

# TWAM

Tools with a Mission

# Our news

Life transforming tools that ignite hope

October 2021



Empowering people with the tools that create livelihoods and transform lives

## Welcome to TWAM News



In this edition we focus on some remarkable people and the projects they have started using TWAM tools. I hope, as you read their stories, it will convince you of the impact TWAM tools have across Africa. It is

also encouraging to see the emergence of new countries such as Malawi. So please read and be inspired by these remarkable people.

*Mike Griffin, Chief Executive*

### Tools to donate?

To find your nearest collection centre or to contact a local collector check our website or contact Ipswich.

### Time to donate?

We are in particular need of drivers at our Coventry Refurbishment Centre. If you are interested please contact the Ipswich office, we'd love to hear from you.

### Financial support

TWAM operates seven refurbishment centres across the UK and sends out over 20 containers of tools a year. We keep our costs very low but we still need a lot of support. We value all gifts whether one off or regular. You can send donations to our Ipswich postal address or request a Standing Order and Gift Aid form.

### Prayer support

TWAM depends on prayer. If you don't currently receive our quarterly prayer diary and would like to, please contact the Ipswich office.

*"And let us consider  
how to stir up one  
another to love and  
good works."*

Hebrews 10:24

### About us:

Tools with a Mission is a Christian charity enabling people to earn a living and support themselves and their families. In many countries people have few skills, little education and no means of earning a living. A switch from aid dependency to self-sufficiency is impossible without help. TWAM started over thirty years ago, and has since provided this help by collecting and refurbishing tools and equipment no longer required in the UK and sending them overseas. Through collectors and centres across the UK, our team of dedicated volunteers and supporters help transform thousands of lives every year.

Thank you for your ongoing support.

### Tools with a Mission

2 Bailey Close,  
Hadleigh Road Industrial Estate  
Ipswich,  
IP2 0UD

t: 01473 210220  
e: [post@twam.uk](mailto:post@twam.uk)

*TWAM is grateful to the Aall Foundation for  
their long-term generous support of our work.*



*Great excitement as the tools from TWAM arrive*

## The tools that ignite hope

'Fountain of Hope' Foundation in Zimbabwe applied for tools from TWAM in 2019 and we wrote about their hopes and dreams in the January 2021 edition of TWAM News. Little did they know at the time how important their plans and TWAM tools were going to be! But then Covid 19 arrived!

The effect of the pandemic on Zimbabwe's fragile economy and people was devastating. The World Bank reports that 1.3 million people were added to the number of extreme poor, meaning a staggering 49% of the population were now in this category. The extreme poor were disproportionately affected and in rural areas up to 70% of children lost all access to education.

As 'Fountain of Hope' was applying for tools and making plans to open a training centre, they had no idea how desperately their community would need them. They know now! One of their leaders, Wallace, explains:

*"There is high unemployment among the youth in our community and some of the young people end up abusing drugs and creating a whole lot more problems. Covid has forced many young girls into prostitution, because this is the only source of income for their families. If these girls and boys who have dropped out of school were provided with skills that lead to employment they would not have to do this."*



The carpentry workshop filled with TWAM tools

We might ask ourselves if such devastating and overwhelming community problems can be addressed just with training and tools? Wallace thinks they can; he continues:

*“It is to this backdrop that we decided to come up with a vehicle that provides skills to the young people of our community, so that they may either be employed or create employment for themselves. The youth are the future of our community and without them, communities are doomed. We therefore decided to run this programme in order to rescue them from being driven away by the tides of poverty.”*

Can tools really achieve this? The simple answer is “yes” - when combined with skills training and the friendship, support, self-belief and emotional and spiritual support that come with it. No training group is just about the tools, but the tools make all the others possible.

But don’t take our word for it. Let’s meet a couple of the trainees who started their courses earlier this year.

## Meet Brendon

Brendon was raised in an orphanage. In Zimbabwe, young people are released from orphanages at the age of 18 and are immediately expected to be self-supporting. But, as Wallace points out: *“How can he live independently in a nation where there are no jobs? Where is he going to stay when he doesn’t have any money for rent?”* How easily Brendon could have fallen prey to a street gang and a life of crime. But ‘Fountain of Hope’ offered him an overwhelming hope that his life could be better.

