

ANNUAL REPORT 2012



TOOLS FOR SOLIDARITY

Belfast, the 29th of January 2013

Company Information

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Tools For Solidarity

TFS - Tools for Solidarity is a voluntary non-profit making organization.

PRINCIPLES & ETHICS

Underlying all the activities of TFS are the principles and values of self-help and empowerment, individual awareness, inclusiveness, voluntarism, and the right to challenge / oppose activities or 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 critical analysis of development issues, environmental sustainability and ethical working practices.

AIMS

- To promote self-reliance by furnishing overseas projects with high quality recycled hand tools and sewing machines
- To involve individuals, organizations and the public in development and environmental issues
- To utilize working methods that develop and support a sense of international solidarity and promote volunteering and ethical working practices
- To have appropriate premises, personnel and funding to meet the agreed outputs and objectives of the organisation

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Chairperson's Address

In 2007 the organisation took a big step and established a centre in Tanzania, with the aim to provide tailors with the support they wanted. After four and a half years MSTC – The Mwanza Sewing and Training Centre has become a very successful project that continues to develop and improve the services it gives to Tanzanian tailors. The organisation and all the many volunteers who have contributed to provide the support to this project can feel proud of their achievements. TFS have not rested with the success of MSTC but have been making great efforts to develop and encourage similar projects. We hope in the following year to have some new projects that will run alongside the one at MSTC. MSTC funding from TFS has now stopped and the project is self funded as from the 1st of May 2011.

As already mentioned, the organisation has only been able to support such developments overseas with the help of international volunteers who continue to carry out the majority of the work within our workshop. Over the last year TFS has had its highest ever number of international volunteers working for the organisation. The number of requests from people to come and work for the organisation has also increased. This has enabled TFS to look to the development of new projects and to look to streamline the storage and flow of materials into and out of the workshop.

Finances of the organisation have been relatively stable for the previous year. However funding is getting more difficult and more time is needed for this. There still remains a weakness in TFS of too few core staff able to carry out most of the administration, including funding.

TFS is a small organisation that has had a significant impact in changing the approach to thinking and implementing development support. The organisation does not have the human resources to develop this much further. If it wants to continue to develop better working practices it will need to network more with other organisations and consider joint programmes.

John Wood

Volunteer Report

The *ethos* and spirit of volunteering is fundamental to Tools For Solidarity. Without volunteers there would be no organisation. Ultimately development is about people and TFS seeks to support people in their own personal development in a spirit of solidarity.

Volunteers fulfil all the roles in the organisation from collecting and sorting tools, checking sewing machines for our projects overseas, box making, preparing shipments, publicity, fundraising and development education.

We have international and local volunteers, long-term and short-term, full-time and part-time, able-bodied and disabled, spanning an age range of more than 70 years! Each person brings something new and important to the organisation.

International volunteers have played an important and ever increasing role in our work ever since the first international workcamp we hosted in 1984. Nowadays, our international volunteers come to us through the European Voluntary Service (EVS), a EU programme under Youth in Action. Their placements last from one month to one year. This year we had volunteers from Turkey, France, Spain, Italy, Germany and our first ever volunteer from Palestine. We continue to host one volunteer each year from Eirene, a German organization committed to international peace work.

Providing voluntary opportunities for people with fewer opportunities is one of our main aims in Northern Ireland and was one of the factors in TFS to open a full time workshop. We have volunteers with extra support needs working for us in Belfast, Downpatrick and in the Mourne Grange Camphill Community in Killeel. This year they have developed their own tools workshop where they carry out tools refurbishment to support Vocational Training Colleges and disabled groups in east Africa.

There are hundreds of people who give their time, energy and enthusiasm to make TFS what it is. It is an inspiration, as many visitors to our workshops testify. TFS thanks all our volunteers for what they bring. We also thank those organisations and institutions that assist us in finding and funding our volunteers especially the British Council for their role in the Youth in Action Programme and Volunteer Now for local volunteer recruitment.

