

Empowering Young People in Africa Through Vocational Training

Increasing our impact in 2024

Welcome to Workaid's Winter Newsletter. This has been an exciting year for us. Our primary focus of helping schools and training organisations to provide quality vocational training to thousands of young people in Africa has continued apace. New projects and partnerships have been developed and put in place to increase our impact.

I was able to travel to Uganda and Tanzania in the first part of the year to see the organisation and projects we support. More recently I was in Zambia, visiting the work of the Vwila Foundation, our main partner organisation there.

Helping even more young people

I found it particularly satisfying to see what has been achieved in Zambia. The first part of my visit was reviewing the Vwila Foundation's aims over the past three years. Their current strategic plan is coming to an end so it was a great opportunity to analyse the progress made and set objectives for the next three years.

We had planned to support 90 schools and vocational training institutions with tools, equipment, educating instructors and, in some cases to build and refurbish vocational training classrooms. Ultimately, we were able to help 140, a significant increase on what was planned. Combined, these organisations have taught over 15,600 young people over the last three years, most of whom have successfully gained a formal qualification.



Providing specialist training

Increasingly, we are investing in projects that provide specialist training. The best example of this is manual and electric sewing machine maintenance and repair. In early October, the latest cohort of 10 secondary school tailoring teachers completed an intensive Workaid-funded residential training programme. This is the third group of teachers we have trained over the past three years, proving the importance both Workaid and the Vwila Foundation place on this type of training.

Zambia has no formally recognised qualification in sewing machine maintenance and repair, yet there are hundreds of thousands of these complicated but incredibly useful machines in the country. Wherever you go you see people in small workshops making the most intricate garments, or repairing damaged clothes, but very few people know how to service and repair them. In fact, when visiting projects, I often find several machines tucked away, broken and just waiting for someone to get them back up and running.

With this in mind, The Vwila Foundation has started consulting with the Technical Education Vocational and Entrepreneurship Training Authority (TEVETA) of Zambia to establish a curriculum which will provide a formal qualification in this subject.

We plan to open a sewing machine service centre in Zambia in 2025. The primary purpose will be to service and repair both manual and electric sewing machines. Some machines will be sent from the UK while the rest will be taken from projects we have supported in the past. A group of trainees will be taught using a curriculum developed by Workaid and The Vwila Foundation which will then be assessed by TEVETA. The plan is to have the course formally recognised by the end of 2025.

The Director of the Vwila Foundation, Emmanuel Zulu, will be carrying out a survey to determine the number of broken machines that have been provided to our projects and will initiate a plan to reinstate them. Of the machines submitted by each project, half of them will be returned once repaired and the remainder will be given to new projects. This will extend Vwila's ability to provide additional tailoring training to young people.



Students of the sewing machine maintenance course pictured with Adrian

Looking to the future

Workaid has started to do much more than just send tools and equipment to projects. Establishing vocational training classrooms and workshops in rural secondary schools in Zambia has been a great success. By the end of 2024 we will have supported 11 schools in this way.

We are also establishing a specialist sewing machine servicing and repair workshop in Western Uganda. This includes the construction of the workshop and supplying the tools and equipment. The workshop will be large enough to teach other trade skills like carpentry, motorcycle mechanics, masonry, metal fabrication and welding.

While providing quality refurbished tools and equipment is at the core of what we do, funding projects directly is becoming more integral and vital to our work. As a result, we maximise our positive impact on people's lives and help the projects we work with to achieve greater sustainability.

Providing funds only occurs after we have conducted thorough due diligence on the partner, in order to ensure they are well managed and have robust accounting systems in place.

We will be looking for new ways in which we can increase our funding to strengthen our financial resilience and to ensure we can underwrite the projects we support.

Workaid enables thousands of young people in Africa to benefit from quality vocational skills training every year, quite an accomplishment for such a small organisation. I believe the approach we are taking is the right one. We have excellent partners in the three African countries we work in and their projects are completely aligned with our ethos as an organisation.

Adrian

Adrian Hatch, CEO

Carpentry students in Zambia



Emmanuel Zulu, Director Vwila Foundation



Teacher and students at a newly refurbished classroom in Zambia



Inspiring Case Studies from Zambia

Here are a few examples of how your donations have made a difference to people's lives. You can read more on our website.

Future Pillars Vocational Training Institute Deborah – also known as “Mama Workaid”

Deborah's parents passed away when she was young and she was raised by her aunty. Deborah was only able to complete her formal education at primary level, which is common in Zambia. She married in her late teens and had three children. Unfortunately, her husband left her soon after her third child was born.

