



TOOLS FOR SOLIDARITY

Annual Report 2020 - 2021



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BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Principles

Underlying all the activities of Tools for Solidarity are the principles and values of self-help and empowerment, individual and global equality, environmental awareness, inclusiveness, voluntarism, and the right to challenge/oppose activities/actions that contradict these values.

Mission Statement

TFS supports self-reliance by providing high quality refurbished tools to working people overseas, promoting international solidarity, and challenging global inequalities through a critical examination of development issues, environmental sustainability and ethical working practices.

Our Aims

01

Encourage

Promote self-reliance by furnishing overseas projects with high quality recycled hand tools and sewing machines.

02

Engage

Involve individuals, organisations and the public in the development and environmental issues. Utilise working methods that develop and support a sense of international solidarity and promote volunteering and ethical working practices.

03

Ensure

Tools For Solidarity will have appropriate premises, personnel and funding to meet the agreed outputs and objectives of the organisation.

Solidarity in practice is the heart of TFS's work. You can contribute in a very practical way by donating hand tools or sewing machines, by making a donation towards essential shipping and running costs, by providing materials or by volunteering.

We thank you for your continued support in our efforts to contribute to the TFS.

CONTACT

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CHAIRPERSON'S ADDRESS

"The past year has been a very challenging one and not just for us. In March we had to close our workshop for 3 months as Covid-19 lead us into a lockdown throughout the UK."

However, due to the dedication of TFS volunteers, we transformed our living space into mini-workshops. Hence when we finally were able to return to the workshop, we had refurbished and prepared about 140 sewing machines for shipment!

While COVID-19 has stayed with us for the rest of the year, we adapted the safety measurements that enabled us to continue the work in the workshop. Unfortunately, two core aspects of our work were badly affected. We had to stop our Supported Volunteer and ESD (Education for Sustainable Development) programmes during the pandemic.

However, on the Project Development note, TFS were able to send two containers and start a new project in Njombe, Tanzania. For such a small organisation, the achievement is astonishing and illustrates the commitment and focus of the whole team.

The year also showed us an interesting development with WorkAid charity providing an opportunity to create a partnership between two organisations. Although a joined visit to Tanzania was unfortunately affected by COVID-19, organisations plan to meet soon to discuss closer co-operation whilst staying in the UK.

Apart from it, TFS also managed to purchase extra storage to provide enough workspace in our main workshop. This was badly needed as we had to move shelves with tools and sewing machines to allow enough space for COVID measurements later on. While a lot remains to be done to create a fully operative external storage place, the organisation can begin uncluttering and organising all donations that can help us to understand what we have for the next shipments and which materials we can ship to the projects already.

The organisation is glad to be able to survive through the pandemic time; however, the next 18 months will be a difficult period. The pressure from the COVID and the loss of the main programme we used to have our European volunteers with will be the main obstacles in the following year. The main goal for the upcoming year is to find a way to navigate through these issues and continue with supporting overseas projects. As well as, keep the supported volunteer programme open and make everything in our power to keep ESD sessions running.

PARTNERSHIP DEVELOPMENT AND SUPPORT

MSTC

The Mwanza Sewing Training Centre (MSTC) has been very busy this year as 3 members of staff received a full container and 2 TFS staff went to visit the workshop! Over the 12 months, MSTC delivered more than 360 sewing machines, 14 knitting machines and conducted 9 training sessions to 225 skilled tailors.

The container, loaded with 429 sewing machines and 12 knitting machines, arrived in the middle of June 2020. In March 2021, 2 TFS staff members visited MSTC, SIDO (TFS partner in Tanzania) and the workshop. The staff stayed for 5 days where they had the chance to discuss the future of MSTC and the possibility to partner with other organisations within the UK. They also met with SIDO regarding the finances and promotion of the project. Finally, they evaluated the quality of the resources and met with artisans about their sewing machines and training. Overall the feedback from artisans trained is very positive and promising:



“The sewing machine from MSTC is better and stronger. Before the embroidery training, I was making and selling only clothes and now I’m doing mainly embroidery. People come from villages for my work. With the increase in my income, I managed to employ one more person and also bought a plot to build a house. I’d like to have more skills in embroidery for improving my business.” - Tailor in Geita

PARTNERSHIP DEVELOPMENT AND SUPPORT

RASTC The RASTC centre has also been extremely busy! During these 12 months, RASTC received one container, had to train the future workshop mechanic for the new tools refurbishment centre (NASTC) and prepared the visit of TFS staff. On top of this, the centre also provided 63 sewing machines and trained 32 trained tailors. They also allocated more than 100 hand tools to artisans across the Ruvuma region.