A special thanks goes to our local group of volunteers on the Isle of Man who has been collecting tools and sewing machines for us for many years now. There is always a buzz in the workshop when news comes through that another crate has come in from the Isle. This year they have collected and shipped to us more than 1000 tools and 100 sewing machines. Well done!

In 2011-12 TFS in Belfast has hosted 12 international volunteers, 20 local volunteers and 8 volunteers with extra support needs.

TFS Downpatrick

The Downpatrick workshop provides volunteering opportunities to more than 30 people each week – most of which have some form of extra support needs. This means that the main focus of the work is slightly different in Downpatrick than in Belfast. Here we aim to provide an environment that enables people to be involved in whatever way they can – no matter what their own situation is. For many of the volunteers coming to the workshop is a form of therapy – where they can feel part of something important and worthwhile, where they can meet other people in an inclusive and supportive environment and where they can develop their own skills at their own pace.

In his second year as workshop co-ordinator, Chris oversees the work of the volunteers and provides them with all the training and support that they need. Natania and Hugh, both of who have become more involved and committed to making the workshop a success, ably assist Chris.

The volunteers continue to support the MSTC in Tanzania through the provision of refurbished sewing machines, treadles and kits of tools for the trained sewing mechanics. They assist the Belfast team in packing the container that we send each year to Tanzania. They are also involved in refurbishing tools for vocational training colleges in Uganda and other tools requests.

TFS Downpatrick works with a number of different organisations to provide supported volunteering opportunities – these include Action Mental Health, the Autism Centre, Mindwise and Volunteer Now. We thank these organisations for their continued support and co-operation.

For a number of years now we have also worked with Ardmore School in Downpatrick. Each week a team of students come to the workshop and get hands on experience of working with and repairing tools. This is challenging work for them and for us, but it provides them with a unique opportunity to be directly involved in development assistance, as well as learning new skills. We thank Winnie for her dedication to this programme.

TFS Downpatrick can be extremely proud of what it achieves – despite the fact that it receives minimal funding – and that it manages to do so on a shoe string budget. The entire costs for the year are less than £8,000. We are very grateful to the Unicorn Food Cooperative in Manchester who has provided funding for the next 3 years. However this does not meet half of the annual expenditure, so the search continues to secure more funding.

We thank all the volunteers for their contributions and especially to Chris, Natania and Hugh for their dedication and hard work.



Figure 1: *Tools For Solidarity Volunteers from Belfast and Downpatrick after loading the container on the 19th of September 2011.*

Partnership Development and Support

(Shipping and Requests)

In previous years this section of TFS annual report has been known as “Shipping and Requests”. However this does not reflect the changing work and ways in which TFS have developed over the past 4 to 5 years. In future this section will be entitled “Partnership Development and Support”.

This year TFS has sent:

1. One shipment of sewing machines and materials to MSTC, details presented below in Table 1;
2. A small shipment of 10 sewing machines and material support to a new project in Kigoma, Tanzania;
3. Support for a project in Congo working with women refugees, 5 sewing machines;
4. Preparation for a shipment of tools and sewing machines to 2 projects in Uganda.

From last year MSTC has provided 375 sewing machines and has trained 340 tailors, in a weeklong course involving dress / embroidery design, business and maintenance skills. These figures represent a significant increase from previous years when training levels only reached 86 tailors trained and 290 machines provided. This development has been made possible by providing tailors with free accommodation and food while training takes place.

During discussions at MSTC in May 2011, between TFS, SIDO – The Small Industry Development Organization and MSTC personnel, a new focus was given to increase the number of tailors being trained. This required that a house be rented to provide free accommodation to all who came. The results are clear to see and this has helped MSTC to become officially recognised within the SIDO structure as a training organisation.

At the beginning of the year an evaluation of the project was conducted by 2 people and the reports can be found online at the TFS website. The reports main conclusions were that the project delivered the support to the tailors in a way that promoted sustainability and skill development. Some of the quotes from that report have been used within this annual report.