She and her aunty knew she needed to do something to feed and educate her children, so in 2020 she enrolled at Future Pillars Vocational Training Institute, in Kabwe. We supplied sewing machines and tools to this institute in 2017 for their vocational training courses.

Deborah had a particular interest in tailoring and enrolled on that course. However, after only a few weeks the principal had to speak to her as she was performing so poorly. He explained how learning to be a tailor could support her family and change her life. Very quickly she became the most outstanding student in the class! She used an electrical sewing machine donated by Workaid, which she wouldn't let anyone else use. So, the other students gave her the affectionate nickname 'Mama Workaid'.



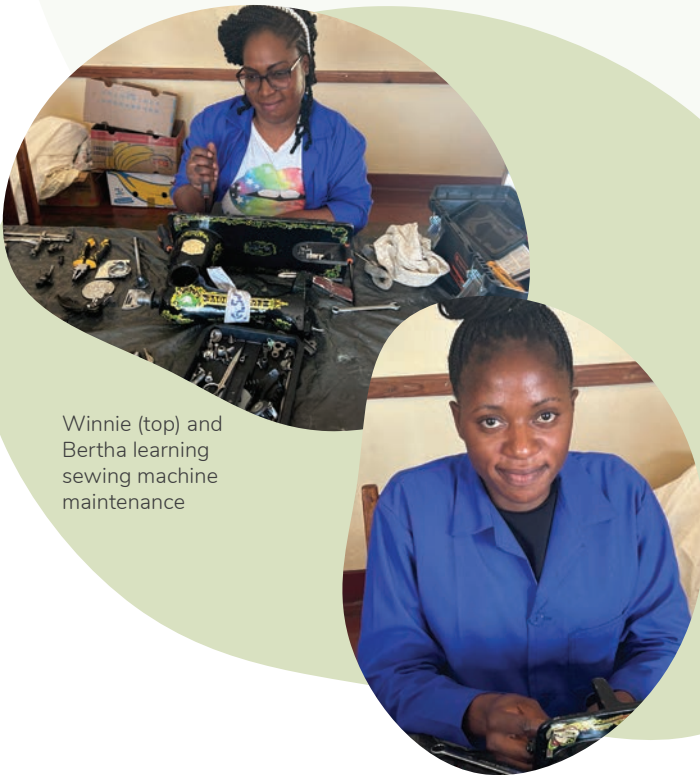
'Mama Workaid' and her sewing machine

Sewing machine repair and maintenance training for secondary school teachers Bertha and Winnie

Bertha and Winnie are two of the teachers who took part in intensive sewing machine repair and maintenance training funded by Workaid in Kabwe. We have provided equipment to the secondary schools where they both teach tailoring and design.

Bertha was particularly keen to take part in the training as there wasn't anyone close to her school who could maintain and repair sewing machines. She found the sewing machine repair and maintenance course of huge value and believes that with the skills she learnt, not only will she be able to keep all her sewing machines working, she will also be able to pass on her knowledge to her students.

Winnie has found the practical training she received very valuable. Her initial experience was somewhat challenging, but she now feels extremely confident, especially working with manual machines.



Winnie (top) and Bertha learning sewing machine maintenance

Roy, an instructor teaching sewing machine repair and maintenance in Zambia



Inspiring Case Studies from Zambia

Bulungu Secondary School

David

David, age 20, graduated from Bulungu secondary school in late 2022. He completed his studies in design and technology with his best subjects being woodwork and metal fabrication.

After graduation, he started his own furniture making business, believing that he could produce furniture of a much higher quality than others in the area.

He works under a tree outside the small two-bedroom home he rents for his family. The quality and design of the furniture David makes is impressive, as pictured here. Since his house is a distance from the main road, he faces the challenge of promoting his business. However, we are confident that word will spread quickly about his amazing work. Earning enough income to rent his home and provide for his wife and young child is a significant accomplishment for him.

David is an excellent example of how your donations enable young people through vocational training.

David's advice to anyone graduating:

"Don't wait for employment to come to you, employ yourself!"



David with some of his excellent quality furniture



Why Zambia?

