

TWAM news

Tools with a Mission

Summer 2017

Boxes of Hope



A Christian charity sending tools across the world

Welcome to TWAM News



I am very pleased to focus this edition on 'send a box' and the amazing difference one box of tools can make to a life. It costs £25 to send a box of tools to someone in the developing world who will use them to change their life. As I read these

stories my reaction is simply, how can so little achieve so much? And what else could I possibly give £25 to that could change a life? The world is full of great charities meeting genuine needs, and I would never want to belittle the work they do but I genuinely cannot think of anyone who can achieve so much with so little.

So I hope as you read this summer edition of TWAM News that it will inspire you the way it has inspired me.

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.

"And do not forget to do good and to share with others, for with such sacrifices God is pleased."

Hebrews 13:16 (NIV)

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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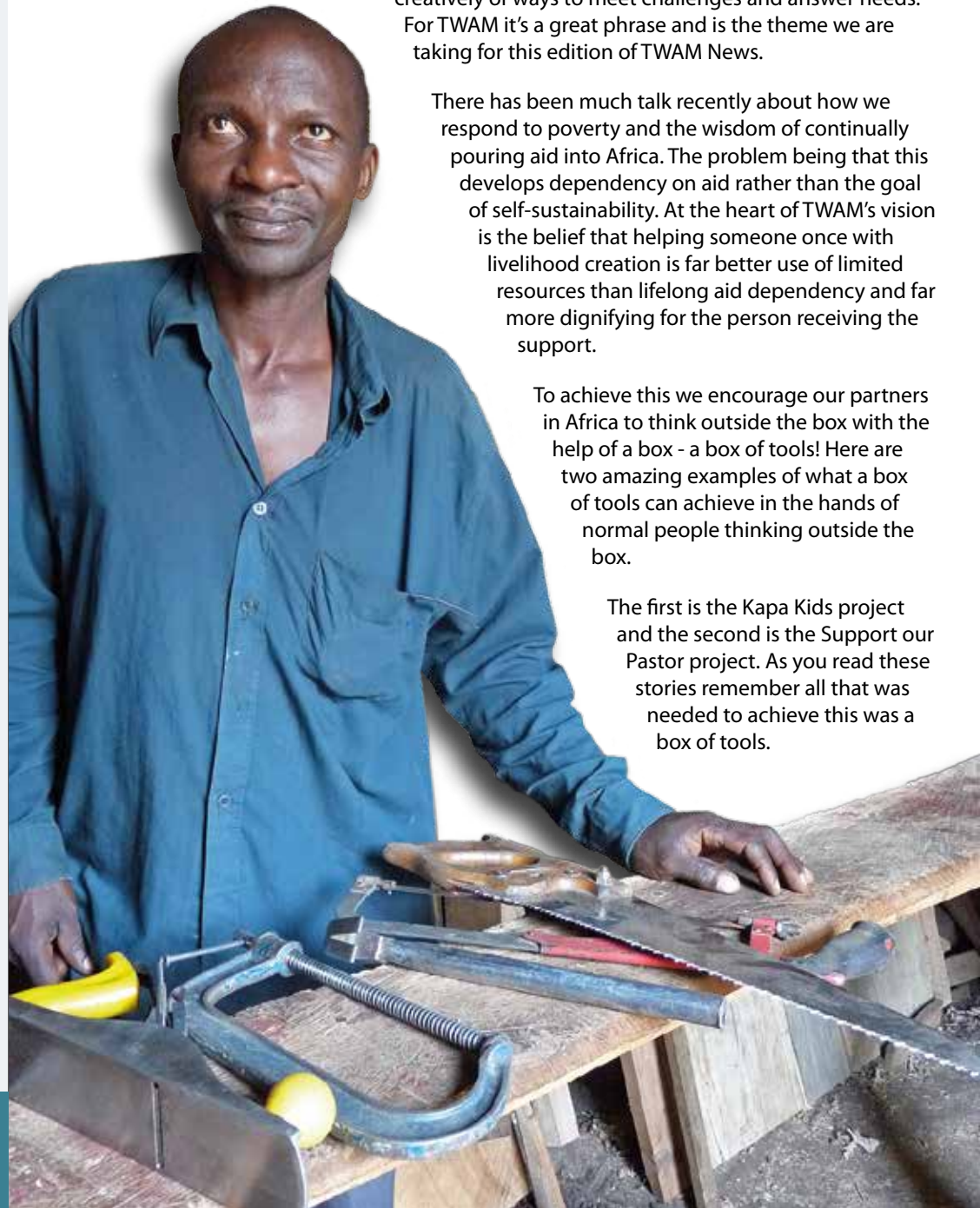
Thinking Outside the Box

This phrase is often used to challenge people to think creatively of ways to meet challenges and answer needs. For TWAM it's a great phrase and is the theme we are taking for this edition of TWAM News.

