

Empowering Young People in Africa Through Vocational Training

Focus on Uganda

This was my first visit to Uganda since September 2019. COVID restrictions had prevented me from flying for over two years, so when the opportunity arose I was keen to travel again.

We are placing emphasis on developing partnerships with like-minded UK based organisations who support programmes in Africa in the same geographical areas. These partnerships will allow us to reach more young people and improve our cost effectiveness as an organisation.

Uganda had one of the longest lockdowns in the world keeping educational institutions closed for around 18 months. Schools and vocational training programmes officially re-opened in early 2022 but have struggled to get student numbers back to those in 2019.

My first stop was at Kira Model Farm, an agricultural and vocational skills training centre near the town of Guyaza, Kampala run by Amigos, a UK based organisation. Recently we started to supply their training programme with tool kits for graduates.

The second part of my trip was to Fort Portal and Kasese in Western Uganda. I re-visited a number of the projects I last saw in 2019 as well as new ones. Our focus in recent years has been in the west of the country where the levels of poverty are highest and young people are most in need of help.

We work alongside Eryeza Kasiringi (Kas) who is our local assessor. He helps us assess new projects, whilst also managing Albert Valley, a progressive secondary school. His school has been so successful that the local authorities asked him to establish a vocational training unit. More recently, the Ministry of Education's Directorate of Industrial Training has named the school as an examination centre where all vocational learners within the local district will sit formal and informal final exams.

During my visit I saw various well run, dynamic projects delivering fantastic vocational skills training programmes to young people. However, some were not so inspiring, but these nonetheless have helped young people albeit in a more limited way.

Previously, we have sent tools to many projects but it has proved difficult to carry out follow-up visits to see how the tools and equipment are being used. These visits are so important to understand project requirements and their challenges and to help make them successful.

In the future we will work with fewer projects in Uganda. Those we do support will receive a comprehensive package of tools and equipment to ensure the best training outcomes for young people and the community. Regular follow-up visits will be made over a three-year period to assess their progress, student achievements and any additional needs.

We have learnt that one of the best ways we can help young people upon graduation is to provide tool kits to enable them to establish their own business. Tool kits can be carpentry, masonry or tailoring etc. With this in mind all projects in Uganda will receive business start-up tool kits which will either be for individuals or small groups of three or four people.

I was able to visit several young people who had established a business since graduating from a Workaid support project. Many of them were now employing and training other young people in their chosen trade. Their success has enabled them to send their family members to school, to rent or build a house and provide food, clothing and other household essentials.

The next two years will be incredibly exciting for Workaid in Uganda. We will target fewer projects but they will receive comprehensive assistance. We will also place far greater emphasis on providing young people with the tools they need to establish their own business once they complete their training. We see this as a vital component of our strategy to help eradicate poverty and create decent work and economic growth in some of the poorest and most deprived areas of Uganda.

Find out how Workaid is making a huge impact in Uganda by reading the stories of true entrepreneurs; Gevina, Raymond and Jofrey.

Adrian Hatch, CEO



Address

The Old Boot Factory
71 Townsend Road
Chesham
HP5 2AA

Contact Us

Phone Number: **01494 775220**
Email Address: admin@workaid.org
Website: workaid.org
Registered Charity: **1041574**



Follow Us



Agape of Hope Female Youth Development Association

Gevina - Tailor

Gevina heard on the local radio that **Agape of Hope** were looking for young people to enroll on their tailoring and design course. Gevina applied, was accepted and successfully completed the course after six months. She had saved up enough money to purchase a sewing machine and rent a small single room facing a side street in Kasese.

As with most of the young people who complete vocational training she believes in giving something back. Over the past three years she has trained 10 young women for a small fee in tailoring and design. On completion of the training four of the young women have each purchased a sewing machine and set up businesses.

Gevina now has a second sewing machine and sells the garments she produces at the local market. She is able to pay the school fees for her three children and she is saving up to buy a small plot of land nearby as an investment for her family.



"It makes me proud to help other girls similar to me."

