



A carpentry kit for £30 given to a disabled self-help group gives them the chance to earn a living and the respect of their community.

NEWS

On location for Workaid

The past nine months have flown by since becoming the CEO of Workaid and in September I finally had the opportunity to visit the work we support in Zambia and Uganda. Having lived and worked in East Africa in the '80s and '90s, I was excited about returning to a region that has a special place in my heart.

Firstly I travelled to Zambia and was accompanied by Workaid Trustee, Moyra Zaman, then I proceeded on my own to Uganda. The purpose was to get to know the people and organisations who are our representatives on the ground, to see the projects we are supporting and to meet many of those who have benefitted from training and are now putting

Adrian Hatch, CEO

that training to good use. In Zambia, Workaid operates through the Vwila Foundation which is ably run by its Director, Emmanuel Zulu, and the organisation's Administrator, Maureen Mtika. I'd heard many good things about Emmanuel before I travelled to Zambia and I wasn't disappointed. Emmanuel is extremely knowledgeable, has excellent working relationships with government right down to the people and projects supported. Added to this he is very humble and a really nice guy. It is difficult to go into detail regarding all that I saw, but I have focussed on a couple of examples of people and organisations that made a great impression on me.



Zambia Association of Children with Disabilities (ZACD)

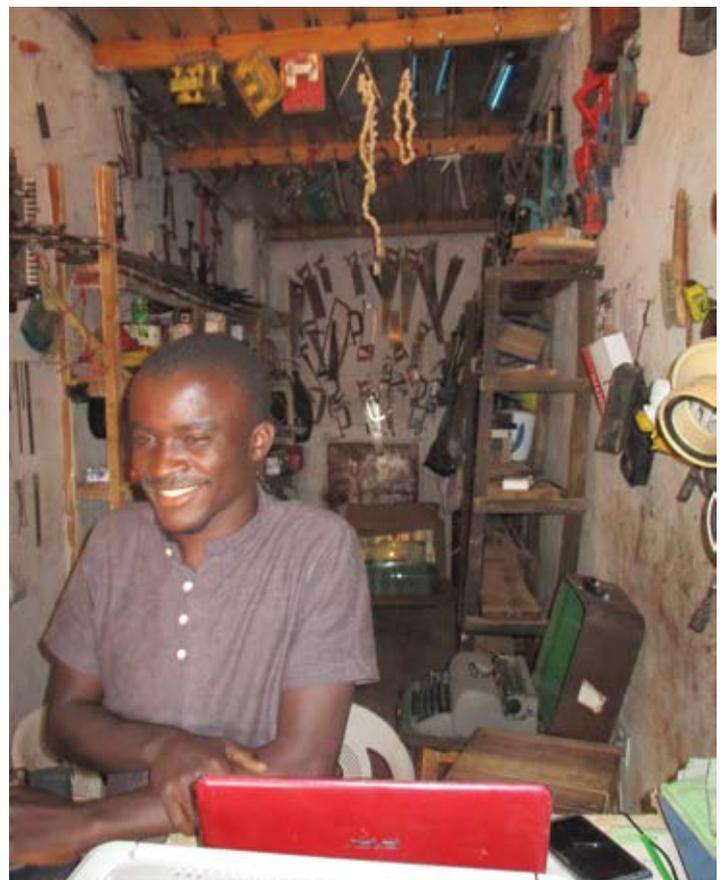
G Hand Works

This was established by Gilbert and two other graduates from the Lusaka Youth Resource Training Centre in 2015. The other two members have subsequently left, but over time Gilbert has taken on other graduates from the Training Centre and often provides internships to students.

The business is based 100 kilometres to the West of Lusaka in the small market town of Nangoma. Metal fabrication and construction form the bulk of the business and it has grown to such an extent that Gilbert now employs 34 local people; he is now a major employer in the town.

He still has a good number of tools donated by Workaid which have been a real benefit to them. They were currently building two small scale guesthouse complexes and had renovated a staff house at a local hospital as well as re-roofing the children's ward. They had even constructed a sheet steel press that allows them to fabricate door frames.

This is a wonderful example where Workaid has provided tools and equipment to a Youth Resource Centre and tools to young people in order to establish a business.



Gilbert in the workshop

Agape of Hope Female Youth Development Association

One of the best organisations I visited in the West of Uganda. They have a clear focus and haven't tried to do too many things, as a consequence they have a very strong programme.

