



Our News

October 2023

Overcoming adversity to provide opportunity



Empowering people with the tools that create livelihoods and transform lives

Welcome to TWAM News

Thank you for supporting TWAM, and I hope as you read this edition of TWAM News, you will be inspired by some amazing people doing incredible things with the tools we provide.



Our two main stories of Juliet and Barbara are particularly inspiring as they show such a selfless response to personal tragedy and adversity.

Please be encouraged in your support of TWAM, and thank you for standing with us as we work so hard to provide the tools that transform lives.

Mike Griffin
Chief Executive

Containers sent July - September 2023

We sent one 40ft container and one 20ft container to Zambia and two 20ft containers to Uganda.

Between them they contained:

- 806 Sewing machines
- 43 Knitting machines
- 184 Carpentry kits
- 78 Carpentry workshop kits
- 85 Builders' kits
- 65 Plumbers' kits
- 81 Electricians' kits
- 44 Groundworkers' kits
- 64 Agricultural kits
- 78 Boxes of power tools
- 144 Computers
- 1,419 Other miscellaneous tools and kits

In total, around 3,091 tool kits and machines.

"Don't withhold good from someone who deserves it, when it is in your power to do so."
Proverbs 3:27

About us

We are a Christian charity that collects donated usable tools, refurbishes them, sorts them into trade kits and sends them to the developing world for livelihood creation.

We support local people, meeting local needs with life transforming skills training projects. We supply the tools to equip the training centres and to give to trainees when they graduate. With this support we see long-term sustainable livelihoods created. Thanks to over 500 volunteers in the UK and your support, we will continue to transform lives and communities.

Tools to donate?

To find your nearest collection centre, or to contact a local collector, have a look at our website or call our Ipswich office.

Time to donate?

We are always looking for more volunteers to help in our centres and to collect tools where they live. Please visit [twam.uk/volunteer](https://www.twam.uk/volunteer) to browse our available roles or ring 01473 210220 for more information.

Financial support

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 donate online, 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 our Ipswich office.

Tools with a Mission

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

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“This group is more than a place to learn, it’s another home for me”

Jane, a mother, grandmother, and widow, spent every day haunted by a series of heartbreaking losses. With her husband beaten to death by drunks in the street and three children lost to a brutal illness, she faced a seemingly insurmountable struggle to provide for her family.

Before she found the Blessed International Ministries Organisation, her days were punctuated by door-to-door labour, hours of washing and ironing for meagre payment that barely fed her family. The deep hunger and desperation in her grandchildren's eyes was a constant reminder of her struggle for sustenance.

Yet, in the heart of adversity, she found a sanctuary. She started a handknitting course, and she didn't just gain a skill; she gained an extended family. Their arms were always open, ready to catch her when the burden of survival threatened to knock her down.


After finding empowerment through skills and companionship, Jane is no longer the suffering day-labourer that she used to be; she is a talented

artisan. Her once-meagre earnings have grown into a reliable income, enough to fill her children and grandchildren's stomachs and rewrite the narrative for her tragedy-stricken family.

Jane's TWAM knitting kit has truly transformed her life and allowed her to support her family and find valuable companionship. It took her from just barely surviving to a place of self-reliance and empowerment.

“This group is more than a place to learn, it’s another home for me. I earn more money than I did before so I can support myself and my family. This equipment you are providing is changing lives, it’s really changing mine.”

Her story speaks volumes about the strength of community and the significant impact of donated refurbished tools. It highlights a large part of our mission - uncovering the potential hidden within those burdened by hardship, and helping them to reshape their futures with tools.



When I lost my husband, I knew I must continue

Juliet understands all too well the challenges of being a widow in Zambia. She did not think she would, and would give anything not to, but she does. Her husband, Pastor Yako, set up Fly Deaf in 2015 in one of the poorest areas of Lusaka to reach some of the most vulnerable people, the deaf and widows, with the practical expression of God's love. With the support of TWAM tools, he started tailoring, knitting, carpentry and computer training. But he tragically died in 2020, and as a result, Juliet lost her home and the building used for the training centre when her extended family forced her and her children to leave. Stealing widows' property is illegal but a common practice in Zambia.

