

TWAM

Tools with a Mission

Our news

Sharing the joy - saying thank you in their own words

Autumn 2018



A Christian charity sending tools across the world

Welcome to TWAM News



In this edition of TWAM News our theme is 'thank you.' Most people, myself included, are ready to complain when something goes wrong, but all too often take it for granted when things go well. Complaints

invariably outnumber the times we simply say thank you. So we have given over this edition of TWAM News to the recipients of our tools who want to personally say thank you to all of you who support us. They want to do this, because many of them are genuinely desperate to share their gratitude at the difference you have made to their lives. It is my pleasure to give them this wonderful opportunity.

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 always need local collectors and volunteers in our refurbishment centres. Please contact Ipswich for details. 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. Gifts can be sent to Ipswich and Direct Debit and Gift Aid forms requested.

Prayer support

TWAM depends on prayer. Please pray for us.

You will be enriched in every way so that you can be generous on every occasion, and through us your generosity will result in thanksgiving to God.

2 Corinthians 9:11

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

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It is hard growing up in a poor community on the outskirts of Kampala, the capital of Uganda, where youth unemployment is permanently around 85%. It is hard to believe there is any future and anything to look forward to. But for the trainees in the Kawampe Carpentry Workshop everything has changed and they want the opportunity to say thank you.

The trainees attend the workshop for two years and learn every aspect of carpentry. As they learn they make furniture, windows and doors to sell to support themselves and fund the workshop. The quality of the work is extraordinary, with beautifully carved bedheads and tables. Unsurprisingly, the workshop has plenty of work.

Tools with a Mission has supplied workshop carpentry kits including industrial lathes and pillar drills. Each trainee receives a carpentry kit that they will take away when they complete their course. There are eleven trainees, and they all want to say thank you, but there is only room in this article for three of them.

Hello I'm James



"I would like to say thank you, because my life has been very hard and you have given me hope. My father died 15 years ago when I was very young. My mother could not cope and I have not been to school. A friend told me about the workshop but I was too scared to come, so he brought me. I have completed my training and have been kept on to train other boys.

I am now saving up money to start my own workshop. I cannot believe how my life has changed. Thank you for making my life worth living."

Hello I'm Eddie

"I want to thank you. I grew up in Kawampe and my parents sent me to school. But there is no work and nothing to do. I did nothing for three years. It is hard for me to tell you what that is like. It is so hard when you want to work but nobody has a job to offer you.

I looked everyday and that is when I saw people earning a living from carpentry and decided I wanted to learn this myself. I asked how I could do this and somebody told me about this workshop. I had heard about the workshop, but never thought it was something I could do. I am near to finishing my training and my life is looking very good. I have my tools and I love them.

Thank you for giving me a chance to have a skill and earn a living for myself and my family."

It is hard sometimes to get across the sense of hopelessness that can overshadow a young person's life, when they have nothing to look forward to and see no opportunity to ever change this.

With no unemployment benefit and therefore literally no money, no social services support or anything to give encouragement, it is no surprise that an overwhelming sense of despair and often depression accompanies the statement 'I did nothing for years.'

It is equally hard to explain the sense of sheer relief and joy when they realise this can change, or in the case of Patrick, his mum realises her son's life can change.



Hello I'm Patrick

"I want to say thank you to everyone at TWAM and to my mum. I did not finish school as my family could not afford the school fees. I had no work and nothing to do and spent 18 months lamenting what I could do with my life. I had no hope, but then my mum met a trainer from the workshop and they discussed if they would help me and then they asked me to apply.

I have been here now for one and a half years and have got many skills. My friends are admiring the skill I have learned and I want to share it with them. Now it is my dream to help them, because now I have this skill I must share it with them. My dream is to become a trainer.

I want to say thank you to you, because in the workshop, I have learned a skill, but I have also gained the confidence to fulfil my goal."

The Kawampe Carpentry Workshop is a truly inspiring project driven by the determination of the trainees to take hold of this one opportunity to see their lives transformed.

Thank you from everyone at TWAM for your support, prayers and tools, without which none of this would be possible. Please do help us to continue to see lives transformed through tools and training.



