

TWAM

Tools with a Mission

Our news

Revisiting our founding values of TWAM

April 2022



Empowering people with the tools that create livelihoods and transform lives

Welcome to TWAM News



Thank you for reading this edition of TWAM News and for your support and interest in our work. Our focus this quarter is to revisit the founding values of TWAM to support the setting up and running of Skills Centres.

These train vulnerable people of all ages in life transforming skills and enable trainees on completion of their courses to have the tools they need to set up their own businesses and break free from the life of ultra-poverty.

I hope as you read these stories you will be encouraged to conclude we are still transforming lives through the gift of tools. All these were gained while assessing projects to ensure both they and we are meeting our founding values.

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 also need more local tools collectors working from home and volunteers in all our centres. Please go to timefortwam.uk or ring 01473 210220 to find out more or apply.

Financial support

TWAM operates three refurbishment centres and five vans across the UK, supported by a team of over 450 volunteers in the UK and over 100 in Africa. We send over half a million refurbished tools to Africa every 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.

“For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.”

Jeremiah 29:11

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

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

t: 01473 210220
e: post@twam.uk

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

Harriet and Esther:

From poverty to successful business women

Why does TWAM exist? What is our purpose?

These are questions we have to regularly ask ourselves to check that are staying true to the original goals set for the charity when it was founded 38 years ago. Then as now TWAM had two main goals:

1. The first is to support the setting up and running of Skills Centres to train vulnerable people of all ages in life-transforming skills.
2. The second is to enable trainees, on completion of their courses, to have the tools they need to set up their own businesses and break free from the life of ultra-poverty for good.



Harriet outside her shop

The only way we can check if this remains true is to visit trainees years after they have completed their training and gone out into the world with their new skills and tools. Two trainees, visited by Mike our CEO and Simon the Chair of the Trustees

in 2020, were Harriet and Esther. Harriet graduated from her tailoring course six years ago and Esther three years ago. Together, they demonstrate TWAM's long-term commitment to support and care for those who receive our tools.

Meet Harriet



Harriet is typical of the vulnerable women TWAM wants to support. She only completed primary school, having said 'I attended a very bad school.' These are often community schools for children who cannot afford the school fees charged by Government schools. They have no qualified teachers, books or even pencils and paper. She has two young boys - now aged 14 and 11 - and she has always had to bring them up on her own.

Harriet with her TWAM sewing machine

Harriet joined Mindset Development, TWAM's partner in Entebbe, Uganda, with one clear aim. She tells us:

"My family did subsistence farming and I did not want to do that; it is very hard and crops are not reliable. Also there is never money for school fees and I did not want my kids to grow up and not go to school."

She could not afford to send her boys to school, could barely afford food and had no hope of ever having a home to call her own. Sadly, the lives of her boys looked to be heading for the same tragic spiral of poverty that had blighted Harriet all her life. Then everything changed. She tells us:

"When I graduated and received my sewing machine, I started work on someone's verandah for 2 years. It took me that long to save enough money to rent my shop. I have seen a big difference since I moved, as many people now walk past and ask for alterations and clothes."

Meet Esther

But what of her heartfelt plea that her children would go to a good school? She continues:

"Both my boys are in school and both are top of their classes. God has blessed my children with wisdom and one would like to be a doctor. I am happy, as long as they have an education and learn a skill."

This is why TWAM exists - three lives transformed forever, through skills training and a sewing machine.

Esther is also from a rural area and her family sent her to live with the extended family in Entebbe in the hope she could achieve more than a life of a poor rural labourer. She, too, is a school drop-out as her family could not afford school fees. Leaving your family like this is a sign of pure desperation. Esther shares a little of this with us as she says:

"I am from a rural area where there is no work or prospects. When I came to Entebbe to work I had no idea what I would do. I started working as a domestic maid until I heard about Mindset and went there."

