



The Difference We Make In **AFRICA**

Transforming
Young Peoples'
Lives



Every Story, A Future

This collection brings together success stories from the three countries we work in: **Uganda, Tanzania, and Zambia**. Across diverse landscapes and communities, they highlight the impact we can have on young people through our collaborative work on the ground.

Each country has its own distinct context shaped by culture, history, and environment. Yet there are recurring themes of **resilience, innovation, and the power of community-led change** throughout.

The stories captured here are not just snapshots of impact, but living examples of what is possible when local knowledge and collaboration meet.

As you read through these stories, we invite you to reflect on the strength of the individuals featured whose experiences continue to inspire us to empower young people through vocational training.



Uganda

Jofrey's Story

2016 – 2022

As an orphan, Jofrey was identified as a vulnerable young person and offered training. He chose to study sheet metal fabrication and welding after observing several people in his village earning a good living from it.

He completed one year at Basu Bandu Rural Development Association (BRUDA) and returned for an additional year to develop his skills.

The COVID pandemic interrupted his ambitions to establish his own business. However, the association later opened a branch in Bwera, a small town 25 miles from Kasese. They asked him to become a trainer in Bwera and establish a metal fabrication and welding training workshop. Here, he trains five students and fabricates beds, window frames, doors and sewing machine treadles.

Jofrey saw a fabricated treadle BRUDA purchased from Kampala and thought he could do better. Shortly after, he fabricated one which was indeed made to a higher standard. He made two more for the association and several for private clients.

All of the items produced by the training workshop are sold and the proceeds contribute to Jofrey's salary, the workshop's running costs and small allowances for the trainees. He is thoroughly enjoying his current role and would ultimately like to start his own business.



Jofrey fabricating a sewing machine treadle in 2022

2023

Jofrey continues to train students and fabricate treadle sewing machine bases for BRUDA.

Besides his work at BRUDA, he also does other metalworking jobs to supplement his income.

As a motivated and high-quality fabricator, he has built a successful business. He has been subcontracted to Albert Valley Vocational Institute for Karugutu (AVVIK) to fabricate their sewing machine bases.

With great pride, Jofrey now uses a full-face auto-darkening mask provided by us instead of the unsafe sunglasses he had been using.

Jofrey has saved the money he made through welding, fabrication, and training, with plans to build a house in his village.



Jofrey wearing the new welding mask

2025

His metalworking business has been doing so well that it has enabled him to buy two fields and cultivate cocoa as a cash crop. He has saved enough money from both to build a house.

Jofrey's success highlights the profound impact vocational training has had on his life. Along with practical skills, he has also acquired language skills, and now speaks excellent English. This is a significant achievement given that he only spoke his local language in 2022.

As for BRUDA, they have now moved from their rented office and workshop in the town of Bwera, on the border with Congo, to a small town about five miles away in a hard-to-reach location. Here, BRUDA have been able to purchase a small plot of land and have built an office and a small training workshop.

After talking to the team, they shared that **Jofrey personally funded the costs of the new workshop construction.** While the scale of the help Jofrey provided to BRUDA was considerable, it is normal for former trainees to help others either financially or by continued education.

Fiona Lhukogho

Fiona, 23, graduated in tailoring at Bulhalho Foundation (BUF) and was awarded a Department of Industrial Training Diploma. She rented a small room in the local village and received a manual sewing machine and haberdashery kit from us. Now, she trains a student in tailoring and hopes to continue with others as her business grows.

BUF have given her work to make beekeeping suits and she sometimes has to subcontract these to other tailors to help with the workload. Her ability to work to a high standard and deliver suits on time has helped her secure these contracts.

As a single mother of a five-year-old child, Fiona prioritises her savings to ensure she can send her child to a good school. Providing for her family with the money she earns from her practical skills is something she is extremely proud of.

Her next goal is to save enough money to buy an electric sewing machine which will enable her to do more complicated work. However, her long-term dream - as with many other graduates - is to build a small house for her family.

Fiona's story demonstrates how the tools we send transform lives, not just for students but for their families as well.

Fiona, tailoring
in her workshop



Jovia Ithungu

As a mother of two young children, 31-year-old Jovia focuses on providing for her family. She previously ran a mobile money kiosk that generated a small income. However, in order to earn a better living, she decided to apply for vocational training at Kirabaho Premier School (KPS). We have been sending tools, equipment and sewing machines to this school since 2019.

Since training as a tailor, Jovia has established her own workshop opposite KPS. We provided her with a sewing machine to help get her business started. She has a natural talent for tailoring and her knowledge and skills have led to her being hired by KPS as a trainer.

Now, she primarily makes school uniforms for children. Although the work is seasonal, her recently acquired skills have opened up new income opportunities.

She is saving to build a small house and pay school fees for her children. It is clear from her motivation that she will continue learning and has a bright future ahead of her.



Jovia, tailoring school uniforms



Jofus Ayebale Kyambi

Jofus, 27, made and sold chapatis at the local market but felt he could do more with his life. This led him to enrol on a metal fabrication and welding course at AVVIK where he graduated in 2024.

Since then, he has established a small, but very successful, workshop in Karugutu where he produces high-quality products. AVVIK has also hired him to fabricate metal windows and doors for the new centre of excellence they are building with our support.

Due to his work being in such high demand, they have placed several students in his workshop to learn practical metalworking skills.

Jofus places high importance on saving money with the goal of building a house for his family. He wants to become a **“big boss”** in the community.

