

Tools and Training for Livelihood in Malawi

2018-2019

BOOK 1



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A project run by The Global Concerns Trust and funded by The Scottish Government



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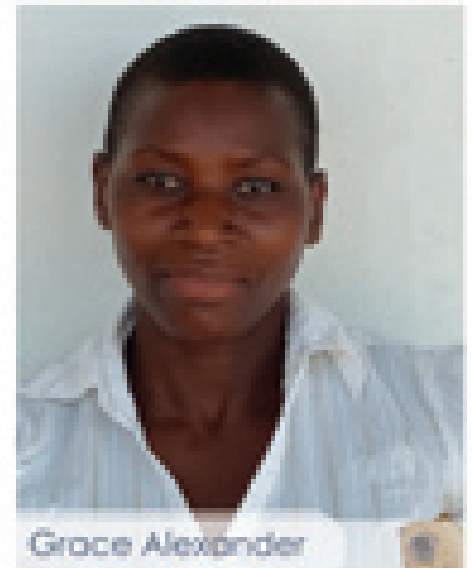
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The Global Concerns Trust is a Scottish based charity that aims to reduce poverty and empower vulnerable people through partnering organisations that implement sustainable grassroots development projects.

We currently support projects in India, Kenya and Malawi.

We have worked with our partners in Malawi for 11 years to provide vocational training and start-up tools to hundreds of adults with disabilities, helping them to start up small businesses and generate an income to support themselves and their families.

In 2018 we secured further funding from The Scottish Government to continue our training programs in Malawi until 2023.

This booklet details The Global Concerns Trust's current projects in Malawi 2018 – 2019, describing the training that is happening, the work in Scotland and Malawi that make it possible and the impact of the training so far.

We have produced a film about this project, which can be viewed on our website

www.globalconcernstrust.org.uk

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THE PROJECT

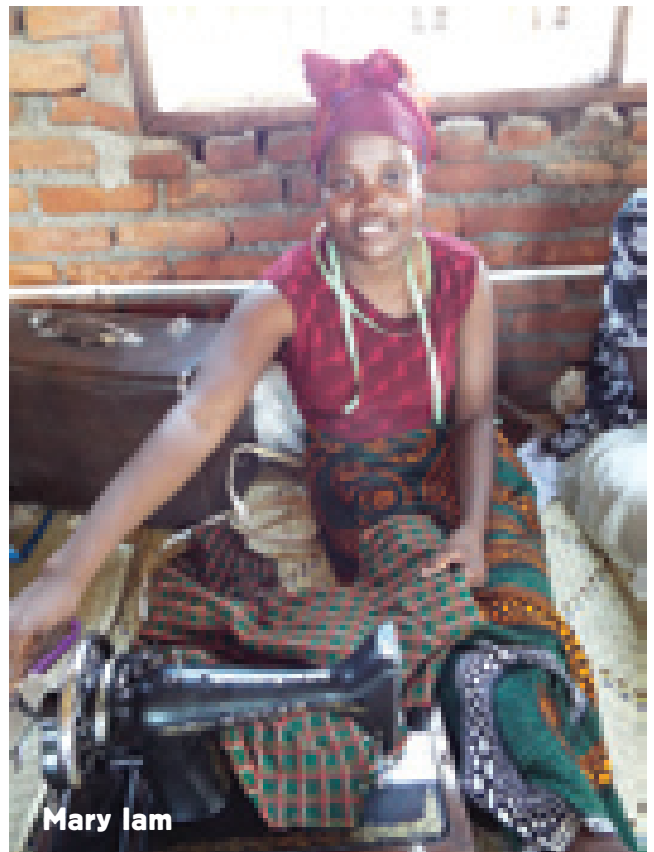
Malawi is a beautiful country with a rich culture and heritage. It is also very poor, with 50% of Malawi's 15 million citizens living below the poverty line. Poverty is especially high in rural areas, where there is minimal infrastructure or access to services.

It is estimated that of the world's poorest people, those who lack access to basic necessities such as food, clean water, clothing and shelter, 1 in 5 is a person with disabilities.

People with disabilities are more likely to live in poverty due to multiple barriers to accessing education, health care and employment. In addition, people with disabilities experience further challenges such as lack of disability aids and medical treatment, stigma and prejudice, higher chances of being subjected to violence, isolation and disempowerment. People with disabilities have been widely excluded from many development processes.



Women and girls with disabilities live with double discrimination due to existing gender inequalities. For many disabled people, supporting themselves and their families is extremely hard and many are completely dependent on their extended families or are forced to beg to survive.