Brendon has done really well with his carpentry and until he can afford it, Fountain of Hope have helped him with accommodation. Now his dreams are of opening a small shop where he can repair and make furniture.



Brendon

So, can tools really transform a person’s life and future? Brendon says ‘yes’.

Ebenezer would also agree. She too is learning carpentry. She left school and found it impossible to find work. So when she heard about the carpentry course starting in March 2021 she quickly asked if she could join.

The turn-around in her life has been extraordinary, as she has gone from despair and hopelessness to making big plans to open her own workshop - where she can make furniture for rural schools. She tells us:

*“I have been to rural schools where children sit on the floor and use their laps as tables. My greatest desire is to help these communities by providing better furniture for their schools.”*

Brendon and Ebenezer clearly meet the criteria for joining the ‘Foundation of Hope’ carpentry workshop. They are vulnerable young people with a passion for carpentry and to see their lives change for the better.

With your support, lives can be completely and permanently turned around. If Brendon’s life had not been hard enough growing up in an

orphanage, it was about to get so much worse. Ebenezer was in a perilous position with no work or money and with few options other than the horror of sex-work. But what a change the tools, you have helped us send, have made to their lives. Thank you for making it possible. We'll give Wallace the last word:

*“On behalf of ‘Fountain of Hope’ and the young people we are training, I am so much grateful to you for providing us with tools to empower the lives of young people. We started this program out of the desire to assist and empower young people to transition from the life of hopelessness to a life of being*

*hopeful for the future. It was really a very big step of faith because we didn’t even have one tool to start with and our team is so grateful to you for being an answer to prayer. These tools are doing a tremendous job of opening up the minds of these young people; they already see themselves as business people. The young people who didn’t have any vision for the future now have got great visions for the future. These tools ignited hope in the lives of the young people. Thank you to all who gave us the tools that we are using.”*

Ebenezer



## 20 tonnes of transformed lives to DRC Container

We sent our biggest container of the year to DR Congo in July. It was the largest 40 foot container you can get and it held over 20 tonnes of tools. It was a huge achievement in the current conditions and showed the amazing commitment of all our volunteers from the tool collectors, to the people who sorted and refurbished them, right up to our team of dedicated Country Coordinators who prepared all the tools applications from Africa.

We thought you might be interested to know what was inside the container. There’s too much to list them all, but below are the main kits we sent.

407	Electric, manual, treadle & industrial Sewing Machines	17	Builders Kits ( <i>Box of 2</i> )
45	Haberdashery Kits	8	Groundworkers Kits
32	Knitting Machines	20	Agricultural Kits
37	Bags of Knitting Machine Wool	47	Motor Mechanics Kits ( <i>for one person</i> )
17	Hand Knitting Packs	11	Mechanics Workshop Kits
92	Carpentry Trade Kits ( <i>for one person</i> )	9	Plumbers Kits
13	Carpentry Workshop Kits	28	Electricians Kits
17	Drill and power tools	11	Welding Machines
100	Desktop Computers	453	Other items including large industrial tools
50	Laptop Computers		

1414 Total tool kits sent

# *We've got some big plans to share with you*

## Because we know:

- Tools can genuinely and permanently transform lives but that demand is way beyond our ability to supply.
- We get requests from countries in Africa where we don't work and we don't have the capacity to say "yes".
- We save hundreds of tonnes of good tools going to landfill every year, but we want to save hundreds more.
- People value the dignity, satisfaction and friendship that comes through volunteering.
- Even though we send a staggering 450,000 individual tools to Africa every year, it is not enough.

## We want to do more; much more...

We don't have to persuade groups across Africa that our tools transform the lives of individuals, families and communities, so the requests from them never stop. We are thrilled by this, but it does mean that demand far outstrips our ability to supply. We want this to change and we want to be able to say 'yes' to many more countries across Africa, who ask us for help.

To achieve this we need to double the number of containers we send every year. Currently, only our Ipswich base prepares and dispatches containers. Ipswich can't do anymore, so we need to open another major Refurbishment Centre to share the load. We're going to do this in Coventry, where we already have a small busy workshop.

