

TWAM news

Tools with a Mission

Spring 2018

Together we'll defeat the Poverty Thief



A Christian charity sending tools across the world

Welcome to TWAM News



Welcome to the Spring edition of TWAM News. Our theme is the challenge and call to defeat the Poverty Thief. I have personally seen too much of his work and the oppressive hold poverty can have on an individual

and a community. Thankfully I have also seen the small spark of hope begin to light up a face as someone dares to believe that life can be better. Our tools offer that spark of hope and it is a privilege to see the Poverty Thief retreating from a life and a community because of the ministry of Tools with a Mission. Please be encouraged by the stories of hope that follow.

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.

"The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly."

John 10:10 (ESV)

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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The Three Amigos

Matthew, Pumulo and Upwell (left to right) know very well how the Poverty Thief can steal everything from you. In their own words they tell us:

Matthew, ***"I was an orphan begging on the streets."***

Pumulo, ***"I had no hope of a job."***

Upwell, ***"I had no skills and no opportunity to learn a trade."***

The three amigos are not untypical of young men in Kafue, Zambia who live in poverty. The Poverty Thief has been busy with these three and has brought death and homelessness to Matthew's family and deprived Pumulo and Upwell of their education. To make sure life was especially tough the Poverty Thief then stole their food and shelter, leaving them displaced from their communities and hanging around on street corners hoping for a chance to make a little money for the day. The Poverty Thief took away any hope these three had of a future.

Poverty can easily keep hold of young people like Matthew, Pumulo and Upwell for their entire lives because there is so

little opportunity for change and the gap between the haves and have-nots is so vast. A gap highlighted as the young unemployed hang around street corners looking for work and eyeing longingly the successful business owners with their shops and workshops. Dreaming the impossible dream that one day this could be them providing for their families and living in prosperity.

It's people like the three amigos TWAM wants to reach out to and provide with that transforming opportunity that fulfils dreams and ambitions and leaves the Poverty Thief out on the street. This is often made possible by the very businesses the amigos admire, choosing to reach out to share their prosperity by offering training and tools.

Collins has a small carpentry business on one of the crowded narrow back streets of Kafue, the very streets which the three amigos hang around. Collins is a member of his local church, where not untypically the church reaches out to young people like the three amigos. Collins already gave time, money and food to support his church but was looking for a way to help people get an opportunity to transform their lives with the same prosperity he enjoyed. He says:

"I wanted to train others and give them a chance."

But there wasn't much he could do, as he did not have enough tools to employ anyone else. Neither did he have time because running his own business was hard, especially when you have to travel 300km each way to chop down your own trees, cut them into planks and bring them back to Kafue.

Then Collins heard about TWAM and in 2015 he received a laptop, desktop computer, workshop carpentry kit with power tools along with some larger workshop tools. Finally, he could make his dream to create livelihoods come true.

Collins took on the three amigos, who became his friends as they trained together. Matthew has now finished training and is employed by Collins, helping him grow his business. The computers have enabled Collins to run his business more efficiently giving him more time to train others. The power tools have enabled him to make a wide range of items like doors and tables much faster. The large workshop kit means more tools for the three amigos to learn with.

The Poverty Thief has been sent packing by the three amigos. In their own words they tell us:

Matthew says,

"Collins took me in off the streets. Collins trained me and now employs me. I really want to go to college"

Pumulo says,

"Collins provides me with food and training, I have a hope of a job. Collins takes care of me and with more training I want to have a carpentry business"

Upwell says,

"Collins has given me my first opportunity to learn a trade. I have two children, so it's not just an opportunity for me but my whole family."

The Poverty Thief never believed anyone would sacrificially teach their trade to young people who might go on to compete with them, but that is exactly what Collins chose to do.

Collins willingly took on the three amigos, giving them shelter, food and a new community to be part of, something they've not had for a long time, if at all.



More than this, he gave them hope for the future.

With skills and hard work the poverty thief is no longer welcome at the doors of the three amigos. Collins has taught Matthew, Pumulo and Upwell well and his business is growing rapidly too.