Few young women choose to be domestic maids as many are abused and taken advantage of because of their extreme vulnerability. This was the worst of all options for Esther and she knew it. So, quickly she started looking for somebody who would train her with a skill. She found Mindset and joined their tailoring course. She tells us:



Esther in her small shop

“It was good at Mindset and when I went, I had nothing - but when I left - I had everything!”

When I graduated, I started my business from my auntie and uncle’s home, but now I have my own shop. I get customers from passing trade and sometimes I put my machine outside to attract attention. I make dresses and shirts.”



Esther displaying some of the clothes she has made

Has Esther achieved her ambitions? Her wonderful comment “when I went (to Mindset) I had nothing - but when I left - I had everything!” surely says it all.

She came to Entebbe in desperation, with no hope and no idea how she could transform her life. Now she had a skill, a shop and security.

Thank you for partnering with us so we can continue to fulfil our original life transforming goals for people like Harriet and Esther.

Dressmaking and hairdressing from the same chair!



TWAM gets hundreds of requests every year from churches and community groups asking for sewing machines. What was unusual about this request from Pastor Fungayi of ‘Christ is the Rock’ Church in Zimbabwe was exactly where he planned to do the training. His venue was a hairdressing salon! He tells us:

“The challenges of my ministry are mostly unemployment due to economic hardships and poverty. I am trying very hard to help many families. I realised most girls and women had nothing to do and could not take care of their families, so I shared my vision for dressmaking training with the church and many girls decided to join.

So in April 2021 when we received our TWAM sewing machines we started with 8 girls. We have two trainers who are teaching dressmaking, knitting, computer literacy and printing. I hope the girls will be able to start their own dressmaking businesses when they finish and then will help other girls just like them.

We fund the project with the products they make and sell while training. Some of the income generated will be used to help the girls establish their businesses and follow them up.

We have seen growth and development despite the pandemic of Covid 19. We are now praying for more girls to train.

I would like to say a big ‘thank you’ for your love and care and for your donation of sewing machines. Without you we wouldn’t have made it this far.”

Pastor Fungayi demonstrates to us that it doesn’t take years of planning or thousands of pounds to change lives; it just takes one person’s vision, the gift of TWAM sewing machines and the use of a hairdressing salon out of hours. So simple, yet so effective.

It's all about the one million tool challenge.

It all started over three years ago when the TWAM Board spent several weekends away to prayerfully seek God's guidance on the future of TWAM. We believe he gave us an amazing plan and have certainly seen in the past few years some incredible confirmations of that. We are now in the midst of our greatest step forward with the launch in our Christmas appeal of the one million tool challenge.

The first stage of this was the appointment of Nigel Hyde as our first ever full time Refurbishment Centre Manager for the Midlands. But Nigel was just the start; now the search is on for our new home in the Midlands.

We are now earnestly looking for a new industrial unit capable of equalling the incredible impact of Ipswich which ships 18 containers a year to Africa. That is around half a million individual tools every single year. To reach our challenge we need a second large centre capable of equalling the output of Ipswich.

We are negotiating to rent premises in Rugby and are praying hard for a positive outcome. It has a huge yard, brilliant offices and volunteer rooms and an immense two storey workshop. It is located in a very prominent position and will help make us known in the town.



A container being unloaded in Zambia. We want to see many more life transforming containers on their way to Africa.

The new centre will require lots more volunteers so we are putting together a plan to recruit them. We'll be doing lots of social media posts and campaigns, there will be video clips of 'the journey of the building' from receiving the keys to fitting it all out. We'll be contacting local papers, radio and TV and inviting Rotary clubs, other local groups and churches to get involved. Combined with in-person and virtual open days, it will be an amazing few months.

The one million tool challenge is well underway and we hope you are as excited about it as we are. We want to do this, not for ourselves, but to help so many more people across Africa to lift themselves out of poverty through skills training and tools.

This also means we will be helping many more countries over the next few years. We get so many requests for help and next year will see Malawi added to the list of countries we serve. We are also looking at Botswana, Burundi, Rwanda and Tanzania.