They received five manual sewing machines and one knitting machine from Workaid in 2014 and a further eight manual machines and two knitting machines in 2017. Forty girls are currently training and the training lasts for six months. Those who have graduated have mostly been able to either establish their own business or gain employment. Of the last group of graduates, 18 have set up their own business, two have been employed by the local hospital to make uniforms and three are working for local companies.

They produce bags, clothes and sanitary pads for local Secondary schools. The Association follows up with visits to the girls every month for the first six months after graduating.

The Association is now looking for a small shop to rent in the local town in which the girls who are training can sell the items they produce. They hope to have this up and running in the next few months.

This is a great example of a successful focussed organisation. By focussed I mean a smaller organisation that provides skills training in specific disciplines such as tailoring and hairdressing only or motor mechanics and sheet metal fabrication only. As a rule, smaller organisations tend to perform better when they focus on fewer disciplines.



Conclusion

Not every project I visited was a success and I would argue that we try and help too many organisations. Going forward I am very keen that we support organisations which are well managed, focussed in what they do and which provide starter tool kits (provided by Workaid) to help groups of young graduates to establish their own businesses or gain employment.

I am keen that we do more to ensure young people are taught the management skills to make their businesses a success.

Finally, I want us to strengthen the capacity of our partner organisations on the ground to more effectively assess, monitor and evaluate new and existing projects.

Workaid should be so proud of how it has positively contributed to improving the lives of so many people, particularly young people, over the years. That said there is the potential to do even more! These are exciting times at Workaid and I am so happy and proud to be part of this remarkable organisation.

Adrian Hatch, CEO

Your Views Help Us Plan for the Future

Earlier this year we conducted a survey and a big thank you goes out to over 300 who completed it, giving us an excellent 23% response rate.

These results, coupled with Chief Executive Adrian Hatch's findings from recent project visits in Africa, give us a good foundation to develop the charity in the next few years.

Suggested plans will be discussed and communicated to trustees, staff and volunteers.

Our apologies to those who found it difficult to offer an opinion to some of the questions, but all views have been equally important to us.

Highlights from the survey include:

- **Where you live** - Half of respondents live within 5 miles of Chesham and three quarters within 25 miles, a good opportunity to gather new supporters from further afield
- **Age range** - 57% who replied are over 65 and 12% are under 45
- **Are we well known?** - Just over half feel we are very or quite well known in the community and we look forward to further promoting the charity's work
- **Fundraising and what to do with funds** - A majority feel we should broaden sources of funding and distribute more tools in Africa. We do need more funds to support distribution, training and development; to ensure we have well run and effective projects. A measure of success is not just the number of containers we send, but by how well the tools and equipment are utilised. Three quarters are aware that levels of funding, numbers of volunteers and the size of our current premises are limiting factors in our expansion
- **More countries** - A majority feel we should consider supporting other countries in Africa. Over time we aspire to reach out to more communities where we can really support them well
- **Donations** - 60% have donated to us financially, including 46% of volunteers which is amazing given the priceless time commitments offered by volunteers without which we couldn't function. Thank you! 57% are likely to give again more regularly, which is hugely encouraging, and a similar number would recommend others to do so
- **Wills** - 8% have included Workaid in their Will. 34% said support with Will writing would be useful and we hope to develop this resource. 15% were against us being more upfront about asking for Workaid to be considered in a Will. This is, of course, a hugely sensitive area but one that can be very important
- **Communications** - as well as this newsletter, the shop, web site and social media, you tell us that word of mouth is an important way of spreading our message and we appreciate your help
- **Recommendation** - around two thirds are likely to recommend volunteering

There are many thoughtful and sometimes critical comments which are being reviewed to help us learn and be sensitive with our plans. A comment echoing many supportive ones is:

“Workaid is a great charity, and I especially like the fact that we can bypass authorities to reach the beneficiaries directly.”

Thanks again for supporting the survey and our work. Full details of the survey will be added to our website.

Container News: Ray Richards



Workaid's latest container left The Old Boot Factory, our headquarters in Chesham, for Zambia on 19th November 2019. It's named Ray Richards and holds a very special place in Workaid's history.