There are many grassroots church and community based charities reaching out through local businesses like Collins' workshop.

**We now receive 600 applications a year from
Zambian charities alone.**

**With your help we can give
more young people the
chance to shut the door on the
Poverty Thief.**

**Please turn to the back page
for more information.**

How do you move forward when the Povert



Imagine a community where nobody works, nobody has a skill, no children go to school, where all you have to eat is what you grow from poor quality seeds struggling to survive in impoverished soil. Where there are no roads, no electricity, the nearest market is miles away and where drought is simply a fact of life. Welcome to the community of Namasagali in eastern Uganda.

The Poverty Thief had made any opportunity of escape seem hopeless and few dared to believe life could be different. But all of that changed when Bernard and Isabel, a quiet unassuming couple in the community, visited some family members in another region. What so amazed them was seeing

how other communities had broken free from the Poverty Thief by joining together and learning skills. Bernard tells us what happened when he returned home:

"I decided I must tell everyone what I had seen and encourage them to come together to start a community group. I visited every home in my community, walking many miles speaking to people and encouraging them. It was not easy as no-one believed we could improve our lives, but I would not let them give up."

Poverty Thief has stolen everything you have?

Bernard's determination paid off and 120 people joined the group when it started in January 2017. Since then they have visited other groups to see how they develop projects, they have met together to listen to radio programmes on developing skills, and taken advice through social media. The change in attitude has been extraordinary! The hold of the Poverty Thief is rapidly slipping away.

Dennis describes their new determination:

"When we visited different projects, like carpentry, we had a desire and a wish to start them here. We know our lives will change when we are skilled because our standard of life will change. If God helps us with these projects we will have money to pay for medical treatment, send our children to school and feed our families."



The group has already started pooling their resources to increase the area of land they use to grow crops and have learned how to tend and feed the soil. This has massively increased their yield. Now they are selling some vegetables and with the proceeds are starting tailoring and carpentry workshops. They have found people in neighbouring communities willing to teach them and started to explore where they will sell their new goods.



The group has applied to TWAM for sewing machines, carpentry and agricultural kits which they will receive in early 2018. These will be the weapons they will use to banish the Poverty Thief once and for all.

Isabel has worked tirelessly to help Bernard set up the community group. She says:

“We wanted development as a way out of poverty. We wanted to do it ourselves by bringing the whole community together. We know our lives will change once we have our tools. Then our group will support our whole community. That will be a very good day.”



The Poverty Thief thought its hold on this rural community was unbreakable, not least because nobody believed it could ever change. But Bernard and Isabel saw a different future when they visited distant family and brought that new future back with them.

Courage and determination alone however could never have defeated the Poverty Thief, it required the tools to do so. Thankfully they were introduced to Tools with a Mission and together what seemed impossible has been made possible. We'll give Bernard the final word:

“Our lives will change because we will be skilled and with TWAM tools we will be able to start workshops here that will benefit our whole community.”



How do you overcome heartbreak when the Poverty Thief strikes?

Patricia knows the devastating power of the Poverty Thief and the heartbreak it can so easily bring. Patricia lives in Uganda and the Poverty Thief has never been far away, he was there at her birth and followed her throughout her childhood.

Patricia's story began with her birth as the youngest of six children, born to a single mother. Her mother's story was one of pain and tragedy with no choices and no opportunity to escape the downward spiral of poverty. Patricia's mother was unable to work and struggled to provide even the most basic support for her young family. There was never going to be an opportunity for Patricia to go to school and she has never had a single day's schooling.

It was heartbreaking for Patricia and her brothers and sisters to see other children in the community go off to school, but knowing that they would never join them, and that without an education they had little chance of ever breaking free of the never ending struggle just to survive.

Tragically, some did not survive and Patricia lost half of her brothers and sisters to weakness and illness.

The hold of the Poverty Thief was complete on this young family. Could it possibly get any worse? Tragically the answer was yes!

In 2016 Patricia's mother died of exhaustion and weakness, simply unable to struggle anymore.