This project aims to reduce poverty in Malawi by empowering people with disabilities, equipping them with the skills and tools needed to be self sufficient and earn a living.



Tools and sewing machines are donated and are refurbished by volunteers at tools workshops in Scotland and Northern Ireland.

They are then shipped to Malawi and are used by our partners, MACOHA and KODO, to provide vocational training in carpentry, tailoring and cane furniture making in the rural districts of Nkhotakota, Salima and Ntcheu.

Our trainees in Malawi receive 6 – 12 months vocational training, business training, AIDS prevention, reproductive health and gender awareness training. When they have finished training they receive the tools and machines they need to start their business.

All trainees also undergo organic manure training and are given a solar panel.

Trainees receive on-going support and are visited by project workers at home to help them with the early stages of setting up their businesses.

They are also invited to attend skill sharing workshops, where common challenges and successes can be shared with their fellow graduates.

Through this continued contact with trainees, we are able to measure the long-term impact of training upon their lives as well as continuing to assist them in any way we can.

NEW FUNDING

In 2018 The Scottish Government announced that The Global Concerns Trust would be one of 11 Scottish organisations to receive further funding under their 2018 – 2023 Malawi Development Programme. This funding will enable us to continue our training and support a further 329 people with disabilities to become financially independent.

We are delighted to continue to be a part of The Scottish Government's exciting work in Malawi and look forward to working with them and our Malawian partners to reduce inequality and champion disability rights.



Desire Mkandawire



Valerie Coutts



Spencer Gelonghe



Samuel Maylosi

Owen Jester



MACOHA

MACOHA are at the forefront of work to help men and women with disabilities to be more independent, self-sufficient and recognised as equals within Malawian society. Their work includes supporting mainstream teachers to effectively include children with disabilities, providing access to cataract operations, orthopaedic clinics, ear health services, HIV/AIDS awareness training and support to mothers of children with disabilities.

We started our partnership with them in 2007 by equipping their vocational training centres in the cities of Lilongwe and Blantyre with much needed tools and sewing machines.

MACOHA (Malawi Council for the Handicapped) is a national organisation established by the Government of Malawi, to implement policies and strategies on disability.

We then piloted with MACOHA the implementation of a vocational training program for adults with disabilities in rural Dowa district, finding local craftsmen to train people in carpentry and tailoring. Trainees welcomed the opportunity to train locally and not to have to travel too far from home to access training.

Trainees are attached in groups of 4 or 5 to a local carpenter, tailor or cane furniture maker and train with them as apprentices for 6–12 months. They are able to learn how to run all aspects of an active business as well as the necessary technical skills.

We have since expanded this model of vocational training to rural Nkhotakota and Ntcheu districts.



Skill sharing workshop Nkhotakota



Itenga Nkhoma

Graduates come back together to attend skill sharing workshops, where they share their experiences and challenges and give each other support and advice. The workshops are designed to help graduates continue to work on product and skill development with marketing strategies that will help them continue to grow their businesses.

Disability Mainstream Training

We are also working with MACOHA to run disability mainstream training in Malawi to help other development organisations be more inclusive when designing and implementing their programs. People with disabilities have been excluded from development processes for too long and MACOHA will share their extensive expertise to help other organisations recognize and minimize the barriers that exclude people.



KODO

KODO also work with other partners to provide mobility aids and sustainable agriculture training to local farmers. KODO was founded and is directed by George Chimpiko, who himself has physical disabilities and has dedicated himself to helping other people with disabilities in Malawi. They have trained 180 adults with disabilities through this program, 55% of whom are women, supporting them to start their own businesses.

Trainees live together at KODO for the duration of their training and the sense of community and fellowship that develops between the trainees is palpable. For many

Our other partner, KODO, is a grass roots organisation based in Salima near the shores of Lake Malawi. They provide vocational training courses in tailoring and cane furniture making to adults with disabilities.

of them, this will be the first time that they will have had the opportunity to leave their homes and meet other people with disabilities. The importance of these friendships, together with an increased sense of confidence and self worth that comes from the training, cannot be underestimated.

All trainees also learn how to make organic manure, a skill they will pass on to their communities once they get home. This will help the fertility of the soil, reduce soil erosion and increase agricultural yields as well as saving people the cost of having to buy chemical fertilizer.





Cane furniture training



George Chimpko, in his Jimmy hat



Making organic manure



Skill sharing workshop

As well as the vocational training and tools, all graduates are also given solar powered home energy systems. Graduates will be able to use this technology to provide light for their families, increase their business output and generate further income by providing mobile phone charging services.



