

TWAM news

Tools with a Mission

Autumn 2017

Finding hope in unpredictable times



A Christian charity sending tools across the world

Welcome to TWAM News



I am very pleased to focus this edition on hope in unpredictable times. All of us are experiencing unpredictable times, wherever we are in the world. Whether it's what's going to happen after Brexit or how do we

feed our children? We all hope that we'll get answers to the big questions affecting us, and many turn to TWAM to help. Throughout this edition we see the big questions our partners ask and how we've provided tools and hope as an answer. I hope you will find these stories inspiring.

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.

"Now faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see."

Hebrews 11:1 (KJV)

In TWAM we live this out every day, faith that the tools and support we need will come. Our partners have faith that the tools will arrive and the new livelihoods and education they have hope in will come to pass. Your help makes their hopes come true and answers their big questions.

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

Finding hope in unpredictable times

Brexit looming, a hung parliament, pay caps, terrorist threats and innumerable unanswered questions challenge our security and our ability to find hope in unpredictable times. I'm sure there are many in our society who lose much sleep over these questions. In this issue we're looking at the big questions asked by people in the countries we support as they try to find hope and security in their unpredictable times. They are challenging questions which so easily could lead to despair but which can with your help lead to hope.

We may not have the answers to all our questions, but it is wonderful to know we can for many of theirs. I hope you find this

edition focusing on hope in unpredictable times as inspiring as we do.

But we can only answer these tough questions by working closely in partnership with local organisations and churches with the vision but not the means to reach their communities. TWAM can provide that means with our tools and together we can transform lives.

Can I introduce you to Pastor Alphonse and his work with the Kasese Baptist Church in Uganda. Together we are helping young people find hope in desperately unpredictable times. Let's look how we are answering the really tough questions.



*Pastor Alphonse
with his wife
Alice*



How can I survive when no-one cares for me?

Edison, aged 16 asked this question when his father died and his mother asked him to leave. It is common when a parent is left alone that the boys are asked to leave and only come home if they can help support the family. For Edison that meant going to work in the one worst places in Uganda; a sand mine. He says:

"I was mining sand because no one cared about me and I needed to earn money. My father died and left my mother to bring up five children. I am the youngest. I used to mine sand as I had to support myself and help the whole family."

The work mining sand out of the river is a very hard and gruelling job that pays very little for very hard labour. It is not the place for a young man to be. Thankfully he was spotted by one of the volunteer community workers from Kasese Baptist Church and offered a place in their skills centre learning mechanics.

Edison desperately wanted to accept but did not think he could because if he gave up his job and could no longer provide for his family he would have to leave home again. The church pastor spoke to his family and they realised what an amazing opportunity this was and decided to support him through his six-month training. TWAM provided all the tools for the training centre and once Edison completed his course provided him with a Mechanics kit. He says:

"Without this training I wouldn't get any job and do not know what I would do."

So we can answer Edison's question, 'How can I survive when no one cares for me?' by providing the church with the tools it needs to set up the training centre, and by giving Edison his own toolkit. A wonderful answer to a desperate cry for help.

How can I learn when I can't go to school?

Edwin is 17 years old and asked this question when he was forced to leave school. His father lost his job and the family could no longer afford the school fees. Edwin tried to find work but with no education or experience it was impossible. He joined the many young people living on the streets and rapidly turned to gangs and crime for survival.

Then he too was spotted by a volunteer community worker from Kasese Baptist Church and invited on to the same mechanics course as Edison. He immediately recognised the chance he was being given and the opportunity to learn again even though he could not go to school.

The church offers the training free of charge and Isaiah the course leader says:

"We look for boys who we think we can help and who will then contribute to our community, maybe by training other boys. We look for orphans and boys without a family to care for them and who have no skills or way to earn income."

Edwin was one of those boys and he says:

"I thought I had no future but knew when I started the course it would give me the chance to make a living for myself. My plan is to set up my own workshop, but it is a big challenge."

Edwin has finished his course and is now serving an apprenticeship in a local garage. When he completes this the church will help him set up his workshop, probably jointly with Edison.



How can I have a family when I am alone?

Pastor Alphonse, from Kasese Baptist Church, has a heart for the street children and every week spends whole nights on the streets talking to them and trying to help them. He found Jimmy living on the streets during one of these nights and invited him to the Friday meal the church puts on for the street children.

As they get to trust the church and Alphonse they start to open up and share their problems. Jimmy shared a predictably tragic story:

"I am one of 23 children. My father was killed when he was robbed and my mother could not cope. She put some of my brothers and sisters into an orphanage but I was left to look after myself. I came to Kasese to try and support myself."