This means we will also need lots more volunteers across the whole of the UK, so we have revamped our dedicated volunteer website timefortwam.uk. It has lots of great new roles. Please have a look at it and maybe there is something you could do, or you may know someone who could help us. To achieve the one million tool challenge we need everybody to play a part.

We have some great new volunteer roles such as:

Church Ambassador

Representing TWAM in your own church

Community Champion

Organising events and promoting TWAM where you live

Community Ambassador

Speaking to community groups on behalf of TWAM

TWAM Local Groups

A great opportunity for like minded people to come together to collect and sort tools, and even do a bit of refurbishment.

We are working really hard to achieve the one million tool challenge and we're so excited at what has already been achieved.

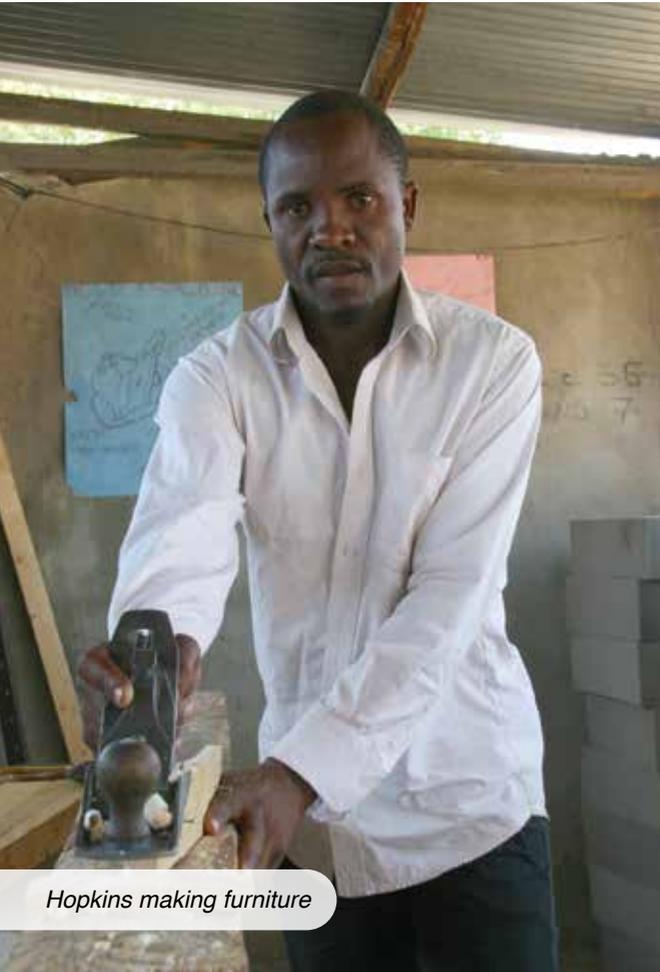


Our revamped website dedicated just to volunteering timefortwam.uk

Hopkins: From despair to success through a carpentry kit

Why does TWAM exist? What is our purpose?

To help inspiring young people like Hopkins. He lives in Zambia and comes from a very poor rural community. As a young man, his ambition was to improve his life and one day when he was married, to ensure his children had a much better start to life than him. Mike, our CEO and Paul, our volunteer Zambia County Coordinator, met Hopkins while assessing the work of Faith Orphanage, one of our supported projects in Kitwe. He shared his struggles and ambitions:



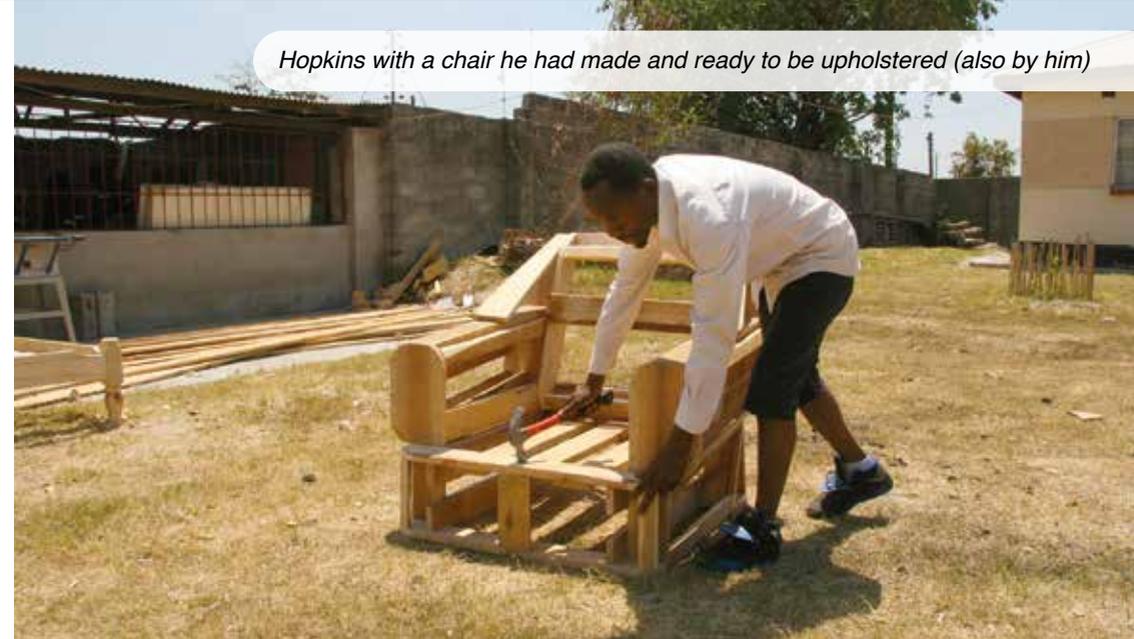
Hopkins making furniture

"I dropped out of school as we could not afford school fees, so I used to work on my father's farm. I earned very little and needed to set out on my own. This is expected in my culture."

For several years Hopkins worked as a labourer, got married and had two children. But he knew he could never afford school fees or any future for his children; so he took the hard, but expected decision to leave his family in the care of his father and go to find better work. He headed to the city of Kitwe, at the heart of Zambia's mineral copperbelt. However, like so many others before and after him, he quickly realised that cities are dangerous places with few opportunities. He tells us:

"I did not have a job, I was doing nothing. I was always dreaming of doing carpentry because I am good with my hands."

After a long period of growing despair, it was his dreaming that finally took him to the doors of Faith Orphanage. This was well-known for providing a two-year carpentry course to a very high standard. He was accepted and stayed, with board and lodgings provided, for one year training and a second year on placement.



Hopkins with a chair he had made and ready to be upholstered (also by him)

At Faith Orphanage everything changed for Hopkins and he tells us:

"I learned a lot. I learned to keep my body fit as we did some exercise before classes, which really helped me. I learned how to run a business, as without this I could not successfully use my skill. I learned to be creative in all I am doing."