We're all getting very excited about this! We have already managed to get our current Coventry site open five days a

week. This means we can take the huge step of employing our first ever full-time Manager. We hope they will be in place in the autumn of this year.

To boost the number of tools the new centre will need and reduce those going to landfill, we will be actively recruiting around 200 collectors, mostly in the North of England. To support them we have already placed a brand new van near Redcar to collect from the North and deliver to Coventry. This van was very generously donated to TWAM.

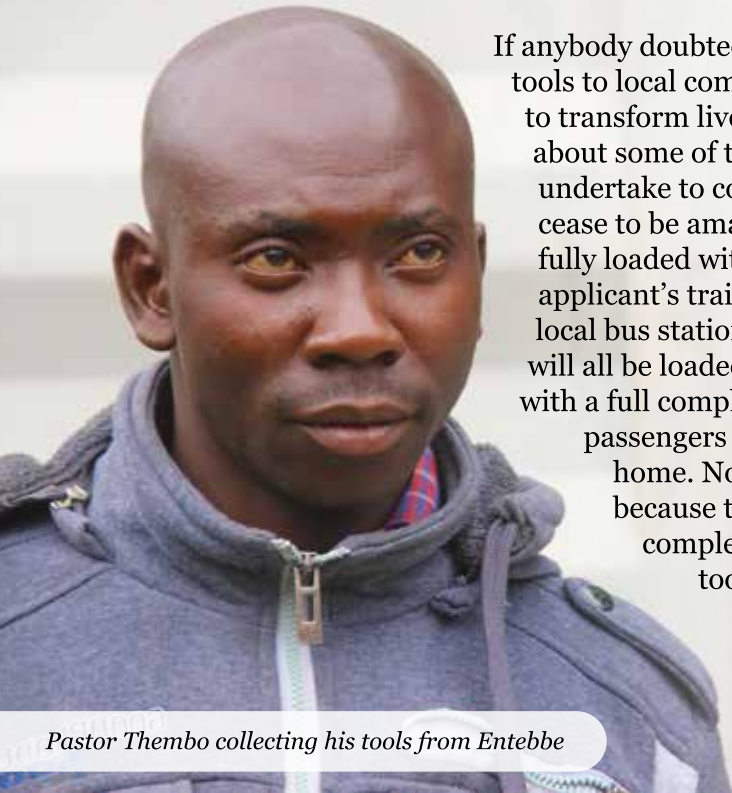
Then, in the spring of 2022, we will start looking for a new building capable of sorting and refurbishing every single tool kit TWAM sends and dispatching up to 18 containers a year.

This will mean we can support hundreds more groups and many more countries. We're so very excited and wanted to share our plans with you.



*Mark, our Northern Van Manager, collecting his new van*

# When going the extra mile turns into hundreds of miles!



*Pastor Thembo collecting his tools from Entebbe*

If anybody doubted the value of TWAM tools to local communities and their ability to transform lives, they only need to read about some of the journeys applicants undertake to collect them. You never cease to be amazed when you see a truck fully loaded with tools going, not to the applicant's training centre, but to the local bus station where somehow they will all be loaded into a minibus along with a full complement of uncomplaining passengers for the very long journey home. Nobody seems to complain, because they all know what a complete transformation the tools will bring when they reach their destination and are just happy for those who will receive them.

Few travel further than Pastor Innocent Thembo. He travels 320 miles to Entebbe in Uganda from DR Congo to collect his tools. We do send containers to Lubumbashi in the DRC but that is 1200 miles away on incredibly dangerous roads! But he does it, because he sees the poverty and despair of the people and desperately wants to help.

The territories of Lubero and Beni, which he serves, have long suffered terrible atrocities by several militia groups. We could not describe in this magazine the things that have happened and the pictures we have seen of the massacres.

Such appalling and relentless cruelty has led to massive displacement and destabilisation of people. They often flee in just the clothes they are wearing and it has impoverished the people. In response, Pastor Thembo has started an agricultural project, which means as soon as they find a safe place to live they can quickly cultivate the land and sow crops. He provides Chia Seeds, a type of Sage that grows very fast and can be harvested in just a few weeks. This has the double benefit of providing food and income in a short time, but also means, if forced to move on again quickly, all is not lost.