Another and new role of the centre is to provide people with disabilities (with no tailor skills) the opportunity to follow a one-year tailoring training in a VTC (Vocational Tailoring Centre). After that, the artisans will receive one sewing machine and one-week training at the RASTC centre free of charge. Currently, 2 young women are studying at the Songea VTC since January 2021.

During their visit, TFS had the chance to visit some tailors and gather positive feedback: “I really like my new sewing machine and I have no problem with it. I got more customers and more money because the quality of my work is better. I also managed to buy 3 chickens” – women tailor in Natumbo.

However, TFS has also great concern regarding some aspects of the project: the state of the sewing machines (parts missing or broken), the lack of communication from the partner and the poor management of the project.

PARTNERSHIP DEVELOPMENT AND SUPPORT

NASTC It has been agreed that a new tools refurbishment centre will jointly open with the RASTC centre in the neighbourhood region, Njombe.

In August 2020 TFS and SIDO signed the MoU for the “Njombe Artisan Training and Support Centre” - NASTC. The workshop mechanic of the centre has been training for 2 months and a half in sewing machines refurbishment by the workshop mechanic of RASTC.

In January 2021 TFS staff arrived in Njombe to continue the training with the future NASTC staff in tools refurbishment and maintenance, set up of the new workshop and meet with the partner SIDO Njombe.

The centre had a very good start as at the end of March 2021 about 100 artisans came to visit it, it recorded an income of 4'723'000 Tsh – NASTC staff sold 6 tool kits, 3 heavy-duty machinery, 3 electrical tools and 70 individual tools.



PARTNERSHIP DEVELOPMENT AND SUPPORT

Malawi This is our 5th year of working in partnership with the Global Concerns Trust and the Scottish tools organisations to support their programme 'Tools and training for Livelihoods in Malawi'. GCT works through 2 local partner organisations in Malawi – KODO, a local, grassroots vocational training project in Salima District and MACOHA – the national council for the Handicapped.

This programme has a real and deep impact on the lives of people with disabilities in rural Malawi. Participants in the programme receive skills training in carpentry, tailoring and/or cane furniture-making as well as training in business skills, gender and HIV awareness and how to manufacture green manure. At the end of their training, they each receive a solar panel and a kit of tools or a sewing machine and materials to help them start their own businesses.

Each year an evaluation is carried out that shows the programme transforms the lives of the trainees and of their families. 96% of graduates establish successful businesses, increase their income and improve the quality of their standard of living. The programme also helps transform the negative image some local people have of people with disabilities.

In January we shipped a consignment of tools kits and treadle bases to GCT partners in Malawi – 7 cane furniture making kits, 3 carpentry and 8 treadle bases.



PARTNERSHIP DEVELOPMENT AND SUPPORT

Malawi Here is the case study of Dorothy Bua and the impact the programme has had on her life and the life of her family.

Dorothy is 45 years old and lives with her 5 children in a village outside Ntcheu. She is an amputee. Dorothy used to sell beans and made only 10,000mk (£10) per month.

She took part in the cane furniture training. She now has a cane furniture business and is selling at least one set (2 double chairs, 1 single chair and a table) a week, making a profit of 120,000mk (£120) per month.

She taught one of her sons, who helps her with the business. Dorothy has been able to buy food, a phone, maize and iron sheets for her house, something she said was previously only a dream. This year she plans to buy pigs.



VOLUNTEERS REPORT

"Volunteering is central to all that TFS is and does. For more than thirty years people have come to Tools from around the world and across the street; all ages, backgrounds and abilities. "

Volunteers bring their energy, passion, interest, curiosity, humanity and humour. They come to learn, to share, to build a better world and it works because we share values: empathy, compassion and a desire to create sustainable development.

This year has been particularly hard for our Tools volunteers. Due to Brexit, it will be harder to get new European volunteers because of the cost of the administrative procedure and the decision of the UK government to end its participation in the European Solidarity Corps programme (ESC). A new strategy will be needed to be able to continue our work.

Moreover, because of the Covid 19 pandemic, some of our international volunteers left their programme earlier to stay close to their family or because their sending organisations didn't give them the choice. Fortunately, the volunteers who could and did stay have done wonderful work and we've been able to ship our two containers on time. However, with the closed border, we were not able to welcome new volunteers for 5 months.