There has been much talk recently about how we respond to poverty and the wisdom of continually pouring aid into Africa. The problem being that this develops dependency on aid rather than the goal of self-sustainability. At the heart of TWAM's vision is the belief that helping someone once with livelihood creation is far better use of limited resources than lifelong aid dependency and far more dignifying for the person receiving the support.

To achieve this we encourage our partners in Africa to think outside the box with the help of a box - a box of tools! Here are two amazing examples of what a box of tools can achieve in the hands of normal people thinking outside the box.

The first is the Kapa Kids project and the second is the Support our Pastor project. As you read these stories remember all that was needed to achieve this was a box of tools.



A Box of Bananas! *The Story of Kapa Kids*



Kapa Kids was started in 2008 in Uganda to improve the income and nutrition of families in the community. The simple idea was that if families had more income they could afford to send their children to school and buy enough food to keep them healthy.

The project has a 2½ acre site where they have set up a very productive smallholding using TWAM tools. Most of the land is taken up with bananas which are sold to the community and given away to the poor. The young offshoots are given away to local families so they can eat and sell their own bananas. They also invite families to learn to grow vegetables by allowing them

to sow and plant vegetables between the banana plants - a bit like allotments. They use their own chicken manure to enrich the soil and teach people how to look after their soil and get the best harvests. All the tools for the banana plantation have been donated by TWAM. The project also has sets of tools they loan out to the families in the community to plant and tend their bananas and vegetables.

The chicken manure comes from the 3000 chickens and turkeys they rear to sell to local hotels and to the community at prices they can afford. This number is about to double, as with the help of TWAM builders and carpenters' kits, they have built a very impressive three storey chicken hut capable of holding another 3000 chickens.

The project gives lots of the chicks away. A family in need, such as grandparents looking after orphaned grandchildren, receives five chicks. The agreement is that

when the chicks start laying the family must give the first five chicks to another family in need, and so on and so on. This simple yet remarkable plan means the number of families being helped increases at an amazingly fast rate.

Chris who runs the project says:

“Before we had tools from TWAM it was very hard planting and growing. The tools have helped us increase production and do much more for needy families in our community.”

But does this out of the box thinking really break the cycle of dependency? The answer is a resounding yes, as this project is completely self-sustaining through the sale of the chickens and eggs. Each family

is encouraged to aim for self-sustainability by receiving help just once. From that point on the bananas and chickens will provide the income to send children to school and put food on the table. An income that will continually increase as the banana plants multiply and the chickens breed.

Through one family helping another family by giving away young banana plants and chicks the whole community captures the vision for self-sustainability.

But it all starts with boxes of gardening tools, carpentry and builder's kits. From such a humble beginning a truly amazing self-funding project has been born. It costs on average £25 to 'send a box' to Africa that can achieve all of this.

Could you send a box to break dependency and give the dignity of self-sustainability?

A Collection Box *for the Pastor*

This surely is the ultimate example of thinking outside the box. Let's meet Pastor Thembo standing outside the mud hut he calls home. His village is made up of 500 families who mostly live in mud and bamboo huts. This is the rural heartland of Uganda.

He is the Pastor of a small Baptist Church and like most Pastors in Uganda his wages are 30% of the Sunday collection. This may sound reasonable, but living in an ultra-poor community means 30% of almost nothing is a challenge at the best of times. Hence Pastor Thembo lives in a ramshacked two room hut with just one stool and a bench to share with his wife and nine children.

His plight is the norm, not the exception, and when the Baptist Association realised the way their Pastors were living they decided something had to be done. Their response was the 'Support our Pastors' project where they offered to train the Pastors in a livelihood creating skill that would provide income to feed their families and educate their children.

