Access to Assistive Technologies







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Designed for users seeking dynamic energy return, enhanced mobility, and superior comfort across all terrains.



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Lifestyle

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3D for the O&P industry.



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Ugani helps you
create High-Quality,
Low-Cost, Fast and
Distributed
Prosthetics and
Orthotics

”

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Get started with 3D in your
workshop in no time!

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sustainable way.

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software for prosthetists.

High-Quality 3D O&P devices

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- In-house printing or
outsourced to us

ugani.org - info@ugani.org



The Ugani Procedure

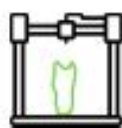
3D Scan

3D scanning of the
patient's stump with
an affordable
scanner.



3D Print

Local 3D printing of
the custom device
on a high-quality
desktop 3D printer.



Modeling

Open-source
modeling with
complete freedom
for the CPO.



Walk

Happy patient walks
of with a perfectly
fitting device, more
profit for you.



DistributedFit

At-home patient
care with partners
across the country.



IN BURKINA...

Capacity Building workshop for P&O and Physiotherapy professionals on the management of amputees due to firearm injuries



On April 4th and 5th, 2024, the 2nd session of the workshop on capacity building for Orthotists, Prosthetists, Physiotherapists and Practitioners in Burkina Faso, on the management of amputees due to firearm and/or explosion injury, was held in Ouagadougou, in the SPONG meeting room, following the 1st session on May 6th, 2023.

At the end of the workshop, the following recommendations were made:

- To the Ministry of Health and Public Hygiene
 - Dedicate the status of indigent (or vulnerable) to the ballistic trauma victim in connection with the security crisis.
 - Define the care pathway for ballistic trauma victims.
 - Facilitate the evacuation of ballistic trauma victims as quickly and as efficiently as possible, particularly by air if necessary.
 - Strengthen the human resources of rehabilitation professionals, particularly physiotherapists, orthotists and occupational therapists.

- Integrate the multidisciplinary approach into the care of ballistic trauma victims depending on the availability of human resources:
 - Level 1: orthopedic surgeon, physiotherapist, mental health specialist (or psychologist), social worker
 - Level 2: orthopedic surgeon, physiotherapist, mental health specialist (or psychologist), social worker, orthotist
 - Level 3: orthopedic surgeon, physiotherapist, mental health specialist (or psychologist), social worker, orthotist, MPR doctor
- Make available at hospital level the medical-technical equipment and consumables necessary for the care of ballistic trauma victims, including rehabilitation.
- To the General Directors of hospitals:
 - Identify a focal point responsible for coordinating the care of ballistic trauma victims.
 - Make available the medical-technical equipment necessary for the care of ballistic trauma victims.
 - Develop partnerships with nearby rehabilitation services for the care of ballistic trauma victims
- To the ICRC
 - Continue efforts to strengthen the capacities of those involved in the care of ballistic trauma victims.
- To rehabilitation professionals
 - Prioritize multidisciplinary consultation in the care of ballistic trauma victims.



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ICRC



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