

Shipment of much needed prosthetic legs reaches Tanzanian hospital to great fanfare

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After weeks of issues with customs and the container being held in limbo, a shipment of 500 recycled prosthetic legs finally reached its destination of Muhimbili Orthopaedic Institute in Tanzania. The limbs, collected from across the UK and sent by Legs4Africa, are part of the charity's ongoing work to reduce waste and maximise life by taking rejected mobility equipment and putting it to use in some of the worlds poorest communities.

"We often have delays," says Tom Williams, founding trustee of the charity. "It's frustrating but we're getting used to it. It just becomes a waiting game. Obviously we want to get this mobility equipment in the hands of our partner hospitals and clinics as soon as possible for the sake of the patients who are waiting for it."

After two months in a hiatus the container finally arrived at Muhimbili Orthopaedic Institute in Tanzania to great excitement.

"The number of people who requires artificial limbs has increased tremendously as there has been introduction of motor cycle as a means of local transport." Says Leah A. Mamseri, Head of the Orthopaedic workshop.

This has increased the number of casualties due to accidents leading to increasing number of amputees from day to day. In this case it has been very difficult for the government to meet the cost of importing new components for making the artificial limb around the country but mostly the Muhimbili Orthopaedic Institute which is receiving majority of patients referred also from other centres.

Leah A. Mamseri went on to say that the fluctuation in currency along with the increase in patients has created a short fall in orthopaedic equipment. This shipment will make a great difference to patients who cannot afford to buy expensive mobility equipment themselves.

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