68.5%
unemployment rate

60%
of the population live below the national poverty line

48%
of the population are classed as extremely poor

Between 2022 and 2024 Workaid helped **105 vocational training projects** and **35 secondary schools** with tools and equipment in Zambia, helping over **15,600 students** gain formal qualifications

Volunteer News

Nothing happens without the support and efforts of our wonderful volunteers, who, along with many other tasks, refurbish donated tools to a high standard in order for us to ship them to vocational training institutions and secondary schools in Africa. You can read more on our website.



Container Benji left for Zambia in May

Benji has been a long-term volunteer at Workaid, attending the Hub for 13 years. As a thank you for his dedication, Benji has been recognised with a container named after him.

Benji looks forward to his visits to Workaid each Monday and Tuesday. He gets himself ready and leaves the house saying he is on his way to work. He enjoys the camaraderie of being in an environment with a variety of people including his friends Ben and Hamad.

"I enjoy working on the fabrics and tools."



Benji and Hamad

Container Tony left for Tanzania in August

Since 2006, Chris has volunteered for Workaid, primarily refurbishing knitting machines.

In 2016, he had the opportunity to visit several Workaid projects in Western Uganda and gave knitting machine maintenance courses using his knowledge and expertise. He made it possible for the vocational training centres and projects to service and repair machines locally, enabling them to become self-sufficient.

When Chris was asked to name a container, he chose 'Tony' in memory of his late brother-in-law. Tony was a local preacher for 50 years in Leeds. His love of books about his beloved Yorkshire led him to volunteer for Book Aid.



Tony



Chris helping to pack container Tony

Volunteer News

Container Joyce leaving for Tanzania

As a tribute to his wonderful wife of 27 years, Norman named our container to Tanzania, Joyce.

It contains many tools and kits to support projects in the Mwanza region of Northern Tanzania. This is a new programme in partnership with the Kalwande Vocational Training Centre and Tools for Self-Reliance – Cymru. Norman has been a volunteer refurbishing sewing machines (along with many other tasks) for 25 years.

He met Joyce, his second wife, at the Maidenhead speakers club, a club he founded back in 1983. Joyce was an amazing person who knew a lot about Workaid as she supported Norman on many of his speaking engagements for us.

“Joyce would have been incredibly proud to have had a container named after her.”



Norman with container Joyce



Joyce, Norman's wife

Container Peter 1996 leaving for Zambia

Penny, who had volunteered for nine years, spent a month in Uganda with her son Peter in 1996.

Peter and his friend, Zanna, flew out to Uganda in 1995 to provide teaching support to a school on a rural island. In 1996 Penny and her husband visited Peter and camped on an adjoining island for Christmas: “it was the most memorable amazing month and we met so many wonderful people”. Penny has since returned to Uganda many times and felt naming our container Peter 1996 was a fitting tribute to her son and the time they spent together.



Penny inside container Peter 1996



Peter, Zanna and Penny in Uganda in 1996

Fundraising

BBC Radio Four appeal

Many of you will have listened in to Eric Knowles, antique expert, on our BBC Radio 4 appeal in June.

Eric talked about how Workaid is empowering young people in Africa to gain vocational skills to support their families. We are delighted that this appeal raised over £60,000. This has enabled us to fund our work to empower young people. Thank you.



Eric Knowles voiced our BBC Radio 4 Appeal in June

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Our Shop with a Difference

Our 'charity shop with a difference' is a key part of our fundraising efforts, specialising in tools and hardware, gardening equipment, craft materials, sewing machines, and general haberdashery. The stock changes every week based on the generous donations we receive from the local community. Don't forget to buy your gift vouchers in time for Christmas!



Gift vouchers

Buy now
only in The Workaid Shop

The perfect Christmas gift
for Crafters and DIYers



Do you like what we do?

If you have some spare time
you could join our wonderful
team of volunteers.

All you need is a little
enthusiasm.

We always need volunteers in our workshop
and shop, to sort, refurbish and pack tools
and equipment, drive our vans and help in
The Workaid Shop.

Find out more: workaid.org/volunteer



SCAN ME

Wishing everyone a Happy Christmas!

Thank you for your support throughout 2024

Give a gift and change a life

If you are looking for the perfect gift, look no further:

You can choose from our selection of virtual gifts and pay safely online.
A gift card will be sent to you in the post (please allow time for postage).

Simply visit
workaid.org/virtual-gift-shop

Your gift will make a positive impact on people's lives and help the projects we work with achieve greater sustainability.

We help individuals to become self-sufficient so that they can earn a living, buy food and send their children to school.

This enables us to continue our work to empower young people with the skills to build a sustainable future.



Scan the QR code to buy a virtual gift



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