

TWAM

Tools with a Mission

Our news

The precious gift of tools, accessible to the poorest

July 2022



Empowering people with the tools that create livelihoods and transform lives

Welcome to TWAM News



Welcome to the July edition of TWAM News. In this edition we focus on the theme of needing each other. The simple truth is that groups across Africa need TWAM to provide tools to fulfil their ambitions and goals to train and transform

lives. We in turn need our supporters to donate those tools and provide the finances to collect, refurbish and send the tools to Africa.

Equally, we can't fulfil our ambitions and goals without the visionary people in Africa asking for our support. So the message of this edition is that we need each other and we are so grateful to all our supporters for making our work possible.

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.

"You can be sure that God will take care of everything you need, His generosity exceeding even yours in the glory that pours from Jesus."

Philippians 4:19, The Message

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



Patrick (right) and the welcoming committee!

“We can buy sewing machines in the market but they break in a month. TWAM machines are durable and last for many years.”

These were the weary words of Patrick, the founder of the Bakatawamu Information and Development Empowerment group in Uganda. If any of our supporters wonder why we don't just offer money to buy their own machines, this is why. Time and time again we hear the same message and see it for ourselves when we visit groups and see the shiny new, but, broken machines. Whereas our machines may be 'preloved' and sometimes a bit battered, after careful and skilled refurbishment from our volunteers they have the potential to last for many years.

So when Patrick set up his project he turned to TWAM. Patrick retired in 2017 and like so many of our wonderful volunteers, sought to use his extra time for the benefit of others. So he looked around and saw the huge challenges of his community and decided he would help meet them. So the Bakatawamu project started. Patrick tells us why:

“I did a feasibility study in the rural area and found that when a child drops out of school they have no options. Our community has many drop-outs and they get involved in crime, drugs etc, but if you get to them and give them options, you can change this.”



Inside Patrick's tailoring workshop

TWAM would not exist without people like Patrick starting amazing projects and then allowing us to provide the tools to make them work. The truth is we need each other and that's what makes all the difference and just how it should be.

So what did Patrick decide to do? Well, we'll let him tell us:

“I thought, if I train school dropouts in tailoring, then give them a sewing machine and find them a place in the market, I will give them a chance. I can follow them up to make sure they are using their skill.”

Patrick has recruited many volunteers to help him and alongside the tailoring. They also work with the parents to make sure they support their children and do not take all the money they make, but allow them to keep some to grow their business. This is really important, as all the hard work can be undone if there is no money to invest in the business, by purchasing materials, upgrading to a workshop etc.

Patrick currently has six locations doing tailoring, but has plans to bring them all together in one large centre. At any one time he has around 65 students training. They help fund the training by getting school contracts to make uniforms and the top students each year are employed by Patrick to help generate income.

