

Jon Batzdorff was contacted by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC)/ Special Fund for the Disabled to provide training in fitting above-the-knee amputees with ischial containment sockets. Jon has provided training in Ischial Containment socket fitting in Haiti, Mexico, South America, and Eastern Europe so I was prepared to help in Africa.

The training took place at Comprehensive Community Based Rehabilitation Center of Tanzania (CCBRT), a community based rehabilitation center in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. All attendees of the prosthetics workshop were prosthetists and technicians who work in countries of conflict. There were 12 participants attending the workshop. They came from Rwanda, Yemen, Somaliland, Myanmar, India, Pakistan, Colombia, and Tanzania.



Patient fit in class with Ischial containment suction socket and ICRC 4-bar knee

The format of the class was lectures and demonstrations, followed by step-by-step fitting of patients. The students worked in teams of two, fitting patients following the instructions of Jon Batzdorff, assisted by Zeon Dewitt, an ICRC prosthetist. As Jon and Zeon finished each step of the prosthesis for their demonstration patient, the students did the same step for their patients. The patients were local Tanzanian amputees who were offered a free prosthesis in return for serving as models during the class. The first group of prostheses were fit at the end of the first week. Students worked with physical therapist Solenne Chupin, an ICRC physiotherapist who trained the amputees to walk with their new prostheses. The students together with instructors made the necessary adjustments. The next week more amputees were cast and more prostheses were fit. Repeated fittings served to reinforce the lessons and be sure that the attendees could repeat the

process independently.

The total project took three weeks with the first week spent setting up materials and equipment followed by two weeks of intensive training. At the end of the class the amputees were wearing in their new prostheses. The students were enthusiastic about the prospect of continuing the work with Ischial Containment sockets when they return to their respective countries.

Follow-up will be provided to help the technicians as they run into difficult challenges.



Class participants, Duria (Tanzania) and Achmed (Somaliland)