Pastor Thembo has developed a network of workers who visit the displaced communities, teach them about fast growing crops, provide the seeds and TWAM tools they need and put them into contact with dealers who will buy their surplus crops. This approach literally saves lives.

But Pastor Thembo knows this is only a stop gap and displaced people cannot rely forever on agriculture. So when the violence subsides and people start to settle, he is also helping with skills training and employment. So he has also received sewing machines, knitting machines, many carpentry and mechanics workshop kits capable of providing employment for many people, builders, electricians and plumbers kits, as well as large industrial tools and welding

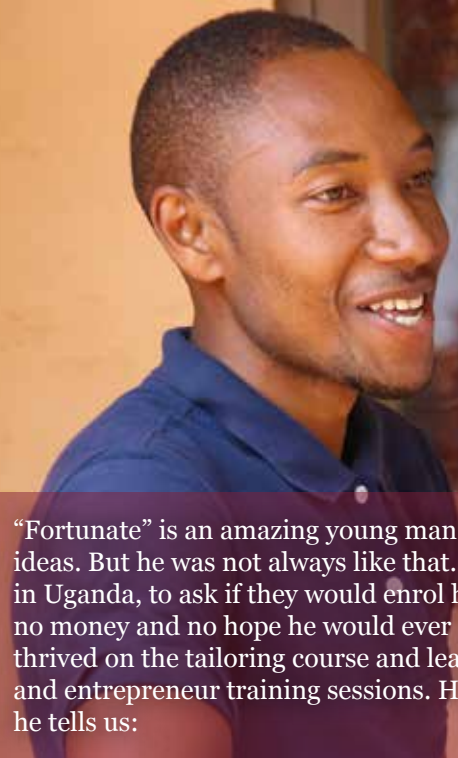
machines. He is running a huge project, prioritising youth and rural women and he has already identified and made contact with over 37,000.

He is now starting an export cooperative so the Sage farmers can pool their crops and ensure they get a good price. He is opening warehouses to safely store the crops from the weather and thieves. TWAM tools are at the heart of this project and one of the catalysts for its growth, hence Pastor Thembo is willing to travel so far to collect them.

If you ever doubt that the tools you help send to Africa transform lives, just think of Pastor Thembo!



## *I learned tailoring and got self-confidence*



*“Tailoring was just the start for me and gave me the skills and self-belief that I could do so much more.”*

“Fortunate” is an amazing young man with boundless energy and a head full of bright ideas. But he was not always like that. When he first approached Mindset, our partner in Uganda, to ask if they would enrol him on their tailoring course, he had no plans, no money and no hope he would ever achieve anything. But everything changed as he thrived on the tailoring course and learned how much he could achieve in the business and entrepreneur training sessions. He felt confident in himself for the first time and he tells us:

*“Since I learned tailoring I have been able to set up a successful business with the sewing machine I was given. But I have seen this as just the beginning, as I want to start up many successful businesses. I have specialised in making bags and saved enough money to start another project.*

*My next project is setting up a honey business. I have had contact with lots of farmers and buy their honey from them in large jerry cans. The honey is raw, so I need to strain it before putting it into jars. I have all the equipment and have bought labels and jars. I sell to shops, on the market and to hotels.*

*I have just moved into my new shop where I will keep all my equipment and*

*sell my honey. The skills I learned at Mindset have made a big difference to my life.”*

‘Fortunate’ has a long way to go as he has divided his little shop in two with a curtain. Half is his honey shop and the other half doubles up as his home and tailoring workshop with room for just his bed and his sewing machine. It’s small, but it’s a start.

He is a great example of the potential of a young person, if someone believes in them enough to train them and give them the tools to change their lives. When you support TWAM, this is what you are doing, believing in young people like Fortunate. So, on his behalf, thank you.