When the border reopened Finn our Eirene brought Mathilda with him and they worked with us for three months before leaving to start their university. We want to thank them warmly for their help. At that time we also welcome another ESC volunteer Zeinab to replace a volunteer who left the project. Birgit, a German woman on her sabbatical year spent a couple of months with us to help us with our second shipment.

In September we welcomed one ESC volunteer, our German Eirene Rahel and another German volunteer Felix joined the month after. One former volunteer Anton came back for a couple of months to help us with our project. However, due to the second Covid wave the border was once again closed for months and some of our volunteers left the project but the majority decided to keep going and continued the programme.

One of our international volunteers has asked to stay with us one more year to help with training new volunteers, repairing tools in the workshop and managing it when our manager went to Tanzania. In December our Russian volunteer Daria finished her ESC but come back for one more year. Our two long term volunteers Andrei and Jessica went back to their country and we wish them all the best.



VOLUNTEERS REPORT

Apart from that, we continue to welcome local volunteers and although we couldn't welcome them during the first lockdown, we were pleased to see them back. New local volunteers have also joined our ESD programme or in our sewing machine section like Francesca. More and more local people are becoming interested in our work and the number of locals now part of our regular team is growing – this is a healthy sign for the organisation but also reflects a growing concern for the environment and how we can create a more sustainable future.

Many thanks to all our volunteers – local, core, international and supported for their dedication and hard work.

Supported Volunteers

Unfortunately because of the new safety measures due to the Covid 19 we haven't been able to welcome our supported volunteers for a full year. It was heartbreaking but their safety was our first concern. We hope with the new regulations and improving situation we will be able to welcome them back soon.



FUNDRAISING GROUP

2020 - 2021 The Fundraising Group continue to meet regularly to review the plans for Tools for Solidarity and to ensure that funds are always available for new and continuing projects. One measure of success was that we received more direct grant funding for projects in this financial year than for many years previously. In the early part of 2020-21 we continued to focus on raising funds for our projects in the southwest of Tanzania, and in particular for the new Tools Centre in Njombe City. Applications that were initiated in 2019-20 came to fruition, and we have been able to fund almost all aspects of the original plans.

The Halifax Foundation continues to be a major donor to Tools for Solidarity, and we acknowledge once again their vital support for our Training Coordinator role.

Fundraising was of course impacted severely by the coronavirus pandemic, with the main lockdowns covering March to June 2020 and December 2020 to April 2021. We were not able to hold any fundraising events, and the volume of donations decreased. We applied successfully to both Belfast City Council and the Department for Communities for special funding for covid mitigation measures; these included hand sanitiser points, separate workstations for volunteers, an additional washbasin, and signage throughout the building. This money was gratefully received for important use, but the paperwork involved was onerous and time-consuming and distracted from other important work.



FUNDRAISING GROUP

2020 - 2021 The same criticisms also apply to two further applications which were in the process by the end of 2020-21, though neither had been finally approved by year-end. These were to the Department for Foreign Affairs in Dublin for funding for our ESD Coordinator, and funding from The Executive Office of the NI Assembly for our Refugee and Asylum Seeker Programme through the Minority Ethnic Development Fund. These are significant grants in that it is the first time for some years that we have funding from the Irish Government and the first time ever that we have funding from the Executive Office.

During 2020-21, we received funding from the following organisations:

Key Indicator	Activity / Project
Anonymous donor	Education for Sustainable Development
Archer Trust	Supported Volunteer Programme
Belfast City Council	Covid Mitigation
Combined Services	Third World Trust Njombe ASTC
Community Foundation Giving Tuesday	Running costs
Dept for Communities Capital Grant	Workshop equipment
Dept for Communities	Covid mitigation
Halifax Foundation	Training Coordinator, running costs
NIPSA	Njombe ASTC
Sewell Trust	Sewing machine parts
Unicorn Coop	Mwanza STC
PJH Wills Charitable Trust	Running costs

FINANCIAL REPORT

Company Number: NI52306 (Northern Ireland)

Registered Charity Number: NIC100614

The Financial Year 2020-21 was dominated by the impact of both Covid and Brexit, the visit to Tanzania by John and Manon, and the purchase of a new property. Overall an expected loss was made, due to the property purchase, however, the net financial assets continue to rise year on year (from £91,296 to £96,441). This was in large part due to a private loan to help with the property purchase. In addition, repayment of this loan has been arranged such that it is offset by the income received from renting part of the new property to Anthony.