Meet Thomas

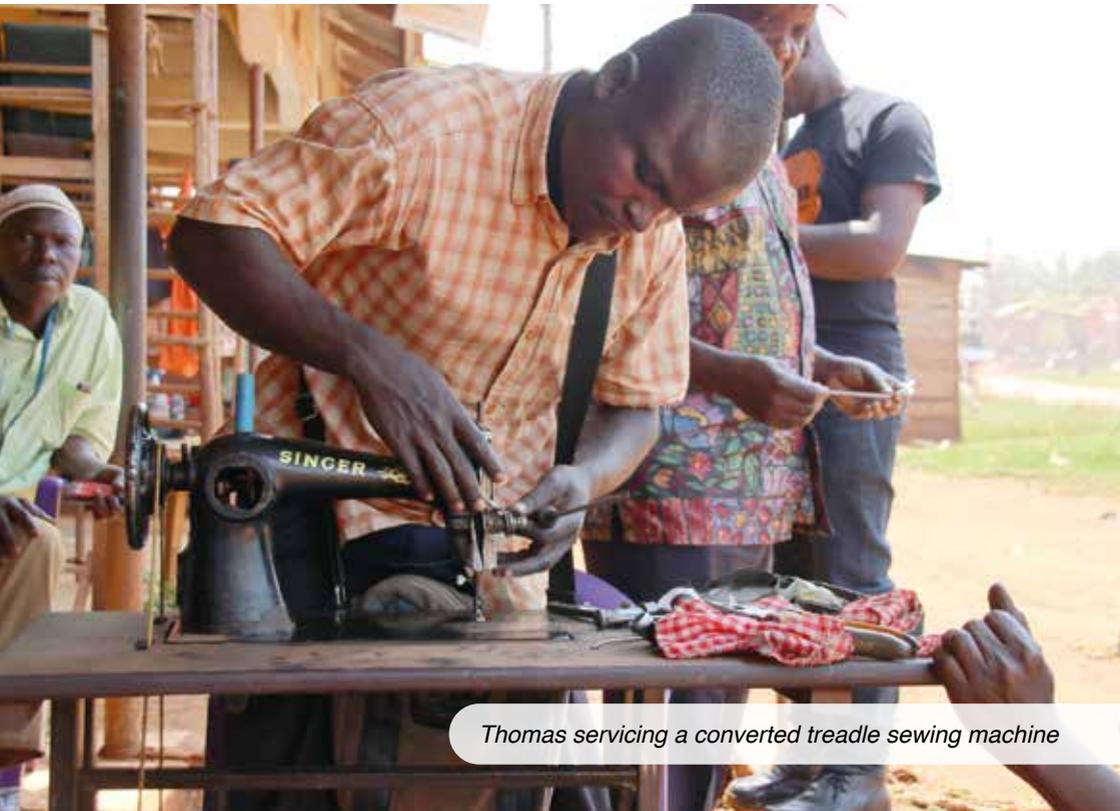
Patrick is now developing a programme to teach people to maintain and repair sewing machines.

Thomas (see photo) now works with Patrick. He trained in Kenya and can not only repair machines but can also convert electric and manual sewing machines into treadle machines. These foot operated machines are especially useful in areas without electricity or where the tailor is based in the street.

Thomas is very busy, but he has big plans. He tells us:

“I am the only person in the area who can repair machines. As well as working with Patrick, local schools and community projects employ me to repair their machines. But working with Patrick, I am now training 35 other people to repair machines. This will be a big help to the community.”

Thomas could have refused to train others and keep all the work to himself, but he has put the community before himself.



Thomas servicing a converted treadle sewing machine

Meet Scolvia

Scolvia is one of the students. She is a school drop-out and had no prospects or hope of employment before she came to the Bakatawamu project. She chose to learn knitting and tells us why:

“Knitting is good because in this area, there are few people doing knitting. I can make money making jumpers for school uniforms. You can start a business without much money. I have completed my course and have stayed on as a teacher, as I want to give back. I have one student at the moment. My dream is to start my own school.”

Patrick and Thomas are wonderful examples of the inspirational people we want to support. What is also so encouraging is that in a few years time when Scolvia fulfils her dream to set up her own tailoring school, she will be approaching TWAM for help too.

We can see how these groups start with one visionary person, who then inspires many others to join them. But the ultimate inspiration is when the students capture the vision and want to do the same themselves.

But it all started with Patrick applying for 7 sewing machines and 1 knitting machine from TWAM.

But the story continues...



Scolvia with her knitting machine

Patrick and his motorbikes

Patrick's ambitions have no bounds and he has recently added motorbike repair to his list of courses. This is a one-year course aimed to provide the students with all the skills they need to service and repair motorbikes. In Uganda, thousands of motorbikes act as public taxis, with people paying just a few pence to catch a lift on the back of one. Young people hire them for a day and it is an easy but dangerous way to earn a living. So repairing and maintaining motorbikes is a good and reliable way to earn a living.



Kaziba (Uganda t-shirt) and Fred (white t-shirt)

So Patrick has purchased an old motorbike and recruited 12 students for his one- year mechanics course. Two of his first students share with us why they joined the course:

Meet Kaziba

"I love bikes. Mechanics is easy and I understand it. It is easy to earn money because there are so many bikes! I found out about the course as I am from this area. I have a plan to open my own workshop, but the challenge will be capital, land and tools. I have found friendship and understanding here and until I can afford my own workshop I can work out of Patrick's. I know I must be disciplined if I am to work here."