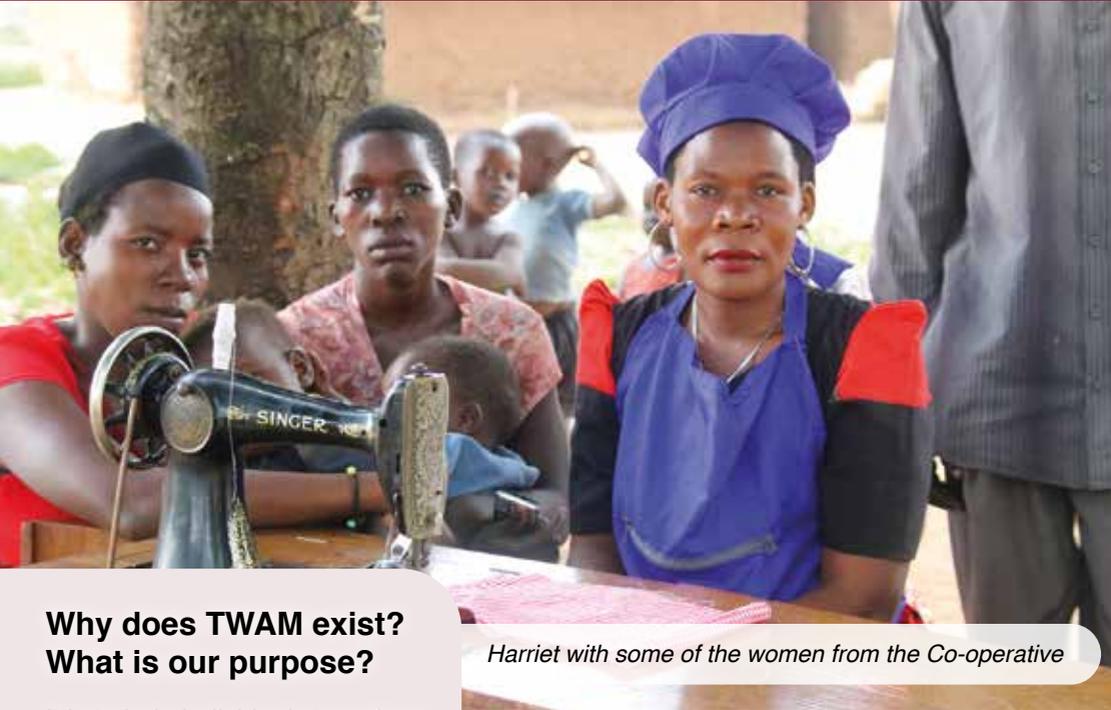
After I completed my second year of training, Faith Orphanage helped me find a small workshop and provided the wood and materials I needed to get started. I started making beds, tables, chairs and doors. Faith encouraged people in the community to buy from me to help me get started. People trust the name of Faith and want to help if they can."

But, has Hopkins fulfilled his ambition to have good employment, a home for his family and importantly the income to send his children to school? He answers the question for us:

"Without this training I do not know what I would be doing right now. So, I can support my family and paying school fees for my two boys is no problem. I now have my own home in Kitwe and am an independent man. Faith Orphanage is still encouraging me and if I have a problem I can go back there; it is my home."

Hopkins has fulfilled his ambitions and in so doing fulfilled TWAMs goals. Crucially, through the provision of schooling, his two sons will never have to face the dilemma of leaving behind their families in a desperate bid to improve their lives. Once again, with your support skills training and tools turned the potential for tragedy into a story of wonderful success.

We needed skills, education and protection, and we gained them all!



Harriet with some of the women from the Co-operative

Why does TWAM exist? What is our purpose?

It is to help individuals transform their lives, but each individual is part of a community and to transform the individual is to transform the community. Communities such as Lwamjaba on the shores of Lake Victoria outside Kampala in Uganda.

Lwamjaba certainly needs help. It was visited by Mike our CEO and Simon the Chair of the Trustees in 2020. It is a very poor fishing village, where few in the community have ever been to school, basic utilities are non-existent, housing is dilapidated and crime, violence and drunkenness commonplace. Their existence is perilous as their boats are old and unreliable and the fish stocks dwindling.

So, the women in the community got together to bring about change. They wanted to:

1. Learn a skill to provide much needed income and which they could control.
2. Gain an education and learn to read and write.
3. Protect themselves and their children from the impact of alcohol abuse.

The women believed all of this was possible through skills training and tools. So, they applied for sewing machines for themselves and carpentry kits for their sons and husbands. They hoped their husbands would support their aims if they too could benefit.

They meet with their sewing machines under a tree. The women learn about more than tailoring, and also have classes in hygiene, literacy, wellbeing and how to work together to protect themselves and achieve their mutual goals.

Meet Dick

They enjoy the active support and protection of Dick, the chair of the Town Council. Dick tells us why he supports the group. He says:

"The task is so huge to help the women. The challenge is the men - as they do not support them. When women ask their husbands for basic things such as food it can cause much trouble. Learning a skill gives a woman self-sustainability so they do not have to accept this."