KODO graduates with their solar panels

Alex Kasiya

Alex is 33 years old, is married with 3 children and lives in Mitchenjere Village, Salima.

Both of Alex's legs are deformed due to a childhood illness. He used to make and sell charcoal and had an income of 30000mk (£33) per month, with which he struggled to support himself and his family. Alex took part in the tailoring training at KODO in 2017.

When he finished he was given a Singer sewing machine, some start up materials and a solar panel. He is now a skilled tailor and runs a busy tailoring shop selling dresses and shirts.

He is also being paid to teach 4 students and has invested in a small grocery business. Alex now has an income of 150000mk per month (£166), an increase of 400%. With his increased income Alex is able to meet all day to day needs and has been able to buy bricks and iron sheeting to build a new house. Alex is saving money and is working hard to grow his business.



Liz is a volunteer in the tools workshop at Garvaid Edinburgh and she has been re-furbishing tools since 2000.

Liz loves working on tools. She also loves going dancing at the disco and being with her friends. Liz has a busy schedule at Garvaid and as well as refurbishing tools she also takes part in gardening, cooking, joinery and bell ringing.

When Liz works with the tools, she is incredibly concentrated. Liz mainly works on small tools, cleaning them, getting the rust off them and sanding handles. She is particularly good at the fiddly jobs that a lot of the other volunteers do not have the patience for, like sorting through hundreds of zips and buttons for the haberdashery kits.

"I have a great laugh with my friends in the workshop. Everyone takes turns to make the tea". Liz doesn't let the fact that she is the only female volunteer in the workshop bother her; like most things she takes it in her stride.



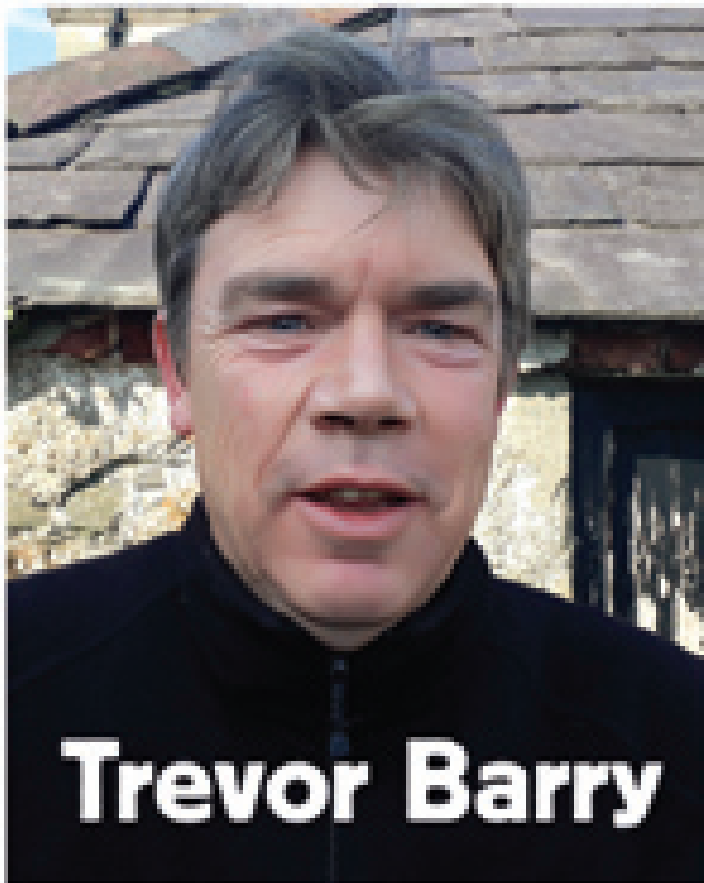
Alima Selami

Alima is 38 years old and lives with her husband and 4 children in a remote village in Nkhotakota district.

She suffers from weal of the lower limbs and leg length discrepancy, which severely affects her posture and mobility. Before training in cane furniture-making, Alima earned a small amount of money (8000mk/£9) per month from farming and her husband earned £16 per month from fishing.

Since Alima started her cane furniture business, her income has increased by 400% and the family's income has more than doubled. With their increased income they have been able to buy mattresses, blankets, better clothes, food, bricks and iron sheets and the living standards of the whole family has substantially increased.

Alima told us her business has benefitted from some 'curious' customers who are surprised to see that a woman, and especially a woman with disabilities, can make such nice furniture.