The field trip and the associated shipping costs were a considerable outgoing which was largely offset thanks to the extent of non-EVS Grants received during the year. ESC Grants received in the year were higher than normal, due to late payments.

ESD continues to self-finance and has been boosted by a second stream of income via a grant from the Irish Government. Covid has meant that no Fund Raising activity was possible during the year. A small, but steady, income continue to accrue from the Solar Panels. Furlough payments also provided an important additional income during Covid.

Expenditure was higher in 2020-21 than the previous year. This was mainly due to the property purchase. However, Overheads also increased (from £77,184 to £90,962). This was due to the Field Trip and Shipping costs, plus the growth of key volunteers being taken on as salaried employees. This was partially offset due to the reduction in volunteer expenses, as gaps in the volunteer complement occurred due to the disruption from Covid.

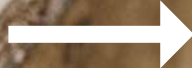


FINANCIAL REPORT

Overall the financial situation remains healthy, however, the coming year is going to be a far more challenging one. Brexit and the end of ESC mean not only a loss of International Volunteers but the loss of, what remains, our major source of income. In addition, this will result in a significant reduction in Universal Credit payments during the year. Income from both these revenue streams will continue but will taper off as the year progresses. With this in mind, we are undertaking a thorough review of our organisational structure and actively, this will include how to maintain a healthy financial structure.

In the short term, a small financial loss is highly likely for 2021-22.

Current Account	£ 18,482
Building Society	£ 77,158
Petty Cash	£ 397
Paypal	£ 404
Net Financial Assets	£ 96,441



FINANCIAL REPORT

A full breakdown of the finances. Income 2020-21:

INCOME	2020-21
Buiding Society/Bank Interest	£ 1,142
Donations	£ 17,894
Grants (ESC)	£ 57,342
Grants Other	£ 29,470
Other Income / Other Sales	£ 0
Rent Income	£ 7,336
Scrap Metal Sales	£ 429
VAT Refunds	£ 1,162
Sewing Machine / Tools sales	£ 1,814
Gift Aid	£ 312
Fund Raising	£ 0
Energy Savings	£ 1,842
Furlough	£6,731
Private Loan	£20,000
TOTAL INCOME	£ 148,962



FINANCIAL REPORT

A full breakdown of the finances. Expenses 2020-21:

EXPENDITURE	2020-21
Direct Expenses	
Purchase, Parts, Material	£ 7,034
Fixed Assets	£ 82,000
Repairs	£ 0
Total Direct Expenses	£ 89,340
Overheads	
Financial Fees	£ 21
Field Trip Costs	£ 10,260
Insurance	£ 1,045
Fund Raising Expenses	£ 0
Legal & Professional Costs	£ 3,899
Light & Heat	£ 3,463
Overseas Payments	£ 596
Rent, Rates & Water Charges	£ 1,600
Salary	£ 32,772
Shipping	£8,785
Stationary & Postage	£ 240
Sundry	£ 114
Telephone	£ 1,064
Travel & Subsistence	£ 2,774
Vehicle Fuel/Motor Expenses	£ 1,816
Volunteer Expenses	£ 22,513
Total Overhead Expenses	£ 90,962
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	£ 179,996
Profit/Loss	- £ 31,032

ESD END OF YEAR REPORT

"This report includes information about the organisation's Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) programme in the academic year September 2020 to June 2021."

Tools For Solidarity (TFS) continued to deliver its ESD programme to Key Stage 2 primary school classes despite the ongoing challenges of the pandemic. Due to Covid-19, we did implement measures such as wearing face masks and social distancing. The sessions and materials were adapted to allow the implementation of the safety measures and to correspond with the policies adopted by different schools. In some cases, sessions were delivered outside and online. We offered 6 sessions to primary schools which tie in with the Northern Ireland curriculum areas 'The World Around Us' and 'Personal Development and 'Mutual Understanding'. The ESD group worked with 12 primary schools and a total of 509 pupils in those 12 schools. Sessions on consumption and sustainability, as well as fairtrade, were delivered to 4 youth groups (comprising 30 young people in total). The ESD group also piloted a series of 4 ESD sessions for adults including the topics: climate emergency and action; food and hunger; fashion industry; cultural diversity. The pilot programme involved 25 adult learners.