Meet Fred

"I completed primary school but dropped out of secondary as I had no money for school fees. Without school, I lacked opportunity and had nothing to do. I did nothing for two years. I found out about the course when I saw youths coming here and asked them what they were doing. They said it could be an opportunity for me. This is my one dream. I want to start up my own garage and then a school of mechanics to give back the opportunity I have been given."

This is the great message of TWAM and we appreciate your kind and generous support. Your gift just keeps giving and multiplying. What a wonderful thing to know when you support us.

Rugby here we come!



Artist's impression of our new Rugby building

Thank you to everyone who supported our 'One million tool challenge' to equip and fit-out our new Refurbishment Centre. We have been overwhelmed and humbled by the response, especially during these difficult financial times. We promise to make every penny you have given count, as we furnish and equip the Centre.

We're now busy recruiting volunteers and making contact with local businesses. We are so pleased with the way Rugby has welcomed us and the great response of the Volunteer Bureau, Rotary Clubs, Community Groups and Churches.

We firmly believe that God has led us to this building and everything that is currently happening is just confirming that. When we first started to look for buildings, the situation seemed completely hopeless, as rents in Coventry had doubled in three years and there were literally no buildings available that we could afford.

Then a picture of this building popped up in a search engine, while looking for something else, and a clear prompting from God led us to go and view it. From the first time we entered the building, last December, we believed God had chosen it for us and it won all our hearts instantly. Immediately, we could picture our volunteers and tools filling the place and we were convinced this was our building.

Thanks to everyone who supported our appeal, we're now busy sourcing all the equipment and finalising our layout plans. It is such a privilege and a joy to be able to equip the Centre all at once. You can see this on our special Rugby webpage on our website. We'll be updating it regularly as we take possession of the building and start to equip it.

For updates, photos and news of

No Payne, no gain!

The sole aim of our expansion (the address is 6 Paynes Lane) is to help the people of Africa, by providing more tools to more countries.

We are also very mindful of saving hundreds of tonnes of good tools going to landfill. The gain really is a 'win win' for everybody.

Thanks to your support we will be able to get the Centre equipped and operating within a few weeks of taking possession. This means we should be able to send two containers to Africa from Rugby during 2022. This will be a huge achievement as it will represent approximately:

- 300 Sewing Machines**
- 30 Knitting Machines**
- 80 Carpentry Kits**
- 25 Carpentry Kit Workshops**
- 45 Drill and power tools**
- 150 Computers**
- 50 Builders Kits**
- 25 Plumbers Kits**
- 25 Electricians Kits**
- 20 Groundworkers Kits**
- 25 Agricultural Kits**
- 40 Motor Mechanics Kits**
- 15 Mechanics Workshop Kits**
- 800 Other tools and kits**

During 2023 we'll all be working really hard to reach our target of 16 containers. It's so exciting, and, if we are honest, also a little bit scary; but we are confident with the support of all our volunteers and the continued faithful, generous gifts from our supporters we'll make this happen.

So thank you for helping us achieve this milestone in the history of TWAM and you can still donate towards the Rugby Centre through our website and all the usual ways.

This is what it is all for: life-changing tools being collected in Zimbabwe



Rugby please visit twam.uk/rugby

“To purchase a tool kit in Zambia would cost more than a carpenter could make in two years!”

“In our remote location we could never achieve the success we do without input from overseas.”

So begins a report to TWAM from Gordon McKillop the founder of Nyangombe Christian Training Centre (NCTC) from Zambia. Due purely to logistics it can be very difficult to get aid and support when you live miles down a sandy track in an area nobody has heard of. This is why the work of TWAM is so effective, as we rely on word of mouth and that knows no boundaries. Hence Nyangombe has had a partnership with TWAM for over 20 years. Gordon tells us the purpose of the NCTC:

“For more than twenty years we have taught skills to younger men and women with a view to empowering them with a life skill which in turn enables them to break out of a cycle of poverty and eventually earn a living through their acquired skill. Our training covers carpentry, building, mechanics and steel fabrication.

Tools supplied by Tools with a Mission make their way to our remote location in North West Zambia and are given freely to every trainee who graduates at the end of his or her course. To purchase a tool kit in Zambia would cost more than a carpenter could make in two years! Tools are therefore invaluable to our general objective of training and empowering young people to make their own way in the world through their life skills.”