'Thank you' for keeping the poor close to your hearts



Their chairperson Fyl Bevan, would like the opportunity to say thank you.

"After years of travelling to Myanmar with used medical equipment from a local charity, I had a "chance" encounter with a young Burmese pastor who is looking after 17 little churches, many meeting in just small bamboo huts and whose family had adopted 17 former street children. Months later it emerged that among his pastors there were over 120 children in their care. Since then our small charity has been supporting them with food, school books, medicines and, sadly, several funerals.

Myanmar experiences disastrous flooding sometimes and FLM has stepped in with emergency aid including food, clothes, clean water and rice seed for a new harvest. Clean

water is not universally available and to date the charity has dug nine wells in remote villages. We realised one of the biggest challenges was to help people generate income in areas where there is no work and little education. This would restore dignity to many families and release funds for the even poorer.

One such work project is to train the women to sew hygiene items, a vast need in developing countries. A visit to TWAM in Ipswich proved a real blessing. The ladies group there provided 35 cotton bags with sewing kits. These were distributed in April 2018 at a remote camp training workshop. The women were really thrilled when they opened their gifts of reels of thread, scissors, fasteners, thimbles and other sewing items. They began sewing the hygiene items using templates provided and have gone back to their villages to use that skill in their communities.

One lady took 6 kits as she has 6 teenage girls in her care. Six remaining kits were given to a friend who works with children living rough on the city

streets. She hopes to use a garage beside her rented flat as a sewing workshop to train these girls with a skill which will give them hope and a future.

The last six kits have gone way up north to desperately poor villages in Chin state.

I want to give our huge thanks to TWAM and all its supporters, and of course the ladies who worked so hard to provide the kits.

God bless all you do for the poor who are so close to God's heart, and I know to yours too!"



In addition to all the containers we send to Africa, TWAM also supports charities who want to take our tools to support their projects around the world. One charity recently helped with sewing kits was Family Link Myanmar, a small Suffolk charity working among very poor communities near Yangon city and outlying remote villages in Myanmar (formerly Burma).

'Thank you' for saving me

In the far western corner of Uganda, right on the border with the DR Congo is the town of Kasese. Kasese is not an easy place to live in due to the proximity to the border of DR Congo. Anti-government rebels have camps in the neighbouring mountain ranges that straddle the border and armed insurrection is a constant threat. The mountains are also home to tribes who practice child sacrifice and children are regularly snatched from the town by these groups.

Unemployment is very high and nobody wants to invest in a town constantly threatened with violence. The result is that few ever expect to work and many of the men turn to alcohol and gambling as a way to deal with the monotony and despair.

But three women got together to make a difference to their town and they decided to open a cafe linked to their church. They learned catering and opened Cafe Jambo four years ago. Their aim in part was to offer women a refuge from abusive husbands. All the commercial cookers, cooking pots, utensils and equipment has been sent by TWAM.

Hello I'm Alice and I want to say thank you

"I helped set up Cafe Jambo and now manage it. We are very blessed to have these utensils from TWAM, it would be very hard for us to buy them as it is almost impossible to get these in Kasese. We would have to go to Kampala which is 8 hours away and so very expensive."



Hello I'm Provia: 'Thank you saving me'

"I joined the Cafe a year ago and am training as a cook. I came because my husband had left me with a young boy (aged 3) and I had no support. My husband turned to drink and although I tried to help him, he only got worse and started drugs as well."

When my husband left me, my landlord threw me out. I was left living on the streets with my son. I started to go to the Friday meal, Kasese Baptist Church put on every week for young people living on the streets. Many young people are on the streets in Kasese. It is a very bad place with lots of gangs."

When I was offered a place at the cafe it was my second chance at life. I now live with my sister who looks after my son while I work in the cafe. As a single mother it was very hard for me, but now I have security and people who care for me and need me."



Now I love God because He has helped me in many ways. So I want to say to everyone in the UK, thank you for saving me."