However, Pastor Thembo felt too old to learn a new skill, and asked a young man from the church if he would train on his behalf and then support both his own family and Pastor Thembo's family.



The quiet, rather shy young man was Bwambale, and he says:

"I accepted the Pastor's offer because I wanted to help myself and other people. When I finished training, the church helped me rent a place in the town so I could help the Pastor and the poor. I was given a carpentry kit from TWAM."



Bwambale outside his workshop

Bwambale now makes furniture, windows and doors. He is very successful and the Pastor proudly told us that he now supports both their families and the poor of the church and the widows in the community.

Once again it's a remarkable story of self-sustainability instead of dependency, and how one box of carpentry tools can help so many people. Indeed, this is not even the end of the story as Bwambale says:

"I am now training two other people in the village because I want to help others as I have been helped."

And all of this can be achieved by sending a box of tools at a cost of £25. Can you think of a more productive way to invest £25? We can't.

Thinking outside the box - the TWAM way.

A Selection Box for Tanzania

Which chocolate do you choose?

Everyone likes a selection box, we can choose our favourite chocolates, or maybe try something different knowing the one we like is waiting in the box - just in case. It's a big decision, but not as big as selecting your lifelong employment. This is why TWAM's partner 'Tanzania Partnership Development Organisation' offers a selection of options. In November 2016 they applied for sewing machines, computer, scanner, knitting machine, carpentry kits, electricians kit, motor mechanics and garage kit.

Edward, their director says,

"We train local orphans in sewing, carpentry, knitting and computer skills to enable them to earn a living and escape from a life of exploitation by others. We believe the answer is wealth creation rather than simply poverty alleviation."



The TWAM selection box means no one is forced to learn a skill they are not happy with, but can play to their strengths. For some this means office based computer skills, for others more hands-on practical skills.

TWAM believes it is up to local communities to decide how best to meet their own needs, and offering a selection of training options and toolkits extends this choice to the individual. It helps give marginalised orphans the dignity to make their own decisions by choosing their future employment.

Edward continues:

"I am so thankful to TWAM for their support for my community. Without their selection of tool kits we could not do our work and train the young people."

With your help the range of kits we send not only trains young people, but also provides the computer support to run the charity too. They also provide a means for the charity to earn income, allowing them to offer their training free to the orphans.

Surely this is the best selection box ever? Thank you for helping us send to the 'Tanzania Partnership Development Organisation.' Just imagine what another selection box of toolkits could help Edward achieve!

A Much Needed Box for Kenya

Let's meet Kennedy.

This determined young man walks a very long way indeed for his much needed box of tools. Every day he walks 5 miles to train as a carpenter in the workshop of TWAM's partner, Paluoc Carpentry Workshop. Kennedy is never late because he knows this is his chance at a good life.

His mother died when he was young and his father can only find casual low paid work. There was no money for him to continue his education and when his father remarried Kennedy was forced to sleep on the mud floor of the building used for the kitchen. As he looked into his future he saw a loveless life filled with pain.

But Kennedy is exactly the type of vulnerable child Paluoc looks to help. Based in Kisumu they look out for the most disadvantaged children in Kisumu, orphaned through HIV/AIDS, dropped out of school and with no training for employment or life skills.

To support their work TWAM has sent them two consignments of tools including carpentry tools, a computer, sewing machines and school books. It was because of these tools, Paluoc



was able to train Kennedy, as they were able to increase their trainees per course from just two to ten. They have even used the tools to build a second classroom and dormitory.

With his much needed box of tools, Kennedy is beginning the long road of healing and a hope of a much better future. Without a shadow of a doubt, £25 well spent.

Living out of a Box

The home that Bonnaventure built

How many of us can say we built our own home?

Well Bonnaventure, another of the students at Palauc can say exactly that, for that is what he did with his box of tools. While this is very impressive it isn't unusual as across Africa there are many homes built with TWAM builders' and carpenters' kits.

Bonnaventure's story began when he was invited to join the Palauc carpentry course. Like so many trainees he joined with little self-esteem, lack of self-confidence, and numeracy and literacy issues. Learning a trade is just one of the challenges TWAM partners face as they try to help teenagers like Bonnaventure turn their lives around.

Before the course he rode a motorbike taxi, which was both poorly paid and very dangerous. It is not a job many would choose. He says:

"I could earn little money and there was no future in it. I wanted to learn a trade and earn a proper wage. I wanted to help my family financially."