Trainees receiving their TWAM tools

Gordon reinforces the message of Patrick from the Bakatawamu group in Uganda in the first article in this magazine. He told us that sewing machines bought locally break in a month and now Gordon stresses that tools are also very, very expensive.

NCTC can only train people with the confidence they will use their new skills to transform their lives because they know they can provide them with long lasting accessible TWAM tools. As a result Gordon tells us:

“Many have their own businesses today using the skills learned at NCTC and one frequently meets individuals trained in carpentry and building who are completely self-sufficient and providing for their families. Others have found their way into employment in the Copper Mines where some are working as supervisors in their own field of expertise.”

None of this would have been possible without your support, be that financial, tools, time volunteering or prayer. So thank you from all of us and Gordon. We'll give him the last word:



Trainees qualifying and receiving certificates and tools

“As we look back over twenty years at the training of over 250 young men and women, we are indebted to TWAM for their valuable contribution.

Our Skills for Life Training would not have been nearly so successful had it not been for TWAM’s vision and willingness to supply tools.”

How can you learn to use a sewing machine or operate a computer from a chalk drawing on a blackboard?



Student on the builder's course

TWAM helps all sorts of groups from a few women trying to lift themselves out of poverty to relatively large organisations impacting hundreds of people. Mengo Technical and Business Institute in Uganda was set up primarily to offer formal education such as Maths, English, Science etc.

But they recognise that this is out of reach for the poorest and most vulnerable, and in all honesty, of little practical value to them. So alongside the 750 students in formal education, they have another 100 learning practical skills. These courses include tailoring, plumbing, motor mechanics, building, carpentry, catering, shoe making, hairdressing and

television and computer repair. Joseph, their Principal, tells us why they offer the practical skills training:

“We are trying to solve the problem of unemployment among the youth, orphans and vulnerable people of Uganda. We are also addressing the challenge of unskilled women who find it hard to leave their homes. There are so few opportunities for them, so we want to offer training and confidence.”

It may surprise, or even shock us, to learn that in the poorest communities training in practical skills and computing is often done with pictures drawn on a blackboard and without any physical tools available.

Joseph is determined to change this and says to us:

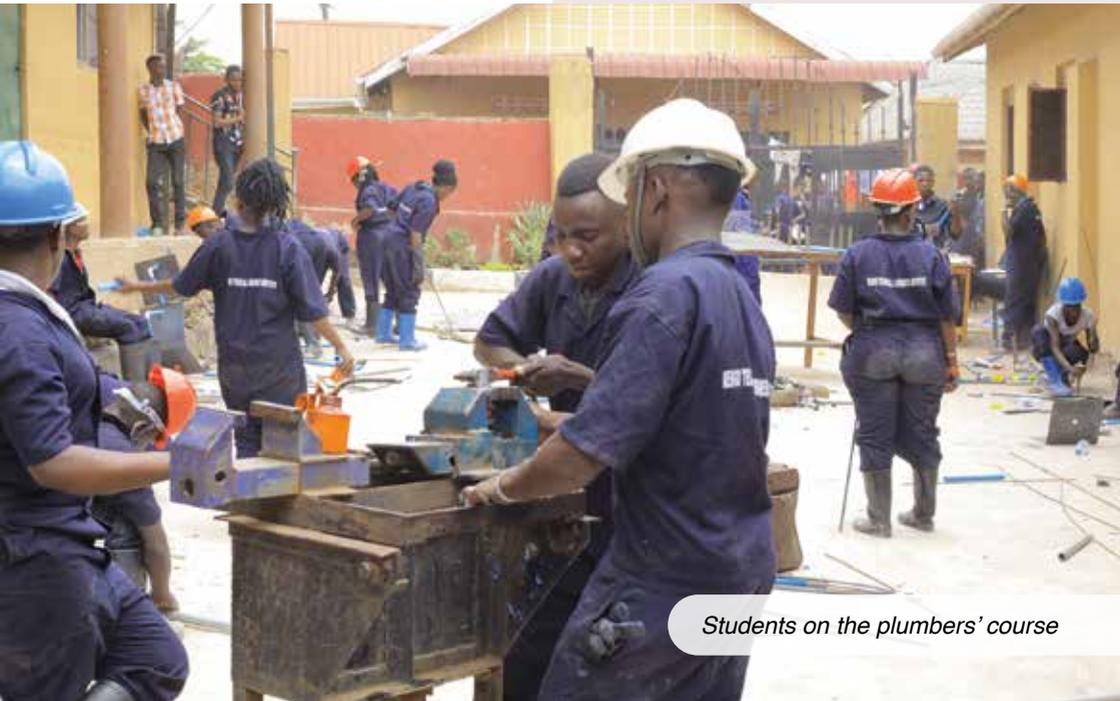
“The lack of skills and the opportunity to train with physical tools is a big problem we try to solve. We apply to TWAM many times, so we can have the tools and machines we need.”