Table 1: *Content description and quantities of the container filled on the 19th of September 2011.*

Description	Quantity
Treadle sewing machines	15
Electric sewing machines	81
Hand sewing machines	319
Industrial sewing machines	9
Knitting machines	6
Spare parts for sewing machines (boxes)	6
Tool kits for mechanics	10
Screwdrivers	290
Large mechanic kits	1
Bicycles	5
Material (rolls)	1
Material (boxes)	70
Spools of thread, zips, ribbons (boxes)	37
Books / patterns (boxes)	2
Second hand computers	1
Routers	1
Information boards	2
Metal filing cabinets	1

Funding for MSTC stopped in May 2011, which means that it is now effectively self-financing. At that stage MSTC had reserves of £18,000 and over the last year the budget has witnessed a dip into the red of £4,500. The higher training levels can explain this deficit, as they try and train tailors who had previously purchased a machine but had not receive their training. Material and operating costs have also increased sharply and this has not been offset by increases in the cost of machines. These issues will be addressed at the next meeting of TFS with the MSTC manager.

The training of mechanics from different districts has also continued with 6 additional mechanics trained. This has been of great benefit to MSTC and tailors in the maintenance of their sewing machines.

“The training I got from SIDO-MSTC on maintenance and repair of sewing machines influenced my career, I’m now capable of undertaking all necessary maintenances to any kind of sewing machine. Currently, I have many customers from different places of Magu District, this helps me to be able of sustaining my livelihoods” – Fundi at Nyamikoma, fundi translate as a mechanic / trades person

“Although I have been a tailor for quite some time, I could not know how to make suits, but when I got the trainings on dress designing from SIDO-MSTC I started to make suits. Many people are now coming to me for suits, this has really impressed me and helped to improve my income” – Female Tailor, 35 years old, at the Kwimba District

“With one machine I was capable of raising 30,000 TSh per month. I’m now capable of raising up to 150,000 TSh per month as a result of more work I do from the added machine that I got from SIDO, this situation makes my contribution in the household more important” – Female Tailor, 34 years old, Shinyanga

“I have been working with SIDO-MSTC since the inception of this project, but compared to so many other projects, we have through this project been able to increase our collaboration and networking with the community and all other actors. As a person, I see this as a success and an achievement to us all” – Co-ordinator, Magu