Juliet was utterly heartbroken, and we thought it would be the end of Fly Deaf, but we could not have been more wrong. We met Juliet again living in a rented home with her five children far away from the house she lost. She had not managed to save many things from her relatives, but she did save her TWAM sewing and knitting machines.

Surrounded by the new members of Fly Deaf she told us:

“When I lost my husband I knew I must continue, because then, I understood how hard it is for women and knew I must continue to help. It is very hard, and I have so many challenges, but I must do this.”

So as soon as she found a new home she started all over again. It shows the compassion of so many of the people TWAM supports, that when she could have focused entirely on her own pain and loss, she instead chose to focus on that of others. So she tells us what she did as soon as she moved:

“When I moved, I reopened by making clothes and displaying them, so people would come and ask me what was going on.

I told everyone my story and that I was going to start training widows. Soon, I had 15 women learning tailoring. They come on Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday.”

Some of the women have only been with Fly Deaf for a few months, and some for many years. Let's meet one of her newest trainees:

Meet Matilda - hoping that tailoring will change her life

Matilda also understands well the pain of losing your husband and the devastating loss that can be to the whole family. She has six children and has struggled for 10 years to try to support them. When she heard about Fly Deaf, she thought that there was finally hope for her and her children. So she tells us:

“My situation at home was not good. I couldn't afford food, I couldn't send my children to school. I have 6 children, and it was very hard for me to care for them, especially since my husband died.

To support my kids, all I could do was sell some vegetables at the market, but this doesn't make much money.

I joined this group last month. Everything is going very well, this group is wonderful. I can already make trousers and shirts for men, as well as dresses.

I see a very bright future for myself and my children thanks to tailoring. I even plan to teach my children so that we can have a family business and all support each other.

I will open a shop in the market where I will sell the things that I make.”

We may think she is being overly ambitious believing that tailoring could so completely transform her life. But she knows it can, because she sees this in the lives of many of the other women in the group. She knows she cannot do it alone, but also knows she does not have to. She has Juliet and she has all the other women to support her.

One of the most inspirational is Frieda and her story is not so different...

Matilda





Meet Frieda - who knows tailoring has changed her life

Frieda's husband left her in 2014, leaving her alone to care for her 8 young children. She was in pain and utterly desperate, until she met Pastor Yako and became one of the original members of Fly Deaf. She tells us her story:

“I started tailoring about 5 years ago, and Fly Deaf is where I learnt to sew, I had no tailoring experience before. When my husband divorced me, I was left alone and had no way to earn any money. I had to find a skill so that I could look after my children.

Tailoring has totally changed my life. It helps me to feed my family and has sent them all to school. My eldest son has done so well, and I was able to support him and help to pay his college fees. He has found a career in marketing.

It is still hard for my children to find employment, but because they have an education thanks to my tailoring, I know that they have a good future ahead of them. They have good skills, and I will support them whatever they do.”

Frieda gives Matilda and the other new trainees hope, as she has proved that tailoring and a sewing machine can totally transform your life. The future of all her children was bleak, but now, with a good education, there is real hope for all of them.

All it took was the compassion of Pastor Yako, his determination to help the most vulnerable, and now the same compassion and determination from his widow, Juliet. But none of this would have been achieved without TWAM tools.

It is also because they are a family and support each other, hence Frieda tells us:

“I also help to share my skills and teach the other women in this group, because I am an experienced tailor now.”

While the team from TWAM was meeting Juliet, a young man walked in and asked if she would help him learn carpentry. Juliet was delighted to be asked, and so the story continues.