But Bonnaventure knew what an amazing once in a lifetime opportunity he was being offered and worked so hard and did so well that when he passed his course he was asked to stay on as the assistant workshop manager. It is so encouraging when with one box of tools, we help take a young person on a journey from having no future to a good home, built with their own hands and stable employment and the opportunity to help train others.

And all because Palauc trained him and TWAM gave him a box of carpentry tools. It is genuinely hard to believe that sending a box of tools costing £25 can achieve all this.



A Jewellery Box from Ngongo

We tell many stories of lives transformed with building, carpentry, tailoring and any number of other skills learned, but not too often jewellery. But Ngongo, a Somali refugee trying to rebuild his life in Kenya having fled the violence of his own country chose to learn how to make wooden handicrafts and jewellery. He was given this opportunity by a TWAM partner working with refugees.

Refugees lose everything when they are forced to flee, their home, livelihood, community, schooling, extended family, literally everything and it is very hard to start again.

He is a very hard working entrepreneur and his products are very high quality. What is so encouraging is that he puts as much effort into selling them as making them - which is the heart of a true entrepreneur. He goes to exhibitions across Kenya as well as key street markets where he can sell his jewellery for a premium.

By selling for a good price, Ngongo has been able to offer permanent employment to fellow refugees and part-time employment to others. Hopefully as his business grows they too will become full time permanent staff as they rebuild their lives in their new home.

For someone who has lost everything, this is a very beautiful jewellery box of a life rebuilt.

TWAM's partner Benson who gave Ngongo his TWAM tool box says,



"It was a great honour giving Ngongo tools to aid him in his work. He was very excited receiving the tools because he says they will transform his business."

Thank you! With your tools and support we have been able to invest a box of tools in Ngongo and in so doing support his family and community find a new home free from fear in Kenya.



A Children's Box for Emmanuel Family Homes in Zambia

A small Brethren church in Lusaka have next to their run down building, a school they opened in one of Lusaka's poorest communities. They have no money, yet seeing such a huge need, stepped out in faith in 2004 to open a school for 500 local children, denied schooling by their parents' poverty. Alongside the school is an orphanage with 8 children.

The church realised they could not support the school any longer from the small collections, so prayed the Lord would send them an answer. He sent them TWAM! For hearing of our work gave the men of the church a truly inspirational idea.

They had no money to donate, but they had skills and they had time. With this in mind a plan came together to set up a carpentry workshop in the town, where each man would commit a day or two every week to make furniture to sell to fund the school.

A local business heard of their project and gave them a lean-to workshop rent free. I'm sure you've guessed where all the boxes of tools came from! They requested a TWAM carpentry workshop kit, all 18 boxes of it to equip their project.



Emmanuel school workshop making sofas

They are now making dining table, chairs, sofas, beds and doors. In so doing they have secured the future of the school by almost completely funding it from the workshop.

We sent 18 boxes and they funded the schooling for 500 children!

Genuinely Amazing!

A Box of Potential for the Democratic Republic of Congo

Imagine a country the size of Europe that has been at war with itself virtually its entire existence. Imagine a war so brutal it has been called Africa's First World War with losses exceeding any other conflict, with six million lives lost. Imagine a country with over 22,000 UN troops struggling to maintain peace just in its eastern region. Imagine a country where nearly half of all children have never been to school and where over two thirds of the population live below the poverty line. Welcome to DR Congo! Imagine the difference a container full of tool boxes could make?

TWAM sent its first container to eastern DRC in 2016 and will be sending the equivalent of two more in September 2017.

The needs are vast, but we have to start somewhere, and for TWAM that means

working with local community leaders and churches to bring change where they know it is most needed. Therefore, our tools are going into the troubled eastern region to the town of Lubumbashi. Over twenty partners have applied for tools to support schools, training centres, women's groups, disability groups, church based projects and communities, agricultural projects and vulnerable adult projects.

All these projects have one thing in common, their aim of lifting people whose lives and communities literally destroyed by war out of ultra-poverty. The displaced need stability and integration into a community. The young need the structure of work and the opportunity to build homes and families. Women need to be free from violence and their children able to obtain education and avoid exploitation.