Trevor Barry

Trevor, 51, is a tool volunteer at Downpatrick and lives in the village of Ballynahinch, Northern Ireland. Trevor studied engineering at university and worked for British Aerospace as a designer.

In 1991 Trevor became unwell, developing schizophrenia. He had to leave his job, lost all his money and even contact with his family. For 4 years he travelled around, effectively homeless, finding casual work where he could on building sites. When his father died Trevor got back in contact with his mother, who helped him to seek treatment. Together they moved over to Northern Ireland to start afresh, but the first few years were very hard for Trevor, who felt isolated and depressed.

On World Mental Health Day in 2006 Trevor saw a leaflet about the tools workshop in Downpatrick and he started as a volunteer. Being a part of the tool workshop transformed Trevor's life.

"It definitely helps me. It helps my concentration. If I wasn't here, I would be sitting at home, just watching tv and listening to the radio. Coming here gives me a routine. I have learnt new skills. It's very friendly and welcoming and I have made loads of friends over the years. I am a lot more settled than I have ever been."

"I didn't think I would have done so much. I had given up hope a bit. Now I can look back at recent history and see I have done something positive and that encourages me to keep going."

Trevor enjoys working to refurbish smoothing planes – "They are intricate. It is so satisfying when you get the blade sharpened. There's a link to my previous work with tools. I like working with my hands – it's like occupational therapy and I am helping other people at the same time."

TOOL WORKSHOPS

The number of workshops involved with this project is expanding and we now have tools and sewing machines being donated and refurbished at 7 workshops across Scotland and Northern Ireland.



Warren, Brian, John and John



shipment of tools to Malawi

The tools and sewing machines are refurbished by groups of adults with learning difficulties, mental health difficulties, international volunteers, people with dementia and retired people.

The quality of the tools and Singer sewing machines that are donated make them worth shipping across the world, as they are durable and can be repaired.

They are also recycled. Without the input of the workshops in Scotland and Northern Ireland, we would be forced to buy tools and machines in Malawi, which are cheaply made, break easily and cannot be repaired.

This project promotes skill development in Scotland and Malawi, engaging volunteers in international development, including people with learning and mental health difficulties, across the UK.

There are many skills involved in refurbishing the tools and machines and the work can be adapted to suit any technical ability.

The volunteers enjoy the social nature of the tools groups and find it really rewarding to be helping individuals so directly in Malawi. In addition, this project contributes to a reduction of waste in the UK in terms of the recycled tools and sewing machines.



Quality in Life

Garvald Edinburgh is a Scottish Charity offering creative opportunities and support for people with learning disabilities. They are inspired by the ideas of the educator and philosopher, Rudolf Steiner and have been operating in Edinburgh since 1969.



Win Hatton, Warren Canham, Elizabeth Halliday, Malcolm Lindsay and Joseph Gibney modelling shirts made by one of our Malawian graduates, Wabanga Chakutanda.



Left to right: Malcolm Lindsay, Kevin Marshall, Warren Canham, Liz Halliday, Lesley Berter, Dahoud Hussain, Michelle Cowe and Doug Brigmen.

MILLTOWN COMMUNITY

Milltown Day Workshop, South Aberdeenshire, was set up in 1996 to provide practical work activities for local people with a range of disabilities. Restoring tools has been one of our most popular activities in our Day Workshop for nearly 20 years. The work is done by people who have some disabilities, but more importantly are enthusiastic and like to have a good laugh!



Back left to right: Benny Wilson, Richard Park, Juliet Stewart, Marie Miles, Simon Deaborough, Tom Buchanan, Ben Perry, Elizabeth Costa, Steven McDonald, Emma Evans, Elizabeth Robinson, Connor Milne, Johannes Galt, Raymond Howwood, Valerie Costa.
From left to right: Corey Duncan, Colin Campbell, Tony Greene, Philip Wainman, Michelle Parkinson, Stuart Saunders, Eric Denton, Duncan Smith, Gill Miles



THE ECOLOGY CENTRE, FIFE

The Ecology Centre is a charity that brings people and nature together. They offer environmental education, volunteering opportunities and also create and manage habitats for wildlife.



Robert Smith, Bill Ashcroft and Fred Varney



Tools For Solidarity

There have been tool groups operating in Belfast since 1984. Tools For Solidarity arose from this group in 1992 and has been running a volunteer managed workshop since then. We have a team of international and local volunteers some of whom are people with disabilities/learning difficulties.