Thanks to your support and the amazing hope and resilience tools provide, Juliet could survive the loss of her husband and rebuild her life.

Thanks to tools, Matilda could recover from her bereavement, and Frieda can look forward to seeing tools turn her life around.

Most importantly for these young mothers, because of the tools, their children will not suffer the loss of an education or future opportunities. The gift of tools really is life-transforming for everybody.

Just £25 would cover the costs of collecting, refurbishing, and packing a sewing machine, ready to be shipped to a training centre where it will transform the lives of people just like Matilda and Frieda. This one donation has the power to transform a life forever. Can you think of a way to make a bigger impact with £25? Browse our full range of alternative gifts online:

www.twam.uk/alternativegifts



The Fly Deaf ladies on the porch of Juliet's home where they train

Giving New Life to Old Computers: Meet the Ipswich IT Refurbishment Team.

At TWAM, unwanted, donated computers find a new lease of life under the skilled hands of Graham and the IT team, as well as our IT team in Rugby.

Graham joined TWAM after he retired from a career in IT. His journey began when he decided to lend his skills to a worthy cause during his retirement.

He found TWAM through a volunteering website and soon found himself welcomed into the heart of the charity, which was in sore need of a skilled IT professional at the time.

Graham has witnessed first-hand how every computer that is donated has the potential to transform lives.

"After visiting Zambia, I've seen that this equipment is needed," says Graham, whose dedication sees him volunteering four days a week. "We're empowering people with skills for the future. This is something I love doing."

Behind the scenes, the process of refurbishing computers is meticulous.

Each machine is thoroughly inspected, cleaned, and, importantly, its data is securely erased. A fresh version of Windows and a suite of useful software are then installed.

It's an endeavour that's making an impact across Africa. Graham and the team refurbish hundreds of computers every year, giving new life to them to benefit trainees and entire communities.

Last year, we managed to send over 800 computers to skills training centres. They give trainees the skills and equipment they need to begin their careers.



"Our work gives people another outlook in life," says Graham, remembering a bright 17-year-old girl in Zambia who received a laptop from TWAM. "She knew that she was heading in the right direction - she has a future now."

The work of Graham and the team in Ipswich doesn't just empower people living in extreme poverty – it also helps to reduce electronic waste. Unusable computers or components are recycled, contributing to a more sustainable planet.

However, the IT Refurbishment department still faces challenges. The demand for computers has been growing far faster than anticipated, as awareness and use of IT grows in the countries that we support, and the team is always on the lookout for more computers and laptops to refurbish.

We often receive large donations of computers from lease companies that are updating their inventory, or even schools that are upgrading their IT departments, but this comes in waves and is unpredictable.

So, how can you support the remarkable work being done by Graham and the team, as well as our IT Refurbishment team in Rugby? If you have an unused computer or laptop, consider donating it to TWAM.

Your old computer could be the tool that changes a life, the key that unlocks a brighter future for a trainee. Don't worry about data – the team will ensure it's securely erased.

Whether you're an individual or a business upgrading your technology, remember: your computer's journey doesn't have to end. Together, we can turn e-waste into empowerment and hope.

We accept computers or laptops running a minimum of Windows 7, so that they are able to be upgraded and will continue to serve the recipients for years to come. If you have a computer to donate, you can find your nearest collector on our website:

www.twam.uk/donatetools

The Ipswich IT Refurbishment Department





I am truly a Woman of Valour

Susan lives in Kalulushi, one of the poorest townships on the outskirts of Kitwe, Zambia. Kitwe was once a thriving mining town, but with the collapse of copper prices in 2016, it has entered a period of steady decline.

Susan and her young family were early casualties, as she found herself alone trying to raise four young children. This was when she heard of the newly formed group called Women of Valour. She tells us:

“I was really struggling. I was in a terrible state and feared my children would be displaced as I could not even manage to look after myself. I was struggling and could not even buy food. I feared my children would become street kids.”