The ESD group received positive feedback regarding the content and delivery of the ESD programme. 21% of teachers indicated that delivery of the programme was very good, while 79% expressed the view that it was excellent. Teachers appreciated the global aspect of the programme and felt that it was pitched appropriately for the age of the pupils. Feedback included observations such as, '[The] children now have an improved knowledge of the world map and an understanding of the connection between all of us regarding fairtrade' and 'The delivery of information was very clear and interesting – very appropriate for the children'. The feedback from adults who partook in the pilot programme will serve the ESD group in the next academic year (2021-22). Participants recorded an increased consciousness and willingness to act regarding the topics covered; one comment in the feedback was, '[I will] use this new awareness in my everyday work.'



ESD END OF YEAR REPORT

Aside from delivering the ESD programme, the ESD group made 2 new resources aimed at primary school children (aged 8-11). The first resource is the One World Pack which was made for the One World Festival 2020. The pack includes art activities, games, creative writing, puzzles and opportunities to reflect and learn more about the world we live in. The second resource is the Tools For Solidarity Activity Pack. The aim of the pack is to reinforce the topics covered in primary schools as part of the ESD programme. However, the activity pack can also be used as a learning resource independently of the programme. Both these resources are now available to download on the TFS website. In the year 2020/21 the ESD group comprised both local and international volunteers, as well as the Education Officer, Róisín Sloan. TFS acknowledges the contributions of Rahel, Noel, Sam, Paul, Zeinab and Jennifer, who brought their own distinct sets of skills, experience and insights to the ESD group. TFS hosted 2 students on an 8-week placement at the start of 2021. They both carried out research that the ESD group has used and will continue to use in the development of both the ESD programme for adults and the schools' partnership project (which we intend to start in 2021-22). The placement was part of the students' MSc in Leadership for Sustainable Development at Queen's University. TFS would like to thank both Nicole and Omeed for their hard work and the insights that they have provided through their research.

TFS became a member of the Irish Development Education Association and renewed its membership with the Centre for Global Education in Belfast. TFS has continued to strive to provide quality education for sustainable development.



PUBLICITY GROUP

2020 - 2021 Social Media is an evolving field, and even now, typing this, I'm sure some new features and settings are being added to our favourite social media platforms such as Instagram, Twitter or Facebook. This is exactly why it's essential for our Publicity group to always know the latest news in the digital marketing world. Otherwise, our social media strategy won't work.

In the past year, we have improved our social channels and created a few profiles across the internet to broaden our name even further. Therefore, such platforms as LinkedIn, Twitter, Instagram and Facebook became the leading profiles for us.

The publicity group used all mentioned platforms to promote TFS across NI and the UK in general. Apart from it, we were also recruiting local and international volunteers, and were trying to find tools books for overseas projects.

If we are talking numbers, around 400 new followers joined us on Facebook, 170 supporters on Instagram and 15 on Twitter. LinkedIn became a new platform for our organisation, therefore, we have around 40 followers there so far. However, the plan to promote this channel is in the near future.

Although the pandemic prevented us from promoting Sunday events in the workshop, we still managed to find topics to share with our audience. And in 2021-22 we believe our online presence will become even more permanent.

SPECIAL THANKS

We appreciate all the help our supporters provided to us during the last year, especially next organisations and individuals:

Archer Trust	NIPSA
All Schools and Colleges in the ESD programme	PJH Wills Charitable Trust
Phillip Allen	TFS Volunteers
Belfast City Council	Tim McGarry
Combined Services Third World Trust	Belfast Repair Cafe
Community Foundation Giving Tuesday	SIDO
Unicorn Food Co-Op	Céline Persico Jaap Prins
Emma Duncan and the Global Concerns Trust	Nancy Graham
North Down Recycling Centres	Mr R. Waters
Dept for Communities	British Council
North Belfast Quakers	Tools for Self Reliance
Pam and Tara Patchwork Goose	Garvald
Belfast City Council Recycling Centres	Mr and Mrs Finney
Ralf Zeigler and Eirene	G Sloan
Mwanza Sewing and Training Centre	Ecorys
St Malachy's Old Boys Association	Sewell Trust
South Belfast Quakers	Roy Blair
Friends of Mourne Grange	Attracta Walsh
Grace Canham	Julian Sanders
Tony and Brid Weeks	Belfast Tool Library
Geoff and Tina Claxton	Volunteer Now
Halifax Foundation for NI Jenny Groves	WorkAid