An amazing lesson that it is not just a box of tools, but a lifeline to people who have lost everything. Thank you for helping Provia and please do continue to support and pray for TWAM as we respond to so many requests for help like this.



“Thank you” for changing the lives of disabled people

Life is tough for most people trying to scrape a living in the developing world, but it can be hardest of all for those society marginalises because of their disability. One group who turned to TWAM for support is trying to change this for the disabled people of Solwezi in Zambia.

Hello I’m George

“My life was so hard. Because I cannot walk my family have always been ashamed of me. When I was young they would not let me leave the house. I could not even look out of the door as they did not want anyone to see me. I have never been to school and never had friends. When I was older, I managed to go outside.

Disabled Care came to my village and

found me. They told me, my life could change and asked me what I would like to do. I had seen men doing carpentry and thought it was something I could do. They trained me and gave me a carpentry kit. I have a wheelchair now and have started doing woodwork outside my home.

Now people come to see me and they see my skills not my disability. My life has changed so much, I still cannot believe it.”

George shows us that the gift of a tool kit and the provision of a livelihood can mean so much more to someone than just the means to earn a living. It can literally change their entire life. George shows us that it is almost impossible to put into words the difference a tool kit truly can make.

Hello, I’m Rodger and I want to say thank you

Rodger is from the Disabled Care Organisation and he writes:

“Our organisation was set up to help disabled people who felt left out of society and isolated from their community. Many could not access social welfare and other benefits that the rest of the community were enjoying.

We want to help them lead self sustainable, independent lives. We contact them in their villages and communities and try to learn the problems they are experiencing, so we can together find solutions and see how we can help. Many ask us to help them get the skills to find work. We do this through our vocational rehabilitation programme.

We offer training in tailoring, knitting, building, carpentry, metal fabrication and computing using the tools we get from Tools with a Mission. These tools are put to good use to train disabled people in income generation so they can earn a living.

I would like to humbly thank Tools with a Mission for the supply of tools that makes our work possible.”

It can be incredibly hard for a disabled person to survive in the developing world, as there is often little provision made for the challenges they face. With the vast majority of roads unmade and deeply rutted, a wheelchair user can find it impossible to leave their home. Finding work is therefore impossible, so skills that can be used at home to create a sustainable livelihood are incredibly important. Equally important is the dignity of being asked what problems you are facing and how someone can help you. All too often these decisions are made for them by well meaning people.

So it is a joy and a privilege for TWAM to support George and the Disabled Care Organisation. Thank you for your support, without it none of this would be possible and people like George would still be living in shame and isolation.



“Thank you” for helping my family survive

We recently received this letter from Alice. She lives in the vast slum area surrounding Kitwe, Zambia’s third largest city.

Hello, my name is Alice

“I am from the town of Kitwe in Zambia. I would like to share my short testimony on how TWAM has helped me through Vision Care Foundation (VCF). You have empowered me with a sewing machine. This sewing machine has really helped me support my family.

Now my children can go to school and I can put food on my table. My life has been so hard, I cannot tell you what I have had to deal with. But my life began to change when I started to see the only way to survive and support my family was with a sewing machine.

I was visited by Emmanuel from VCF Mumfunte, because I had seen the sewing workshop he had started in my community. He recognised my challenges and offered to train me and later gift me a TWAM sewing machine.

I don’t know how to tell you how much I appreciate everyone who is making it possible, all I can say is thank you.

It means so much to me to see how the lives of women are being empowered, for it has been said that when you empower a woman, you have empowered a nation.

It’s our prayer that TWAM will continue to support us and send us more tools and equipment soon. Thanks for your support.”



“Thank you” for giving hope to our students

Our Moon Education is a project TWAM recently supported for the first time. They are based in Zambia with the aim of helping young Zambians access higher education but at the same time give something back by making an impact on their immediate community. We think it is important to teach skills about operating collaboratively and of volunteering, so our scholars are practicing what they preach. We believe that by instilling a sense of working with the community now, it helps them consider how they will solve problems in Zambia after they have completed university.

able to distribute mock test papers to each of them without having to go to the trouble of printing them.