Jimmy was forced to join a gang and start down the road of a life of crime until he was asked what he would like to do to change his life. His answer was to become a mechanic. He has now completed his course and apprenticeship and joined a team of mechanics repairing motorbikes (the local form of taxi).

So what is the answer to Jimmy's question 'How can I have a family when I am alone?' Well in Jimmy's own words:

"I call Pastor Alphonse my 'uncle' because he and the mechanics in the workshop are now my family. In this garage I have family."

Jimmy now has a stable job, a new family, lots of support and he says quietly, with a little embarrassment, "lots of customers ask for me by name."

We may not have the answers to all the big questions of uncertainty facing us, but together we can give some answers to young people like Edison, Edwin and Jimmy.

Thank you for all your support in so many ways that has made this possible.



How can I work when there's 85% unemployment?

We live in unpredictable times. Many of us will have felt this personally. Wages and pensions have struggled to keep pace with inflation and interest has virtually disappeared. The tragedy is that the problems of the developed economies is multiplied many times within developing countries like Zambia.

Zambia relies heavily on copper and the price has halved since 2009 with the closure of virtually every mine in the copper belt. Hence you see everywhere men congregating by street markets desperately hoping for the offer of just one day's work. Few find it, so families go hungry, children are excluded from school and everyone fears being made homeless. There are no safety nets in developing countries so an economic down turn can be devastating for everyone.

So how do you get through such uncertain times? Let's go to the copper belt of Zambia and meet Emmanuel who has a vision to help. He says:

“There is little hope that things can change, or that our local youth can find employment.”

Emmanuel realised that the only hope for people was a practical skill in a trade that was still in demand and decided to set up training programmes in carpentry and tailoring. He continues:



“I received tools from TWAM in 2015, and it allowed me to start carpentry and tailoring workshops in local communities where there is a lot of poverty and hopelessness. Over 18 months, we have built up the workshops and are training over 30 people at a time.”

The tailoring project is a community of 14 women who are training and supporting each other through unpredictable times. Many of the women at the tailoring workshop are involved in the “adopted child” project where they support orphans in the local community from their proceeds. TWAM is more than just a supplier of tools, it helps bring communities together. Emmanuel says:

“The tools bring hope and a change of mind set in young people.”

Behind Emmanuel are a team of people who provide land for the workshops and who support the training.



The tailoring workshop is on land provided to it by a local widow Edna. A local carpenter, Jonago has provided space on his land for a carpentry workshop and is helping with the training. Without these people the projects would not be able to run. Emmanuel isn't stopping there and has launched a second carpentry workshop in a neighbouring community thanks to TWAM tools. He is aiming to open six workshops. The communities are a great source of support to Emmanuel. He says

“TWAM is bringing together the people of my community, without TWAM tools I could not have started these projects.”

So can you bring hope when there is 85% unemployment? Could Emmanuel really make a difference? Let's find out as we meet two of the people benefitting from the passion Emmanuel has brought to fruition with the help of TWAM.

Anna and Monica are from the tailoring project. Many women have become the main bread winners since the mines have closed and they are no exception. The proceeds of sales from their training makes the difference between having a meal on the table or not. Six months into their one year training they are now determined to start their own tailoring businesses ideally making men's shirts.

Monica's husband Luca lost his job in a mine and has enrolled in Emmanuel's carpentry workshop project. People always need clothes and they also always need a carpenter for furniture, house repairs and building. Emmanuel chose his training project well! With the support of Emmanuel and TWAM; Anna, Monica and Luca are learning skills and finding hope.

So can you bring hope when there is 85% unemployment? Yes, we really can when we partner with visionary leaders like Emmanuel who are determined to bring hope even in seemingly hopeless economic times. Emmanuel believes God is revealing to him step by step a plan to reach out to every poor community and we'll be with him every step of the way.



Thank you that together we can say yes. Together we can bring hope even where unemployment is impossibly high. To find out more ways to say yes, please look at the back page.

How can I feed the children when I have no food?

We hear stories from our own country of the need for foodbanks and the importance of a hot school meal for children. We may wonder how people cope in these situations. This is a tragedy, but in many parts of Africa it is a daily struggle made so much worse when rains fail and crops die.

This is tragically the reality for Northern Uganda which is currently experiencing the worst drought in the country's history. The result is severe food shortages leading to huge price rises making what little food there is inaccessible to most of the population.

Nine million Ugandans are currently at risk of starvation.