The remaining children were split up amongst distant relatives and Patricia has lost contact with virtually all of them. She was effectively alone in the world.

But thankfully that changed, and we'll let Patricia continue her story in her own words:

"I never had an opportunity to go to school when I was young, but by the grace of God I heard at my church camp about Mindset. I asked more about it and I decided I must go to visit them and see if they would help me. I went along and they were so welcoming and Maureen became a mother to me."

Mindset is TWAM's main partner in Uganda and they work with vulnerable young women. They train them in tailoring, provide an education, business skills, counselling and motivational support.

Maureen is the founder of Mindset and a truly inspirational woman with the biggest heart imaginable. It didn't take Maureen long to realise the plight of Patricia and bring her into the love and care of the Mindset family. Finally someone was challenging the cruel hold of the Poverty Thief.

Maureen



Patricia spent a year training with Mindset and completed her tailoring course at the beginning of 2017. The result is extraordinary. Patricia tells us:

“When I heard about Mindset I had lost hope, but through Mindset God has brought me back. I learned tailoring and specialise in making bags. I am now making bags to help pay for my schooling so that I can catch up. I can now afford to buy clothes for myself. I hope that I will be able to go to university to learn design.”



Maureen helped Patricia track down an Aunt who, in return for Patricia helping with house duties, gave her the use of the small kiosk by her gate. She has turned this into a small bag making workshop. It is still a struggle for Patricia and she still cries when she talks about her mother and her childhood. She can still only just support herself and funding a university course will be the greatest challenge of her life.

But the Poverty Thief has finally been given his marching orders thanks to Mindset and the gift of a TWAM sewing machine and haberdashery kit. The wonderful conclusion to this story is that Patricia is not willing just to help herself get free of the Poverty Thief, now she wants to help others. Again in her own words:

“I am now in my church choir and support the work of my local church. I go to visit the sick in hospital and go on church missions. I look forward to giving something back to other girls and single mothers, as I know what my mother went through. Mindset went with me and held my hand on my journey and I want to do the same for others with God’s help.”

The Poverty Thief doesn’t stand a chance! Thank you for helping TWAM and Mindset defeat him and give Patricia a future she never dared to dream of.

You might like to note that Maureen from Mindset will be the guest speaker at our National TWAM Day and AGM on Saturday 16 June 2018, venue to be confirmed. Put the date in your diary now!

How do you support your family when t

It is often said that people can survive almost anything if they have hope, but when hope dies all is lost. For people living in areas of Northern Uganda, the Poverty Thief's grip is so tight and so cruel they are in real danger of losing all hope.

Natural disaster through drought has caused crops to die, high unemployment means few have the money to buy food and nobody has money for schooling. If this were not enough, many families are child-headed and trying to survive without the support of parents who have been lost to HIV/AIDS. How do you find the hope to keep going in such terrible times?

The answer is found in one of TWAM's partners, Opuyo. They realised the only way for child-headed families to survive natural disasters and unemployment was through education and skill learning.



But how do you find the resources to build a school and skills centre at times like these?

How do you find the money to equip them and pay teachers and trainers?

How do you break the Poverty Thief's hold and give hope to the hopeless?

The answer for Opuyo was to turn to TWAM for the resources to build the school and crucially to fund it.

So in 2016 they received carpentry, building and electrical kits to build the school and skills centre, along with garage kits, knitting and sewing machines were then used to equip the skills centre. Opuyo has no money to buy materials and wool for the training so this was sent by TWAM as well to get them started. The sewing machines and builders' kits are being put to good use, as you can see.

The young people in the skills centre are now producing enough goods to support themselves, the skills centre and the school.

The Poverty Thief steals away all hope?

This means that despite all the attempts of the Poverty Thief to deprive the most vulnerable of child-headed families of food, education and training, Opuyo continues to give hope. It is testament to their determination to help meet the needs of their local community through a self-sustainable project that is robust enough to weather the effects of drought and natural disaster.

