

Tools for Self Reliance Project Update – 2015

Throughout 2015 Tools for Self Reliance ran 31 projects in Malawi, Sierra Leone, Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia. These projects provided 4,053 people with the opportunity to take part in training to develop or improve practical skills, alongside business and life skills.

Some highlights include...

Lilongwe Youth Organisation (LYO), Malawi

This six month project working with Lilongwe Youth Organisation (LYO) trained 25 people, sixteen of whom were selected from the village and nine were young people that had recently finished school and were selected by LYO. Nine people received training in electrical installation and eight were trained in tailoring, and carpentry and joinery. Alongside trade skills they also learned how to run a successful business and were provided with life skills training. Upon graduation participants received a start up loan and toolkits.

Before this project many people could not afford to send their children to school, but since graduating through their newly established businesses they have been able to earn extra money to pay their children's school fees, giving them a brighter future. The project has also empowered women, some of whom were being victimised and abused by their husbands. They are now self reliant and can earn their own income. It also inspired three people to return to school; two of whom were women aged 38 and 42; and one young man aged 23, who was able to pay his school fees due to income earned from electrical and installation work.



Martin and Elizabeth (pictured) recently successfully graduated from this course. Martin previously worked as a labourer and Elizabeth looked after her husband at home. Both of them specialised in tailoring and learnt how to make clothes, alongside enterprise training. They also learned about HIV/Aids and sexual health. They have recently opened up a shop together. As a result their incomes have increased. Elizabeth is now able to buy good food and send her children to school. Martin now has money for both himself and his business. He says "he feels free and happy".

Guu Foundation Community Based Rehabilitation (GUFO), Uganda

The project supported communities where there were few or no training or educational opportunities. The goal was to support mainly formerly abducted young people with training in order for them to work independently or together as an enterprise. The project trained 45 young people in trades including: welding and fabrication and auto mechanics. They were placed with existing business owners as apprentices to get a real understanding of the workplace environment.

The project was a real success. 39 of 45 of the young people who completed training in various vocational trades are now employed. This has not only enabled them to be self-reliant, but has also improved their quality of life. This project equipped young people with practical life and vocational (marketable) skills and as a result, they are now less vulnerable to manipulation and exploitation by employers and are better able to negotiate their employment contracts. Furthermore, 8 young people secured employment with a local road construction company.