But everything changed when she joined Women of Valour. She continues:

“I trained in 2016. I had no idea how to tailor before I got my sewing

machine, but now I can make three things every day and support my family.

I have rented space outside this shop since I got my machine in 2017. There is a lot of traffic so I can get lots of business. I make shirts and dresses and do repairs.”

And what matters for Susan is the impact. Instead of fearing her children entering street gangs and turning to crime, all four are at school, well fed and live securely in a nice home.

All have good futures to look forward to and the comfort of knowing their mother is cared for by the group. The training centre is literally across the road from Susan.

This is the long-term impact of tools. The treadle sewing machine Susan received in 2017 is still going strong, and there is no doubt in her mind that she is a Woman of Valour. We couldn't agree more.

Ensuring disability is no barrier to employment

Shekinah Glory Skills Training Centre was set up in Zimbabwe by Juliet Bvekwa. It aims to reach young people in the Zvishavane District who are denied the opportunity to learn because of disability and ultra-poverty. This includes orphans, vulnerable children and especially deaf young people.

There is nowhere in the district that teaches sign language, and most deaf children have never been to school. So Juliet teaches sign language alongside the practical skills that offer genuine hope of employment.

She has found people willing to learn sign language in order to train deaf young people in tailoring, knitting, carpentry, agriculture, making detergents and welding. But with so many challenges, the trainees need much more, so Juliet tells us:

“We want to help set up our trainees once they finish their courses, especially our target group - the deaf teenagers. They are still young and are from very poor backgrounds, and supporting them with tools will have a great impact on them, their families, and communities.”

So when they have completed their training, they are offered tools and the support of the training centre to find employment or set up their own businesses.

The photo on the left shows Ben, one of the deaf students, receiving his Skills Certificate at their very first Graduation Ceremony in 2022. Juliet continues:

“It was an amazing day. The trainees were so happy, their parents were overjoyed. We greatly appreciate your support in providing us with tools. May God continue to use you to touch the lives of others.”

It is wonderful to know that the tools we send can make so much difference to so many lives and give skill, hope, value, and dignity to those who have never experienced it before.



Ben receiving his certificate

A group of seven people, including Barbara and her trainees, standing in a room. Barbara is on the right, wearing a blue and white checkered dress. The others are wearing various colorful clothing. The background shows a room with a table and some equipment.

I must provide a hopeful future for a desperate generation

It is hard to describe how hard it can be to live with a disability in the developing world.

Most roads are unmade surfaces, and few buildings have ramps or accessible doors.

Schools can be reluctant to accept children with disabilities, and the expectation can be that children and adults should stay at home and do nothing.

But Barbara from Uganda was having none of that! Her experience growing up with disabilities made her determined to help others overcome their disability-related challenges.

So she started the Upendo Foundation, offering training in tailoring and knitting in her house, and if people could not come to her, she took tools to them with the support of her husband, who is deaf, driving their car.

It is very challenging for Barbara, but she is a woman on a mission. She tells us:

“Persons with disabilities have a challenge of getting work even after graduation due to marginalisation and also very high competition for the few jobs available.

Our desire is to see persons with disabilities becoming job creators and not job seekers by exposing them to a number of skills so that after they graduate, they are able to start up something for themselves and then employ others.”

To achieve this, Barbara needed tools from TWAM, and she applied for sewing and knitting machines, builders’, carpenters’, electricians’ and mechanics kits, plus agricultural and groundworkers kits.

She believes that disabled people can do almost every job with self-belief, the right training, and the provision of good tools.

Barbara has found trainers in all these skills who share her belief. Barbara focuses on training in tailoring and tells us:

“By the end of the course, trainees should be able to sew a dress and work independently, and be financially literate. They should be able to communicate with customers and be able to look after themselves and dress themselves.”

Two of Barbara’s keenest students are Jovia and Charles.

