



CUBA:

## Orthopaedic technology company aims to promote know-how transfer

People with physical disabilities are not adequately provided with prostheses and orthoses in Cuba because there are few qualified specialists and the workshops for orthopaedic technology are outdated. In the framework of the develoPPP programme of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (Bundesministerium für wirtschaftliche Zusammenarbeit und Entwicklung, BMZ), Ottobock and the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH committed to improving orthopaedic technology training and supply in the country. The medical technology company Ottobock has maintained trade relations with Cuba since 2014 and would like to further expand its activities there. The company focuses on holistic care: its innovative products are to be fitted at the recipients' homes by qualified specialists.

### THE CHALLENGE

Almost 16,000 people in Cuba are living with amputations, for example as a result of accidents or diabetes; however, only 3,000 of these are currently fitted with prostheses and orthoses.

The state-administered Centro Nacional de Ortopedia Técnica (CNOT) is responsible for technical orthopaedics and maintains around 40 care facilities throughout the country and employs approximately 450 orthopaedic technicians. These are usually inadequately trained and mostly work in outdated workshops. New recruits are rare in the country and have so far mostly been trained locally with existing materials and methods. In order to improve the standards of care, the project partners hope to qualify specialists and provide modern medical technology.

Ottobock can thus offer professional, holistic care in Cuba and generate more demand for its own products. Since the approach goes beyond the mere distribution of components, Ottobock is able to strengthen its own market position in the long term.

### PROJECT APPROACH

In order to train orthopaedic technicians according to the latest standards and to equip CNOT workshops accordingly, the project partners implemented the following measures, among others, as part of the develoPPP project from 2016 to 2018; the total budget was approximately 410,000 euros:

- 18-month advanced training in leg prosthetics according to international standards (ISPO II) for four CNOT specialists at the Ottobock International O&P School in Duderstadt.
- Training in leg prosthetics and orthotics for 92 CNOT employees and lecturers at the Faculty of Health Technology (FATESA) of the Universidad Ciencias Médicas in Havana
- Establishment of the new techniques as part of the training in the main workshop of the CNOT
- Creation of a strategic modernisation plan for the nationwide orthopaedic technology workshops.

Ottobock contributed its expertise in medical technology as part of the project, thus promoting the local transfer of know-how. GIZ supported the project financially.

*"Cuba is a country with long-term potential for us. We are able to open up a new market in Latin America through cooperation with GIZ. At the same time, together we are improving the quality of life of people with disabilities."*

**Marcelo Cuscuna**, Regional President, Latin America  
Ottobock



## RESULTS

Training and know-how transfer in the field of medical technology have significantly improved health care. For example, the CNOT has further developed technical orthopaedics based on the knowledge gained from the project. More prostheses and orthoses could be produced and delivered to patients. Because it was possible to train more specialists in the orthopaedic field, Ottobock is now able to use its medical technology products more in the country.

92

orthopaedic technicians further qualified

30%

increase in production in the field of orthotics and prosthetics at CNOT



Long-term know-how transfer

## PROJECT PARTNERS

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innovative business idea that can be expected to have a positive development effect? Then learn more now and become part of the develoPPP success story! Further details on the programme, current project examples and the right contact for your questions can be found at: [www.develoPPP.de](http://www.develoPPP.de).

Information on further BMZ funding opportunities for companies can be found at: [www.wirtschaft-entwicklung.de](http://www.wirtschaft-entwicklung.de).

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