But what does this have to do with TWAM? It's not the usual story you find in TWAM News.

TWAM works with many organisations in the affected area and for some our support is the difference between life and death.

One is the Kyarumba Anti-AIDS group working with orphans and vulnerable young people.

The key to survival is for families working together, but what if you don't have a family?

One of the sad consequences of AIDS is a large number of orphans and vulnerable children have no family or community to turn to in times of severe hardship. They have no means to earn money to buy food so when it is scarce and prices rocket, they are the most vulnerable.

Kyarumba realising their potential vulnerability came to TWAM looking for a variety of tools to enable them to build workshops to make goods they can sell and develop a training programme for the young people.

In 2016 they received TWAM carpentry, building and electrician kits along with sewing machines. The TWAM tool kits have not only built the workshops but also made it possible for the group to make and sell clothes and furniture to earn the money they need to buy the food to feed the orphans and children in their care. If this were not enough, which I am sure it is, it has provided the young people with life changing skills. Mbusa, one of the groups' co-founders says:

“We have realised so many achievements in the community in just 7 months since receiving the tools. We have seen trainers and trainees acquire new skills. Furniture production has rapidly increased because of the power tools. The workshop is becoming a centre of excellence locally.”

The group now has the tools to weather droughts, economic downturn and rocketing food prices. Your support of TWAM has helped the Kyarumba Anti-AIDS group to build self-sustainability and answer the most pressing question for them.



How can I feed the children when I have no food?

By creating income generating projects to earn the money to buy them food.

The tools from TWAM have made this possible for Kyarumba and many groups like them. It is amazing to think your tools and support directly help communities and groups weather the disasters of drought and flood by taking away their reliance on vegetable they grow by giving them the skills to diversify and earn an income.

Thank you for helping us to help others in their times of greatest need.

How can we educate our children when we have no school?

In TWAM News we often bring you stories after the tools have arrived and of the benefits being reaped but how does it all start? How do applicants find out about TWAM and why do they seek us out? Let's meet the Matunga village group in Zambia and discover their answers to these questions.

The Matunga villages are typical of rural Zambia, a close knit community of subsistence farmers, whose life is hard and very much lived on a day by day basis. The villages are over five miles from the nearest main road and two hours walk from the nearest government school. For the younger children its extremely tiring bearing in mind they also help their parents on the land before and after school. This came to a head with a tragic event, one of their leaders explains:

“One day our children were returning from school over the main road when one of the girls was struck by a wheel which had come off a vehicle, she was killed. The parents and our whole community were devastated and everyone cried out, “why can we not have our own school?”



The answer came back “You can if you build it and run it yourselves, so this is what we decided to do.” The villagers started their school with nothing more than two shelters for classrooms. Volunteers have come forward to start teaching but there is no blackboard, no seating, no tables and few supplies, but at least the children can get to school safely. But to build and fund a proper school they need so much more.

They have great plans to build a school and develop local industries to fund it, but no means of acquiring the tools do so. Thankfully a local contact had previously received tools from TWAM and he put them in touch with us. They have now applied for TWAM toolkits and can answer their own question:

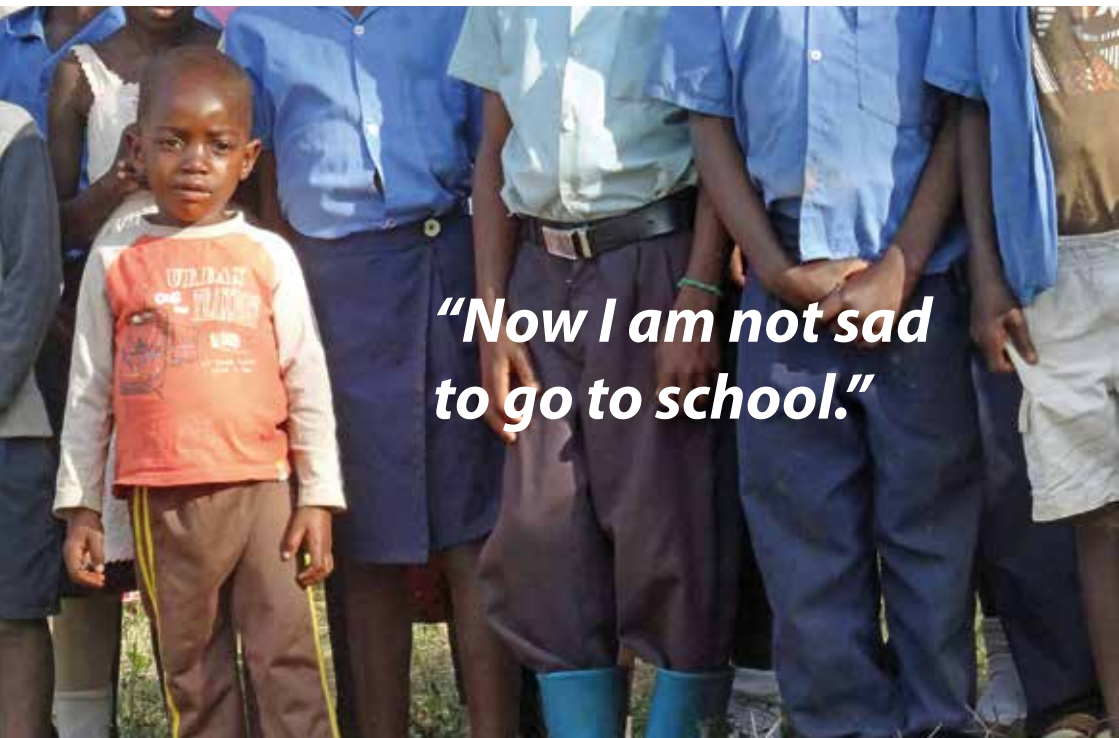
So how can we educate our children when we have no school?