There is hope for Congo and Tools with a Mission want to be an instrument of that hope. Our local partners are desperate to share God's love with people who have experienced far too much hate, and bring healing through their practical expressions of God's love. A modern song based on the prayer of St Francis of Assisi puts this beautifully:

*Make me a channel of your peace.
Where there is hatred, let me bring your love;
where there is injury, your pardon, Lord;
and where there's doubt, true faith in you.*

*Make me a channel of your peace.
Where there's despair in life, let me bring hope;
where there is darkness, let me bring your light;
and where there's sadness, ever joy*

Will you help us send a great big box?

This will be the biggest container it is possible to send, filled with literally hundreds of boxes of tools, each one with the potential to transform a life. This will be followed by another standard container. It's a huge challenge with the longest journey overland any TWAM container makes. The cost is immense but the reward beyond measure.

There is no greater challenge for TWAM's 'Send a Box' than the two huge container sized boxes we want to send to DR Congo. Imagine the despair, but imagine the hope when they arrive.

Your gift will help us meet this challenge and in return, help the people of Eastern Congo overcome their challenges.

Chairperson's Chat God's Gift of Safety

So what difference does a box of tools make to someone who is living in poverty? I can testify to this first hand; one of the roles I had at TWAM prior to becoming Chair was to act as the coordinator for Tanzania. I went over there five or six years ago to see for myself what was happening, and I was greatly impressed by the ingenuity and the commitment of the project leaders I met there.

One project in particular was very affecting. One of our applicants, Albert, had set up a haberdashery workshop in a town called Mwanza, situated on the shore of Lake Tanganyika. Albert was a university student who had recently come to Christ; and he had decided to make the care of the poor and needy a major part of his Christian witness. What was so impressive was that he had chosen to work amongst women who had contracted HIV (often through no fault of their own, via their husbands) and who had then been cast out by their families, and in some cases separated from their children. The sewing machines which TWAM had supplied to them were literally a lifeline; as they had no other means of earning a living apart from the making of clothes on a cooperative basis, which were being sold down at the local market. There was a certain poignant sadness about these women; but their determination to provide for themselves and for their children was inspiring.

As I was preparing this article, I found myself thinking about the boxes which are mentioned in Scripture. I particularly had in mind the word "ark", which reminded me of Noah's Ark. I was prompted to carry out some research and came across something I hadn't known previously; the root word translated "Ark" is actually the same word which is elsewhere translated "basket", the vessel which carried Moses away as an infant as he floated off to safety.

"The sewing machines which TWAM had supplied to them were literally a lifeline; as they had no other means of earning a living..."

I don't think it is too much of a stretch to suggest that those sewing machine boxes which we sent to the Mwanza co-operative were to those desperate women an ark. Like Noah's Ark and Moses' Basket, God was literally providing those ladies with a means of rescue and of safety.

This thought brings me to my final point: our mission at TWAM is to be used by the Lord to bring glory and honour to His name by the humanitarian aid that He has equipped us to provide. In some cases, as I personally witnessed there in Mwanza,

God uses us literally to save lives!

David Ginns





Give the Gift of a Box of Hope

In this magazine we've read stories where each box has uniquely changed the lives of its fortunate receivers. Whether it is Chris doubling the number of chickens he raises so he can give more away to families in poverty, or 500 children only being schooled thanks to 18 carpentry kits earning the money needed to run an orphanage, each box creates an incredible story of impact. You could offer this hope to more in Africa who are applying to us for boxes of hope today.

Please consider the gift of a box of hope.

Want to donate via post? Fill in the form below and make your cheque payable to "Tools with a Mission", using the enclosed freepost envelope to send.

Want to donate by other means? Visit twam.uk/donate, email post@twam.uk or call 01473 210220.

Donation amount £ _____

Office use only: 2017F03

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I would like to increase my gift by 25% without paying a penny more

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I can confirm that I am a UK taxpayer and I want to Gift Aid this donation and any donations I make in the future or have made over the past 4 years to Tools with a Mission. I understand that if I pay less Income Tax and/or Capital Gains Tax than the amount of Gift Aid claimed on my donations in that tax year it is my responsibility to pay any difference. I understand that TWAM will reclaim 25p for every £1 I donate. I agree to notify TWAM if I want to cancel this declaration, change my name or home address or no longer pay sufficient tax on my income and/or capital gains.