Mustafa, Youssef, Yaprack, Andrei, Ross, Maria, Jim, Michael, Jesska, Manon, Jim, John, Stephen, Angeline

The Downpatrick workshop opened its doors to volunteers in January 2004 in a workshop cold enough to ensure the volunteers stuck around - they stuck to all those freezing metal tools.

The Downpatrick workshop is open to all and particularly welcomes people with mental health issues. The workshop is open 4 days a week and there are currently about 30 volunteers who drop in each week. We are delighted to work together with all the tools groups in Scotland to support The Global Concerns Trust.



Right to left: Stephen Wood, Gary Bulmer, Hilary Cosgrove, Michael O'Neill, John Corry and Emmanuel Walters, Chris Vaughan

THE MOURNE GRANGE CAMPHILL COMMUNITY

The Mourne Grange Camphill Community in Killeel runs a small workshop focusing on cane furniture making and carpentry kits.



Geoff Claxton, Connor O'Hare, James Ferguson



BEANNACHAR CAMPHILL COMMUNITY

Camphill Beannachar offers residential care and day work placements for young adults with learning disabilities. Besides a strong land-based work programme with a farm, walled garden and 27 acre estate, Beannachar runs a variety of craft workshops and is delighted to host, since the summer of 2015, a part-time "Tools For Self-Reliance" tools workshop. Although currently a part-time workshop, it is very popular with the students and strongly supported over the past 10 years by the Elton Rotary Club. We will be looking to run it full time in the future.



Tilmann Reinhardt, Orla Pirie, Jodie Mullen, Sarah Johnston, Rory Fraser

IMPACT



To date, 400 adults with disabilities in Malawi have undergone training and received start up tools. The impact upon graduate trainees has been transformative, with 97% having succeeded in setting up new businesses. We have recorded an average increase in income for trainees of 308% and an increase in trainees' families' income of 186%.

In real terms this translates to a substantial improvement of living standards for trainees and their families;

being able to afford better food, basic household goods, livestock, medicine, labour, agricultural tools, seeds, land rental, labour and even better housing. Graduate trainees have shown that their businesses are expanding, with 56% employing workers, many able to invest in secondary businesses for the family, and 80% saving money in village savings groups. **As significant as the increase of income to graduates, is the increase in their confidence, independence and ability to plan for the future.**



Naomi Chiwa



Limboni Yeliko



Trinnes Nyirenda



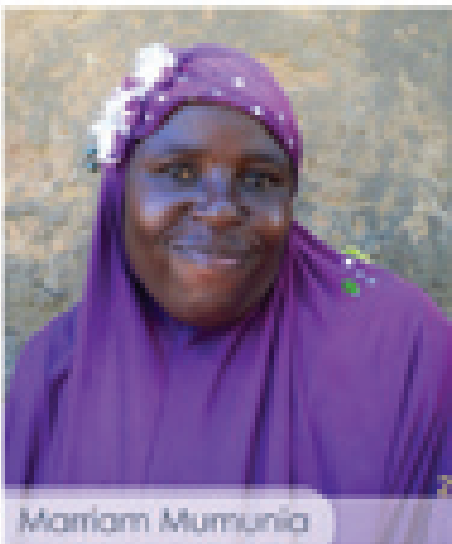
Regina Songazouatu



William Sam



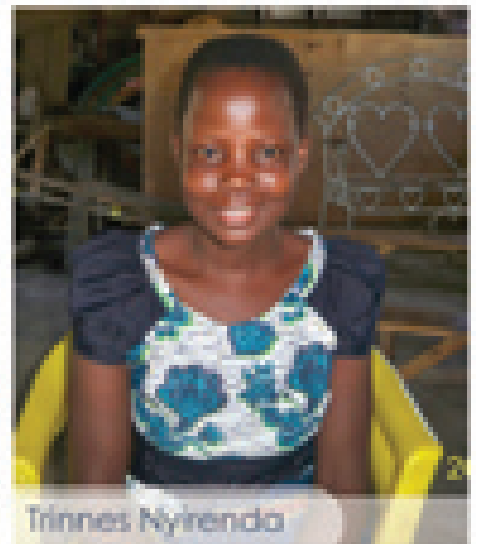
Tumio McDonald



Mariam Mumunia



Dorothy Machiki



Trinnes Nyirenda



This project is funded by the Scottish Government as part of the Scotland Malawi Partnership Agreement.

We would like to thank them, together with our partners KODO, MACOHA, The Scottish Tools for Self Reliance Workshops, The Ecology Centre and Tools for Solidarity for making this project possible.



The Global Concerns Trust is a registered charity in Scotland: SC025640

Written by Emma Duncan

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