Dick recognises the power of skills and tools to transform his community and improve the lives of everyone, especially as fishing is no longer able to sustain the community. But mostly Dick wants to support the women as he shares with us:



Dick

"I do this role as I feel happy when I feel I am helping someone. I am a Christian and when I see a man violent to a woman I must feel bad. I went through it as a child and cannot stand by and see it happen again."

But Dick cannot do it alone, He needed his sister, Harriet.



The main street through Lwamjaba

Meet Harriet

Harriet went to college to learn formal tailoring, but sadly could not afford the fees for the exams and had to drop out of college. So, with her three children she returned to her community to train the women. She is a very accomplished tailor. She tells us:

"I am on my own and with the support of the group I too need to send my children to school. Housing here is very poor and I would like a better home for my children. We need each other to succeed."

The self-help cooperative has now been running for three years and more women from the community have joined the group. Even several men have taken up the offer to learn carpentry. The women have started to earn money and their children go hungry far less often than

before. Some children have started to attend school. Slowly things are changing.

The women have learned tailoring and are earning income they can control and use for school fees and food. They have learned to read and write and some are now able to send their children to school. Together they are slowly changing the culture of their community and gaining the respect and protection they deserve.

It has been very hard and it has cost Dick and Harriet so much to make this stand and support the women. TWAM is proud to support them and stand with them.

Once again, TWAMs goals are being met, as a community that has been in decline for many years and which has such deep-set problems has begun to change.

Elias: I am an orphan and I couldn't manage on my own or afford to look after myself.



Elias welding at Faith Orphanage, Kitwe

"The volunteers told me about the courses run by Faith Orphanage. They told me because they could see that I was an orphan and I couldn't manage on my own or even afford to look after myself. I decided this was my strong chance to have a better life and accepted."

When he arrived at Faith Orphanage, Elias says he decided on welding because it looked much easier to learn than carpentry, which seemed very difficult. His ambitions were clear; that he could manage on his own and afford to look after himself because he had a skill and a good job.

Has he succeeded and helped TWAM meet its goals of transformed lives through tools and livelihood creation? He tells us:

"I am working now and making grills, windows and door frames. In my spare time I help out at Faith Orphanage. I am doing very well and planning to open my own workshop."

Clearly he can now manage very well on his own, thanks to his training and welding machine.

Elias, like Hopkins (pages 10-11) also attended Faith Orphanage, but he learned welding. Last year TWAM sent 63 welding machines to Africa and they are in very high demand. Faith Orphanage has received several to equip their metalwork training centre and workshop. It trains students and also accepts commercial orders which help fund the training.

Elias grew up in a rural community and lost both his parents when he was a teenager. This is common, when the only work is agriculture day labouring, which is so physically draining that many cannot survive it. Elias had no idea what he would do or even how he could live, until volunteers from Faith Orphanage visited his village and recognised his plight. He tells us:



Harriet outside her home with her children

Our Founding Values

In this edition we have seen how our values still hold true, supporting skill centres and changing lives, but we can't do it without your help. Please help us to impact some of the poorest and most desperate people in the world while at the same time saving literally hundreds of tonnes of tools from going to landfill.

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 £ _____

Or you could donate online at: twam.uk/donate; by phone to 01473 210220; using our bank details. Please include your surname and postcode as a reference.
Barclays Bank - Account: 33190994 Sort code: 20-44-51

Name: _____

Address: _____

Postcode: _____

Would you like to receive our **Supporter e-news** once a month? It's packed with up to date news and great stories. If so please give us your email address and tick the box below.

Please send me the TWAM **Supporter e-news**

My Email is: _____

Boost your donation by 25p of Gift Aid for every £1 you donate

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.

Tools with a Mission,

2 Bailey Close, Hadleigh Road Industrial Estate, Ipswich, IP2 0UD
Reg Charity No: 1104903 (England and Wales) VAT Registration Number 347292286

