



Grand Challenges Canada®
Grands Défis Canada

Gender Equality Case Study: LegWorks



LegWorks is an organization that meets the GE2 criteria¹, and demonstrates their thoughtfulness and intentionality in ensuring appropriate design and access.

THE CHALLENGE

9 out of 10 individuals in low- and middle-income countries requiring prosthetics are unable to access them due to prohibitively high costs and other barriers. Female amputees are **even less likely** to be fit with prosthetics, although accurate data is limited.

THE INNOVATION

LegWorks has developed a product called the All-Terrain Knee.

- An artificial knee joint for individuals with amputation above the knee
- Extensively tested against competing, significantly more expensive products – Users felt more stable, fell less frequently and were able to walk more quickly and efficiently with the All-Terrain Knee

GENDER ANALYSIS: IDENTIFYING POTENTIAL CAUSES OF GENDER DISPARITY

- Lack of female prosthetists
 - Potential barrier to women feeling comfortable seeking treatment or prioritization of serving/targeting the female population
- Lack of capacity to meet female physiology
 - Commonly seen in product development, where product tests, clinical trials, etc. focus on the “average male”, while intention is to serve both male and female clients, and in some cases, children.
- Amputation in response to trauma as key driver for prosthetic fittings
 - Generally higher number of male trauma amputees than female amputees

GENDER STRATEGY: 5 KEY AREAS OF FOCUS

- **Data availability**
 - Ascertain data from implementation partners, build survey data to report gender (among other key characteristics) of patients
- **Product design**
 - Allocate resources for the test and design of products for people of different weights, statures, etc., including prioritizing the development of products for the female physiology
- **Composition of patients**
 - Target currently underserved market of female amputees
- **Distribution system**
 - Where possible, support training and development of female technicians and prosthetists
- **Organizational-level initiatives**
 - Promote female leadership within LegWorks – Board, staff
 - Allocate firm resources specifically for gender strategy tracking
 - Develop Human Resources policies and procedures around: Maternity/parental leave, wage equity, sexual harassment prevention and response



¹Grand Challenges Canada applies a gender equality coding system to funding candidates during the due diligence process. The GE2 rating notes the innovation makes a significant contribution to gender equality outcomes.