Vision of War Victims Association (VWVA)

Raymond - Carpenter

Raymond is a current carpentry trainee at **Vision and War Victims Association (VWVA)** in Kasese. Workaid had provided a comprehensive set of carpentry tools. Because of COVID his training was postponed but has now resumed.

Raymond, a school dropout, was the perfect candidate for the VWVA because that is who they were *"specifically looking for"* to train.

Raymond is really enjoying the training and when he finally completes his course he wants initially to work for someone else to gain experience. He then wants to save until he can set up a workshop in his village, specialising in making beds and tables. Raymond is excited about the future and what he can achieve. He has a passion to help other young people who have dropped out of school, to give them the same opportunity as he was given.



Basu Community Rural Development Organisation (BACORUDO)

Jofrey - Metal Fabricator

The **Basu Community Rural Development Organisation (BACORUDO)** was first established in 2009 in the wake of the devastation that had ripped through the country following years of conflict. They are committed to providing essential social, health and welfare and vocational training facilities which offer vital support to develop communities that are most in need.

Jofrey trained in sheet metal fabrication and welding. As an orphan he was identified as a vulnerable young person so received additional support. He completed one year's training and went back for a further year to gain more work experience.

He was motivated to study sheet metal fabrication and welding because he had seen several people in his village making a good living in this field.

COVID interrupted his ambitions to establish his own business but in 2020 the association opened a branch in the small town of Bwera 40 kilometres from Kasese. They asked him to become a trainer in Bwera and establish a metal fabrication and welding training workshop.

He is currently training five students and fabricating beds, window frames, doors and sewing machine treadles.

Interestingly Jofrey saw a fabricated treadle purchased by the association brought from Kampala. He thought he could do much better and built one for the association which was made to a much higher standard. He has since constructed two more for the association and several for the general public.

"I saw machines Basu Bandu were buying, and thought 'I can do better!' And I did!"

All items produced by the training workshop are sold and the proceeds contribute to Jofrey's salary, the workshop's running costs and for small allowances for the trainees.

Jofrey would ultimately like to open his own workshop but he is thoroughly enjoying his current role.



Focus on Zambia

Working with Secondary Schools in Zambia to Provide Vocational Training

Workaid's partner organisation in Zambia, the **Vwila Foundation**, has formed strong working relationships with various government departments to support their efforts to provide young people with the best possible vocational training. The latest partnership is with the Ministry of Education in rural Mumbwa District in Western Zambia.

The Ministry of Education realises that not all young people who want to go to secondary school are suited to follow an academic pathway so they also provide a vocational route. However, most schools have limited infrastructure and insufficient quantities of tools and equipment. This deters young people from enrolling.

Those that study vocational training initially work towards a Level 3 TEVETA (Technical Education, Vocational and Entrepreneurship Training Authority) qualification over two years. TEVETA is the equivalent of the UK's City & Guilds. When they have completed this course, many leave school. However, the Ministry of Education is very keen to encourage students to continue studying for a further three years to advance to the higher Level 2 qualification. Those that perform particularly well and achieve this can go on to University or a dedicated technical institute to attain the highest Level 1 qualification.



Bulungu Secondary School



Chalabana Primary School

Over the next three years we plan to support Vwila and Ministry of Education to develop and deliver comprehensive vocational training in 12 schools in the district.

Vwila has already started supporting two schools in the Mumbwa district, Chalabana and Bulungu School. In each, refurbishing a classroom to provide tailoring and design training and building a large workshop for carpentry and masonry students to do practical training.

Adrian visited both schools in September 2022. They are perfect examples of how projects should use and maintain tools and equipment. Chalabana School has constructed robust and well-laid out shelving to store all the tools we had supplied. Bulungu recently won the regional trade skills exhibition competition for schools and went on to represent the region at the national finals where they finished third.

We will carefully monitor the progress of each school for at least a five-year period. Subject to the project achieving its aim of increasing the numbers of students accessing vocational training and improving their performance, then further schools will be added. We are particularly keen to see how the graduating students perform, to assess the standards they attain and how far they progress in their chosen pathway.