With TWAM carpentry kits we can build our own school.

With TWAM sewing and knitting machines we can make clothes to sell to buy building materials and provide long term funding for our school.

This is an amazing example of what can be achieved with your donated tools and support. A community of rural villages can build and fund a school saving their children a two hour walk and the potential of another tragic loss of life.

Thank you for making this possible and for helping answer a seemingly hopeless question borne out of a terrible tragedy: How can we educate our children when we have no school?



“Now I am not sad to go to school.”

Chairperson’s Chat ***Unpredictable times***

There are times when it seems as if nothing ever goes according to expert opinion. In the UK during the last year or so, we’ve seen political outcomes which nobody saw coming. Who, two years ago, would have foreseen that Jeremy Corbyn would have a realistic chance of becoming Prime Minister, or that Theresa May would lose her overall majority having called an election? I’m not making a party political point here; I’m saying that our country has become used to expecting the unexpected. And who knows where the Brexit negotiations might end up.

In the UK, although change might be unsettling or even threatening to some, it doesn’t in itself put lives in danger. Not so in the developing world, TWAM’s field of operation. The subsistence farmer or the poverty stricken city dweller in sub Saharan Africa is entirely vulnerable to change; for example, climate change leads eventually to drought, drought leads to famine and famine leads to human suffering and loss of life which we in the West find difficult to imagine.

The Christian response, surely, is to honour our Lord by providing assistance to the very poorest, as an expression of compassion. Tools with a Mission is the latest in a long line of Christian charitable enterprises created in

“The Christian response, surely, is to honour our Lord by providing assistance to the very poorest, as an expression of compassion.”

response to extremes of human suffering. You would have read elsewhere in this edition of TWAM News about the impact which TWAM is having as it seeks to equip impoverished people to cope with circumstances which in so many places are changing for the worse. We can’t solve all the world’s problems (*“the poor you will always have with you” – Matthew 26:11*) but we can do our best.

It is a joy to stand alongside our many volunteers and supporters in our shared vision. Thank you for everything you do.

David Ginns

Finding hope in unpredictable times



Edison & Edwin with their teacher Isaiah

Our lead story shares the pain filled questions from Edison, Edwin and Jimmy in Uganda.

How can I survive when no-one cares for me?

How can I learn when I can't go to school?

How can I have a family when I am alone?

Together we can answer those questions and give hope through tools. But to do that we need to work together to donate tools and provide the income to refurbish and sort them into trade kits and then send them across the world. It is a journey of 9,800 miles by land and seas to Kasese and the home of these boys.

Every £1.25 given takes that container filled with tools one mile closer to answering the pleas for help.*

Will you help send our containers on their journey to provide hope in unpredictable times?

Want to donate via post? Fill in the form below and make your cheque payable to "Tools with a Mission." Want to donate by other means? Visit twam.uk/donate, email post@twam.uk or call 01473 210220.

I would like to send the container _____ miles on its journey to Africa. I enclose £ _____

Name(s) of account holder(s) _____

Home address _____

Postcode _____ Telephone _____ Email _____

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

Signature _____ Date _____

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.

*Costs per mile vary per country, the example given is just for Uganda but your gift will support the sending of tools to all the countries we support.

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