But tools alone are not enough for the most vulnerable, they need help to find work. So Mengo helps graduating trainees to enable them find employment or gain the business skills to start up on their own. Joseph continues:

“When we have trained people, we help them get jobs from different garages, factories and companies. Some, we help to set up workshops. It is a challenge for them, so we are planning to see if we can give them a package for start-up businesses.”

Organisations, from small Skills Centres based under a tree, right up to large technical colleges like Mengo, benefit from TWAM tools. Together the impact is enormous. Mengo has been skills training for more than 30 years; just imagine what they have achieved. With your support, hundreds more vulnerable people will have the amazing opportunity to train at Mengo. We'll give Joseph the last word:

“If we could get more tools and equipment, we could equip more learners and produce well equipped students ready to work without having struggles.”



Students on the plumbers' course

Many hands make light work

This is certainly true for the Gwamayaya Helping Hands Project in Zimbabwe. TWAM returned to Zimbabwe after a gap of many years in 2019 and has sent a container every year since. We quickly established a presence in the country and applications for tools flooded in. One of the first was from Gwamayaya and the impact of our tools and their vision was immediate. In their recent report they made this clear as they told us:

“Helping Hand members did not waste time getting started with the workshops after receiving tools and materials from TWAM. We immediately set up carpentry, sewing and baking workshops. We added baking, to involve other members who could not participate in the other workshops.”



Members of Helping Hands displaying their goods

Like so many groups who receive tools from us, they cannot wait to get their project started. Many have planned, prayed and hoped for their project for many months and constantly ask their TWAM Country Coordinator when the container with their tools will leave the UK. It is hard for us to appreciate the desperation of the ultra-poor to receive this kind of long term, life changing sustainable help. Every story we tell shows that the impact of skills training and tools is forever, whereas financial support is only of use as long as it continues to be received. Africans know this, and this is why so many of them choose to apply for tools rather than financial support.

Helping Hands proved this, as they quickly developed a reputation for quality goods and found that people who might have before travelled 135 miles to Bulawayo, (Zimbabwe's second largest city) to buy good furniture, now came to them to buy locally. This makes it much cheaper for the locals and much better for the community. This is a great encouragement to the group and they tell us:



Some of the furniture heading for market



Members starting work building the new Carpentry Workshop

“Project members are enthusiastic and therefore participation in the project is high and the project members are very motivated. The project is currently making doors, furniture, school uniforms, and baked goods.”

Helping Hands faces many challenges including the distance from Bulawayo's markets where they must buy materials and sell the bulk of their goods. It is good that their furniture is in high demand in the city, but very challenging and expensive to get it there. They admit this is a challenge they must somehow overcome. The remoteness of their project also means they have no access to electricity and can only use hand tools. It is not unusual in these circumstances for groups to lose their enthusiasm when faced with such challenges, but not Helping Hands.

We are so pleased to be supporting them as they overcome the huge challenges of living and surviving in Zimbabwe.

Thank you for supporting TWAM, so we can support them and together we can all be 'helping hands' to the inspirational people of Africa.

The precious gift of tools that last, that will not break and which are accessible even to the poorest.

That is our joint gift to the people of Africa.

My Response:

I would like to send quality tools to the most vulnerable people of Africa. 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**

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Signed: _____ Date: _____

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

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