Chaselife Foundation Skills Centre

Mercy - Tailor

Mercy is three months into a tailoring and design course. When she completed her secondary education, a friend told her of the **Chaselife Foundation Skills Centre** in Garden, a suburb of Lusaka.

Curious, she went to see what it was about and was really impressed and told her mother who agreed that she should attend.

Having enrolled, Mercy finds the course to be well thought through and taught. They do have the challenge of not having enough machines for every student, including those Workaid provided.

When Mercy graduates she would like to start her own business designing and making clothes. She loves working with 'chitenge', a colourful local fabric and would like to specialise in making dresses and t-shirts, which she is really good at.



Mercy on the right





Chaselife Foundation Skills Centre

Erica - Tailor

Erica completed secondary school and although she lives quite close to the **Chaselife Foundation Skills Centre**, she didn't know it existed until her stepfather told her about it. They visited it together and her first impressions were not that positive and she didn't think that tailoring and design were for her. However, she decided to give it a go and very quickly fell in love with learning how to design and make clothes.

When she completes her course, she intends to find a tailoring apprenticeship so she can gain experience while putting aside savings to set up her own business.

I Am Zambian Academy

Evelyn - Tailor

Evelyn is an extremely confident young lady who is six months into a one-year tailoring and design course. Her sister had studied food production at the **I Am Zambian Academy** and recommended that Evelyn apply to study there.

Prior to leaving secondary school, Evelyn had established her own small tailoring and design business at home in order to generate a modest income to support her studies.

Evelyn has already decided she wants to focus on designing and making wedding and special event attire. In five years' time, she has a clear vision of developing a successful business, which will employ and support young girls.



The Big Give Campaign

As in previous years, Workaid will be participating in the annual Big Give Christmas Challenge. Our focus for this year will be on the development and provision of quality vocational training in Zambian secondary schools, as we reported on earlier in this newsletter.

Out of the 10-12 million people who leave school each year only 3 million find meaningful employment. This is due to a lack of tools and equipment, as well as ill-equipped workshops, which further exacerbates this problem.

During the next three years, Workaid aims to support over 1500 young people to gain the highest standard of vocational training. We will not only provide tools and equipment for their training but also work in partnership with schools to construct covered workshops and refurbish classrooms for tailoring and design courses.

"I have learnt how to use the sewing machine. I like sharing skills and now at home I can use the machine to make napkins and shirts and help my family to eat."

- Josephine, a secondary school student



Bulungu Secondary School

The expansion of opportunities and access for young people to pursue a career in a vocational trade sends a clear message of the value such skills can bring to their communities. On graduating the students will then be better placed to secure employment or establish their own business, lifting themselves out of poverty and inspiring the next generation.

Our target this year is £12,500 and if you donate online during the campaign, for every £1 you give, Workaid will receive £2. What better way to make a donation than knowing that whatever you give will be worth twice as much?



Donate and Double!



**Make your donation online from
12PM, 29th November 2022 to 12PM, 6th December 2022**
To donate visit **workaid.org/biggive** and follow the instructions

Our New Website

Over the past few months, we've been busy working away on a website redesign to give it a much-needed refresh. This mammoth project would not have been possible without the collaboration of Tomas Pulalski of Framework Digital and hard-working team members Mike and Emona. Together we have created a website which puts a spotlight on the inspiring young people that our work supports.

Check out our new look and we'd love to know what you think and which stories resonate with you the most.



visit workaid.org to take a look!

Our Impact

We work with like-minded organisations and place great value on ensuring these partnerships achieve maximum impact for young people in Africa. We are currently developing new comprehensive monitoring and evaluation systems with all our overseas partners.

These will place emphasis on measuring how young people use the vocational skills they learn to escape poverty and drive positive and sustainable development in the communities in which they live.

Volunteering

Interested in learning more about volunteer opportunities and finding something that you are passionate about?

Join our **wonderful team** of volunteers refurbishing and preparing items for youth vocational training projects in Africa.

All you require is enthusiasm!

We have volunteer openings across the board in a variety of roles so why not get in touch to arrange a tour of the workshop.

Explore in more detail on workaid.org/volunteer or scan the QR code.