When he was asked “What advice would you give anyone who sells chapatis on the market?” He answered:

“They should come to me and I will train them so that they can transform their lives.”

He is already a very successful artisan and we look forward to hearing more about his future accomplishments.



Jofus with some of his work

Muhindo Wisborn

Muhindo is a 20-year-old orphan being trained by Jofus. By acquiring vocational skills, Muhindo hopes to create new opportunities for himself. In addition to training, he receives lunch and a small percentage of profits from large jobs. When he finishes his training, he hopes to be given the tools to start his own business.



Muhindo and a fellow trainee



Jofus with his trainees

Tanzania

Hakizetu

Hakizetu is an organisation based in the outskirts of Mwanza town in Tanzania. The organisation helps young people particularly young women who are vulnerable or victims of domestic or gender-based violence by providing them with life and business skills training. They are also taught vocational skills such as tailoring, design and crafts.

Upon graduation, they are either helped to gain employment or supported to establish their own small business.

Along with Tools For Self Reliance-Cymru (TFSRC) we will supply sewing machines for both the training at Hakizetu and for those who, upon graduation, want to establish their own business. We also plan to hold sewing machine servicing and repair workshops at the Hakizetu premises. This helps develop valuable skills to further strengthen their ability to maintain their businesses.

Students with their
instructors (on the right)



Students displaying
their handmade
products

Vesta Zachari

Vesta is one of the students being trained at Hakizetu.

21-year-old Vesta lives with her seven siblings and their aunty. After dropping out of secondary school without any grades, she decided that she needed to take control of her life and find employment. Her aunty persuaded her to apply to Hakizetu and train as a tailor. She quickly developed a passion and natural ability for sewing and designing clothes.

Vesta joined the programme in July 2024 and has already completed her practical work experience by working and training with a local tailor.

Together with two of her friends and fellow trainees, she is determined to start her own business. Upon completion of their training, the group will be given two sewing machines as well as initial start-up funds to cover the cost of rent for a small workshop for the first few months.

Vesta aims to own her own successful business and wants to train other girls in tailoring and design. In her words:

"I want to be a great teacher".

Like Vesta, nearly all graduates of the projects we support give back by training other young people through their business.



Vesta, tailoring student at Hakizetu

Sam Donatus

26-year-old Sam is the leader of 'Sam Shoe Making', a group of three shoemakers based on the outskirts of Mwanza town. Sam initially trained at Kalwande (one of the projects we work with) and now works alongside the other shoemakers to make excellent quality shoes and boots. The group were delighted to purchase two sewing machines and hand tools from Kalwande which will help them develop their skills and grow their business.

The group take on trainees for one year. During this time, they share their knowledge and provide hands-on practical skills. These trainees will then attend Kalwande for the next sewing machine maintenance and repair course. As they gain experience they will earn money from the shoes they make and sell in the business.

By placing importance on craftsmanship and skills development, the group foster a cycle of learning and growth for its members and trainees.



Sam, shoemaker



Sam and a co-worker

Upendo Smiths Group

Upendo Smiths Group is a group of blacksmiths located in Geita, a region in Tanzania that has significant small- and large-scale mining taking place, particularly for gold.

They have purchased blacksmithing tools and equipment from Kalwande to enable them to make pickaxes and other manual digging tools for the local miners.

Additionally, TFSRC commission them to fabricate a full range of Fair Trade tools. These are sold in the UK by TFSRC to generate an income for both.



One of the blacksmiths at
Upendo Smiths Group



Upendo Smiths
Group

Zambia

Secondary Schools

As part of our partnership with the Vwila Foundation, we have helped rural secondary schools in the Mumbwa district of Zambia provide much-needed vocational training for their students.

Between 2022 and the end of 2025 we aim to have helped 50 schools with tools and equipment

New vocational training workshops have been constructed in ten of these schools and several classrooms have been fully refurbished for tailoring classes.

The latest vocational training workshop is being constructed for Kabwanga Secondary School. The local community have played a very important role in the construction process by providing free labour to excavate the footings for the contractors to begin building.

The main construction phase of the project was completed at the end of 2024. In addition to finishing the electrical work, the exterior and interior of the building were painted and we look forward to seeing the workshop in action.

By providing trainees with a fully functional space for learning new skills, this initiative will improve the quality of vocational training in the area.



Interior of the new Kabwanga workshop



Kabwanga Secondary School workshop



Tasintha Programme

Along with the Vwila Foundation, we have worked with the Tasintha Programme in Zambia for over five years. The programme has 28 centres across the country offering six to twelve months of focused skills training. Their aim is to empower young women, aged between 14 to 35 years old, to learn a vocational skill allowing them to escape a life on the streets.

One of the busiest centres is Chipata Tasintha which is located in a highly populated area of Lusaka. This centre was founded by Professor Nkandu Luo, a specialist in microbiology and HIV.

Zambia has one of the highest HIV prevalence rates globally, with approximately 11.2% of adults aged 15 to 49 living with HIV (*Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS 2024 report*).

Brenda Chama Kabaso, the manager of this centre was trained in weaving at another centre. She now teaches young women how to weave on the loom we provided. As looms are not very common in this region, it provides new income opportunities for the students.

“Tasintha” is a vernacular word in Nyanja, a language spoken by over 15 million people in Southern Africa meaning “we have transformed”. This is a perfect word to describe what we hope to accomplish with this programme; to transform the lives of young women through vocational training.



Young women setting up a weaving loom



Brenda (right) sharing her skills and training



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