Ray and his wife Jean are two of the original founders of Workaid from April 1986, that's almost 34 years ago. For many years Ray worked as our Administrator, at a time when we only had one computer. In fact he was there before we had any computers, when we relied on the typewriters that we continue to renovate!

In 2006 Ray retired from Workaid, but luckily he couldn't stay away long. He's Workaid's popular font of knowledge, the guardian of archives and he continues to willingly help out in many diverse ways whenever extra hands are needed.

It was with heavy hearts that we learned that Ray has cancer earlier this year. The idea to name a container in his honour was put forward by his many friends at Workaid and Ray and Jean graciously agreed.

Ray's container is packed with 849 boxes containing 41 carpentry sets, 14 masonry kits, 12 horticultural kits, 55 sewing machines with 16 irons for tailoring, knitting machines, typewriters and more besides.

We look forward to reporting on the progress of its contents, which will benefit so many projects, in our next newsletter.



Craft Workshops in The Hive



There are many new topics in store for 2020 to appeal and tempt crafters with new challenges. In keeping with the 'Reuse Recycle' ethos that drives Workaid, we have developed fun workshops to create beautiful, functional items using organic and recycled materials: Eco printing, due in April, and the new Printing to Stitch series. We are mixing creativity with technology in workshops making photo books using digital devices and another to take the fear out of Facebook, Twitter and blogging - all of which offer wonderful new opportunities and possibilities.

The workshops are easy to book and fun to do, just go to workaid.org/workshops Why not sign up to receive Crafts newsletters at the same time?

We're experiencing a shortage of manual sewing machines and would appreciate everyone's help in sourcing more manual Singers.

One of the rapidly expanding sections within Workaid is Haberdashery. Each week it's always a hive of activity (organised chaos?!) with incoming bags and boxes being stacked, sorted and re-packaged before sending to Packing for Africa or for sale in the Shop. Well done everyone!



The Big Give 2019

My “Doctor Bag”



Help young people in Zambia and double your donation! Workaid is participating in the Big Give campaign again this year, raising money for Youth Resource Centres in Zambia. At the YRCs young people from difficult backgrounds learn a variety of trades, giving them the ability to help themselves out of poverty. Around 90% of those graduating from the YRCs go on to meaningful employment or self-employment – a much better ratio than for the rest of their cohort. We have previously visited the YRC in Lusaka and know from first-hand experience that they have a really effective model. Maurice graduated from there and now has a small successful tailoring business. If we can reach our Big Give target then we will be able to send two containers with 20 tonnes

of refurbished tools and equipment which will be used to change the lives of 1,500 people! Go to www.thebiggive.org.uk and search for Workaid to find out more. **To send the two containers we need to raise a total of £10,000 during the giving period of midday on Tuesday, 3rd December to midday on Tuesday, 10th December.** Every £1 we raise during that period will be matched thanks in large part to the generosity of the Coles-Medlock Foundation who are again supporting us. **This means that for every £1 you can donate, Workaid will receive £2!** For donations to be matched they have to be made online and they have to be made in the specified period. Our website will be updated with details.

A story shared to Workaid’s Facebook page by the inspirational local GP and BBC contributor, Dr Nighat Arif. Ten years ago my father proudly presented this bag to me. It caught his eye as he was walking past the Workaid Shop in Chesham. This unique charity shop is run by volunteers who refurbish tools and send them to Africa. “It’s your Doctor Bag, to carry all your tools in” my father said. I looked at my bag today, after a night on call and realised it is more than just a bag for my tools. As a Locum GP, the bag literally holds all ‘my tools for my trade’, I can set up a clinic wherever I like. It also provides a sigh of relief to my colleagues and patients when I cover a clinic last minute. It provides comfort to a sick family member who sees me walking up their driveway. The doctor is here. BUT to me it provides safety on a home visit in the night. It provides me information when I am unsure of what the diagnosis is, or when I am scared to give bad news. It provides me comfort when I am panicking about my son Qasim getting yet another fever... my trusty doctor’s bag gives me thinking time as I rummage around in it and pretend I am in control. This is my doctor’s bag and without it I would be lost.



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The benefits of the ‘Tools for Life’ programme in Zambia is so real that even the Government has recognised the efforts and is currently willing to partner at a large scale. The projects that have had a lasting impact are the graduating youths from Youth Resource Centres and Correctional Facilities.

Emmanuel Zulu
Director, Vwila Foundation, Zambia

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