The sewing machines are being used in the wider community. One of the headmen set up a tailoring course for six ladies. They are already making school uniforms and, we hope in the future, reusable sanitary towels. They are also making curtains for our buildings, as their commitment to us for having helped them.

The tools have been really useful in our building projects. We are just putting up small structures at the moment. We have a group of volunteers in the village who are giving their expertise to help us build. In return, we provide them with a meal. They try to bring along younger kids to help develop their building skills. We hope to help them set up a small workshop so that they can earn money for themselves as well as volunteer for us.

Hello from Helen

I’m Helen and I work at Our Moon and want to say thank you for your tools and laptops. We are so delighted with them. The laptops you gave us were very useful during our two week revision course where our scholars were tutoring grade 12 students. They were all able to use their laptops to take notes, access the internet to do some basic research and become more familiar with using technology. We also used their laptops to test them at the end of their sessions - we were

Thank you so much for the help you have given us.



“Thank you” for helping our children



TWAM has always supported charities wanting to send our tools to countries we do not currently work in. One long term charity which has received many tonnes of tools is Starfish Malawi.

Malawi, is a largely agricultural country, suffering from decades of underdevelopment and the devastating impact of HIV-Aids. Most Malawians rely on subsistence farming to provide for their families, which due to climate change is increasingly unreliable. In under-developed countries while education is important, practical skills can be more useful for earning a living. Office jobs are

few and far between, but people always need builders and carpenters.

Starfish have recognised this need and are responding to it by opening a training centre linked to Ngolowindo Model Primary School to teach carpentry, building and electrical skills to the pupils. The school has 1,600 pupils and is based in one of the poorest regions of Malawi.

But whilst Starfish saw the need and had the vision, they did not have the tools to make the training centre possible. So they turned to TWAM for support and now they want to say thank you.

Hello, I'm McJohnson and I want to say thank you

McJohnson is the skills teacher, and he says:

“I am overjoyed with the tools and am so looking forward to being able to teach the skills of electrical installation, carpentry and building construction to the children. The Government promised us tools, we waited for three years but they never arrived.

We are so thankful to TWAM for this provision and for Starfish Malawi. These tools will enable school children to be taught skills that will give them a better future. I cannot express our joy as we opened the first few boxes of tools.”

A group from Starfish UK recently visited the new centre and they too want to say thank you, they said:

“We watched a group of school children using the saws and planes. We could see how excited about the tools and all the things they would be able to make with their newly learned practical skills. This is such an exciting project and we are sure that with the help of TWAM, a difference will be made in these children's lives as they are educated in skills for their future.”

The combination of the vision of Starfish and the tools of TWAM will transform the future of hundreds of pupils in Ngolowindo, and they all want to say a deafeningly loud thank you! They are a great example of your tools and support transforming lives far beyond the countries we directly support.



I want to give someone a reason to say thank you

With your support we can see lives and entire communities changed with the provision of livelihood creating tools. In this edition we have read so many stories of individual lives affected by disability, poverty, abusive families and lack of education. Thankfully we have also read of the life transforming impact of training and tools. Each story is someone wanting to thank you for what you have done. Please help us continue to provide people with a reason to be thankful.

In this edition people have said 'thank you' for the following tools:

- £10 could provide a Sewing Kit
- £25 could provide a Sewing Machine
- £25 could provide a Electricians' Kit
- £35 could provide a Carpentry Kit



Please accept my gift of £ _____ (Cheques payable to Tools with a Mission)

Name: _____

Address: _____

Postcode: _____

Email: _____

- I would like to Gift Aid my donation, please send me a Gift Aid form (please tick).
Or you could donate through our online tool kit donation store at twam.uk.

We'd love to stay in touch

At Tools with a Mission we take your privacy seriously and will only use your personal information to administer your account and to provide you with the communications and services you have requested from us.

From time to time we would like to send you our magazine and other mailings and/or our regular e-newsletter by email. If you consent to us contacting you for this purpose please tick to say how you would like us to contact you:

Please contact me by POST EMAIL (tick as appropriate)

- You won't get our regular newsletters or updates unless you tick the boxes to opt in.
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