## *Dreaming big dreams for Malawi*

Have you ever started a challenging project and then seen it grow and grow and grow? It can be rather scary but also very exciting. One group that has experienced this is the committee of the newly formed Community Technical College in Chipiti, Malawi. The committee is made up of six village headmen who came together to try and solve the problem of long term unemployment caused by lack of education and skills. They particularly wanted to focus on young people, who had little hope of ever breaking free of poverty if this was not addressed.

They originally thought that the problem was too big and the resources too small, but then they heard of TWAM. But it seemed their hopes were dashed as TWAM did not work in Malawi. However, big dreams demand big solutions and they decided to approach our Zambia Country Coordinator to see if they could collect their tools from Lusaka. This was quite a challenge, as it was hundreds of miles away, and they would have to negotiate all the Covid travel restrictions.

Thankfully, they already had links with a UK charity that helped them apply for tools and once their

application was accepted they got to work. Dr. Martin Jamieson, Director of “Livingway Education” picks up the story:

*“After the tools had been applied for, I went to Malawi where a meeting was held with all the village headmen in the area to discuss the ideas that had formed since the request for tools had been made. An Action Committee was elected and plans were made to identify trainers and students capable of making the best use of the tools. Classrooms were constructed and eventually, a community college with two classrooms and a number of outside workshops began!”*



This is what we find so encouraging and humbling, that the promise of tools has the power to mobilise entire communities. Since the tools arrived last year, they have held courses in carpentry, construction and tailoring. Martin tells us:

*“You can see the delight in the faces of the students as they learn the new skills and put them into practice.”*

Most importantly, he adds:

*“There are stories about ladies able to make and sell items of clothing that help them pay for school fees. There are stories that go way beyond this. The community is seeing a resurgence of economic activity that will affect it for years to come.”*

And what we love about projects like this is that they are organised by local leaders and supported by local people determined to transform their own communities. In fact, they are so inspired at the prospect of what can be achieved, they have approached TWAM to request to become our partner in Malawi receiving our containers and promoting the life changing benefits of tools. This could be the start of something big. Martin agrees and tells us:

*“The fact that this change has been and is being organised by their own leaders is a considerable source of pride. This, in itself, has led to other local organisations hoping to do more of the same in the areas they serve.”*

So, the leaders of the Community Technical College dreamed big, but then dreamed even bigger as they sought to promote TWAM across their region and one day, perhaps, become our Malawi partner.



This story emphasises yet again the belief in local people that tools transform lives. They would not have been willing to go all the way to Lusaka amid a Covid pandemic if they did not believe this was true. They would not have built classrooms and workshops before the tools even arrived to equip them, if they did not believe this was true. They would not now be promoting us to lots of other charities in Malawi, if they did not believe this was true. And finally they would not be seeking a long term partnership with TWAM, if they did not believe that tools transform lives.

**Your donated tools and your financial support transform lives. We know it's true; they know it's true; and we really hope that you know it's true too!**



*The College committee meeting to discuss a TWAM partnership*

## Will you partner with us and send life-transforming tools to Africa?

You could sponsor an entire container filled with wonderful "stories in the making" - for £7,500. If you would like to, we'll update you on the container, as we prepare it and ship it out from here.



In this edition we have focused on some remarkable people setting out to transform, in some cases, literally thousands of lives using TWAM tools. But they can't do it without your help. Please help us to help them impact some of the poorest and most desperate people in the world.

I would like to help send tools to Africa and be part of the work to create livelihoods and transform lives.

Please accept my gift of:

☐ £15    ☐ £25    ☐ £50    ☐ £100  
☐ £150    ☐ £250    ☐ Other £ \_\_\_\_\_

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I want to Gift Aid my donation and any donations I make in the future or have made in the past 4 years, to Tools with a Mission.

I am a UK taxpayer and understand that if I pay less Income Tax and/or Capital Gains Tax than the amount of Gift Aid claimed on all my donations in that tax year is my responsibility to pay any difference.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Please notify the charity if you: want to cancel this declaration; change your name or home address; no longer pay sufficient tax on your income and/or capital gains. If you pay Income Tax at the higher or additional rate and want to receive the additional tax relief due to you, you must include all your Gift Aid donations on your Self-Assessment tax return or ask HM Revenue and Customs to adjust your tax code.

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