Jovia lives with her grandmother as a ‘house help’ but wanted to learn a skill to support herself.

When she heard about the centre, she asked if she could learn tailoring. Jovia is deaf, and Barbara is very patient and even helped her learn to lip read.

She is also teaching her maths and giving her the skills she needs to fulfil her dream of becoming a tailor.

Charles has cerebral palsy and learns very slowly. Barbara is teaching him sewing at his own pace, and he needs

1-2-1 tuition as his attention wanders easily.

The work Barbara is doing is amazing, and it is hard to put into words the huge difference it is making to the lives of so many disabled people.

Many, like Jovia and Charles, with no expectation from their families they would ever achieve anything, have flourished in an environment made so positive and encouraging by the determined presence of Barbara.

Barbara knows from personal experience the difference this can make, and so she has bigger plans. She tells us:

“My dream is to have a recreational centre for persons with disabilities, where they can come and explore what they are able to do for themselves. Not just with the skill, but with sports, music, entertainment and all that.”

Jovia (right) and Charles (left) with Barbara



But the first stage was for somebody to believe in Barbara and have the confidence that disability is no barrier for a determined, gifted woman with a big heart for people struggling like her with disabilities. TWAM is humbled to be the charity Barbara turned to and the means by which she has achieved so much. Thank you for your support that has made this possible and for helping the Upendo Foundation fulfil their mission and vision, which is:

‘To initiate, mobilise and equalise opportunities and resources to support youths and children with disabilities to live with value, respect and self-sustainability. By reaching out to a desperate and vulnerable generation for a hopeful future.’

A hopeful future is a precious gift for anybody growing up in ultra-poverty, but a priceless gift beyond words for those society ignores. Thank you for helping Barbara fulfil her mission and vision.

“

“Our desire is to see persons with disabilities becoming job creators and not job seekers by exposing them to a number of skills so that after they graduate, they are able to start up something for themselves and then employ others.”

-Barbara, Uganda

Charles holding up a blouse he has made





The Toolbox

You could make a long-term difference by joining The Toolbox.

Donate a certain amount each month, and over the course of a year, you cover the costs of collecting, refurbishing, and packing all the tools for a certain number of tool kits. You will receive a letter at the end of the year stating what kits you have supported, as well as a calendar. To join The Toolbox and make a long-term difference, go to our website:

twam.uk/toolbox

My lasting legacy, my gift of hope

Writing a will can seem a daunting prospect, but it can be a very precious time when we remember the things we care most about. There will always be more countries and more people that need our help, and your legacy would help to ensure that the most vulnerable people continue to be supported.

We still haven't won the fight against poverty. Below, you can see Doreen and her son, Triumph - a once struggling family whose lives have been transformed by tools. They have left poverty in the past, but there are still so many more families who need our help.

For more information about leaving a legacy to support livelihood creation and having a impact that lasts for generations, have a look at our website:

twam.uk/legacy



We need your support to continue sending livelihood-creating tools to groups who have seen the struggles of their communities and have made the decision to help the people who are suffering the most. We can work together to give the most vulnerable people in Africa the tools that they need to transform their lives.



Please accept my gift of:

£15 £25 £50 £100 £150 £250 Other: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

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You can donate online at twam.uk/donate or using the account details below including your surname and postcode as a reference.

Barclays Bank Account No: 33190994 | **Sort Code:** 20-44-51

Card

You can donate by credit or debit card by ringing our head office on **01473 210220**. We're open Monday to Friday between 9 am - 4 pm.

Would you like to receive our monthly **Supporter E-News**? It's packed with up to date news and inspiring stories. If so, you can either write your email address below, or go to twam.uk/stayintouch to sign up online.

My email address is: _____

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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 in the current tax year than the amount of Gift Aid claimed on all my donations it 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, or no longer pay sufficient tax on your income and/or capital gains. If you pay Income Tax at the higher rate or additional rate and want to receive 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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