Opuyo has achieved so much already thanks to TWAM tools and their immense vision and determination, but they have far bigger plans. They are now using the tools to start animal husbandry and plant citrus plantations to further guarantee their income when the Poverty Thief strikes. Through this they hope to reap an abundance to sustain their project, but they could not do this without TWAM tools.

Over 30 years, experience shows us that the best way to tackle vulnerability to natural disasters is to partner with charities who equip people with a diverse range of skills, so they can overcome the Poverty Thief and be more resilient to the natural disasters that inevitably come.



The Poverty Thief does not need to be an accepted part of life; it is possible through our tools and partners like Opuyo to give hope in even the most hopeless of times. Tools really can be the difference between life and death for whole communities. Thank you for helping Opuyo to offer life and hope to so many. We'll give the last word to Opuyo:

“We appreciate and are so grateful to TWAM who have supported us to ensure that we can offer relevant practical training skills to the rural youth and community”.

How do you stop the Poverty T

Paying for education is the biggest challenge for most families across Africa. Primary education in Uganda can cost just £4 a term, yet still be a huge challenge for parents. Secondary education can see this figure jump to £40 a term, a seemingly impossible amount to raise. This is compounded by the need of the poorest families to ask their older children to work to support the family.

So how can children go to school while providing vital income for their families? It seems an impossible question to answer, but one that must be answered. TWAM works with many charities providing the answer, one of which is World Action Fund (WAF). WAF works across Uganda setting up Youth Working Groups that provide both vocational skills and education.

Like many of the best ideas, it is simple and effective. The income generated by the skills centre helps the students pay for their secondary education whilst also providing vital income for their families. It is a win-win situation.

The Youth Working Groups are equipped with TWAM tools including sewing machines, carpentry, builders', plumbers' and mechanics' kits.

The girls invariably choose to learn tailoring, ably helped by the books and patterns supplied with the machines. The boys generally want to learn carpentry and the building trades.

But how are they managing to earn enough to support their education and their families?



Thief stealing your education?

Stephen is on the carpentry course and tells us:

"I am generating income for WAF with my carpentry tools and helping sustain the project. I am making doors."

We can see from the photo that the doors are fantastic!

Another example is the Arua Youth Working Group who are learning aluminium fabrication and have won a large contract to fit out offices in their town. One of the students, also called Stephen, has completed his fabrication course and education and says:

"The building tools I have received are good, they have changed how I work."

For Stephen a new livelihood has begun, thanks to your help.

Peter Odama from WAF tells us:

"The tools too are doing a great work. The trainers are finding it much easier to teach with the tools, which we could not have bought locally. The tools have paved the way for 50 youths to find work with companies both in Kampala and Arua."



By providing the tools to set up the training centres, TWAM has helped defeat the three main weapons of the Poverty Thief; the stealing of education, the stealing of family security through lack of income and the stealing of skilled employment. All three have been defeated through the vision of WAF and the tools of TWAM.

Thank you for supporting this vital work. Through your support, tools and prayer, the Poverty Thief doesn't stand a chance.



Together we'll defeat the Poverty Thief

The Poverty Thief tries to destroy lives through famine, disaster, death, lack of education and unemployment. But together we can defeat him through the gift of training, life skills and tools. Together we can replace poverty with abundance.

**I'll help destroy the Poverty Thief,
please accept my gift towards his defeat.**

- ☐ £10 gives a Sewing Kit or Box of School Books
- ☐ £25 gives a Sewing Machine or Agricultural Kit
- ☐ £35 gives a Computer Kit, Mechanics Kit or a Knitting Machine



Please accept my gift of £ _____ (Cheques payable to Tools with a Mission)

Name: _____

Address: _____

Postcode: _____

Email: _____

- ☐ I would like to Gift Aid my donation, please send me a Gift Aid form (please tick).
Or you could donate through our online tool kit donation store at twam.uk.

We'd love to stay in touch

At Tools with a Mission we take your privacy seriously and will only use your personal information to administer your account and to provide you with the communications and services you have requested from us.

From time to time we would like to send you our magazine and other mailings and/or our regular e-newsletter by email. If you consent to us contacting you for this purpose please tick to say how you would like us to contact you:

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