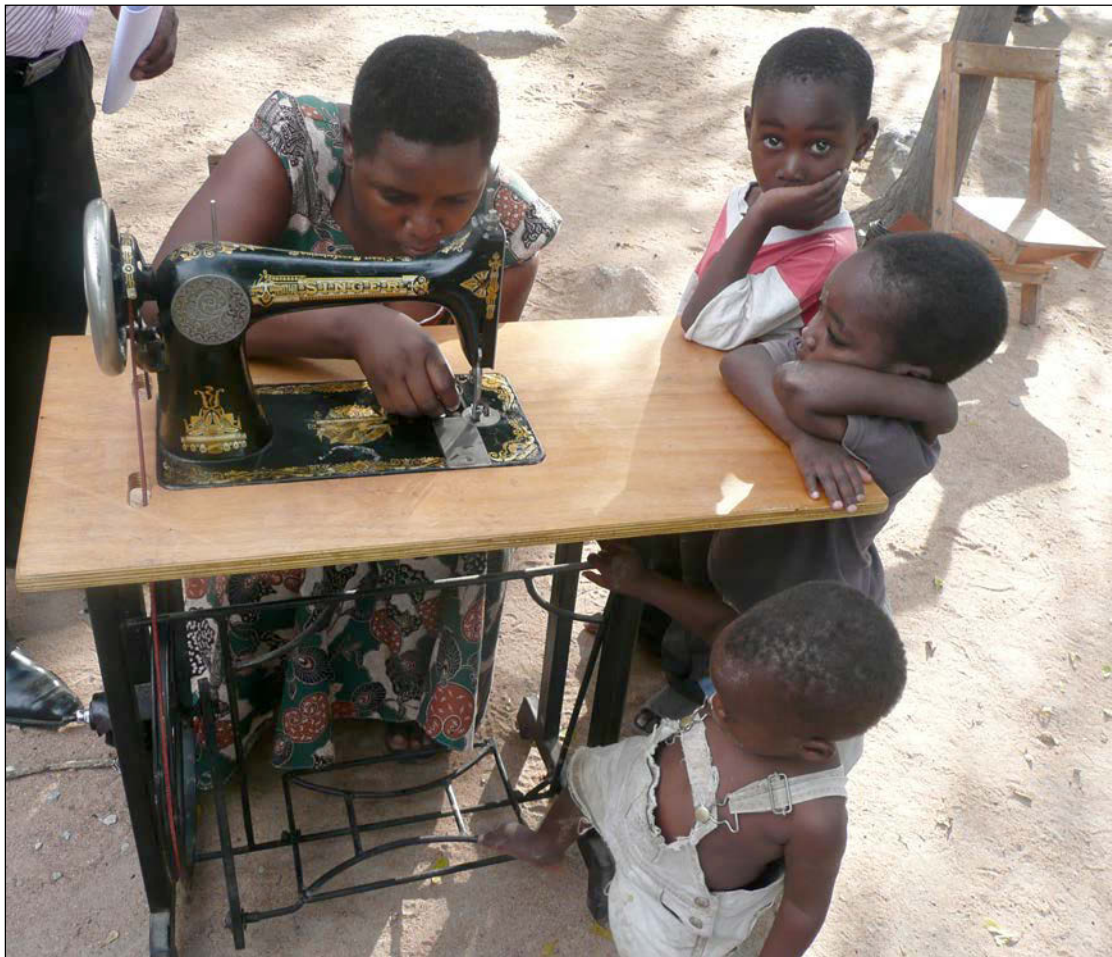


Figure 2: Picture taken during an evaluation of the Mwanza Sewing and Training Centre during April 2011.

Other Activities

1. In April / May 2011 TFS personnel visited several organisations requesting the development of a partnership. It was decided to initiate 2 pilot projects, one in Kigoma and one in Uganda. This would involve the supply of sewing machines and training through the partners to tailors within the project area. WADS – The Women in Solidarity and Development was selected in Kigoma and key personnel sent to Mwanza for training. This is a relatively small project comprising of only 10 sewing machines. The project in Uganda with WORI – The Women's Rights Initiative is larger, comprising of 30 sewing machines;
2. Contact was established with an organisation working with women from the conflict in the Congo. TFS decided to support the work of the organisation FEPEDA – The Fédération des femmes pour la paix et le développement by supplying 5 sewing machines and providing training for a mechanic for one month at MSTC;
3. The workshop has also been busy preparing for a shipment of tools and sewing machines for 12 Vocational Training Centres in Uganda.

Annual Accounts

(1st April 2011 – 31st March 2012)

The overall TFS income and expenditure for 2011-12 was similar to that of 2010-11. Total income was £87,097, 4% below the previous year and total expenditure was £76,918, 3% below the previous year. With no outstanding end of year liabilities, a surplus of £10,918 income over expenditure was generated in 2011-12 and transferred to the building reserve, which is dedicated for the purchase of a new TFS workshop / office facility when sufficient funds have been raised. The building reserve now stands at £78,000.

Notable variance between the two periods occurred in relation to income from Donations (down by 70%), Miscellaneous Grants (down by 47%) and EVS Grants (up by 30%). As there was no travel to Tanzania this financial year, notable savings were made in relation to Travelling Expenses (down by 81%). Maintenance costs (largely consisting of upgrades and repairs to the volunteer's house) were also significantly down by 37%. The larger number of volunteers this financial year was reflected in an increase in Volunteer Remuneration and EVS Expenditure (up by 36%).

TFS Income - 2011-12

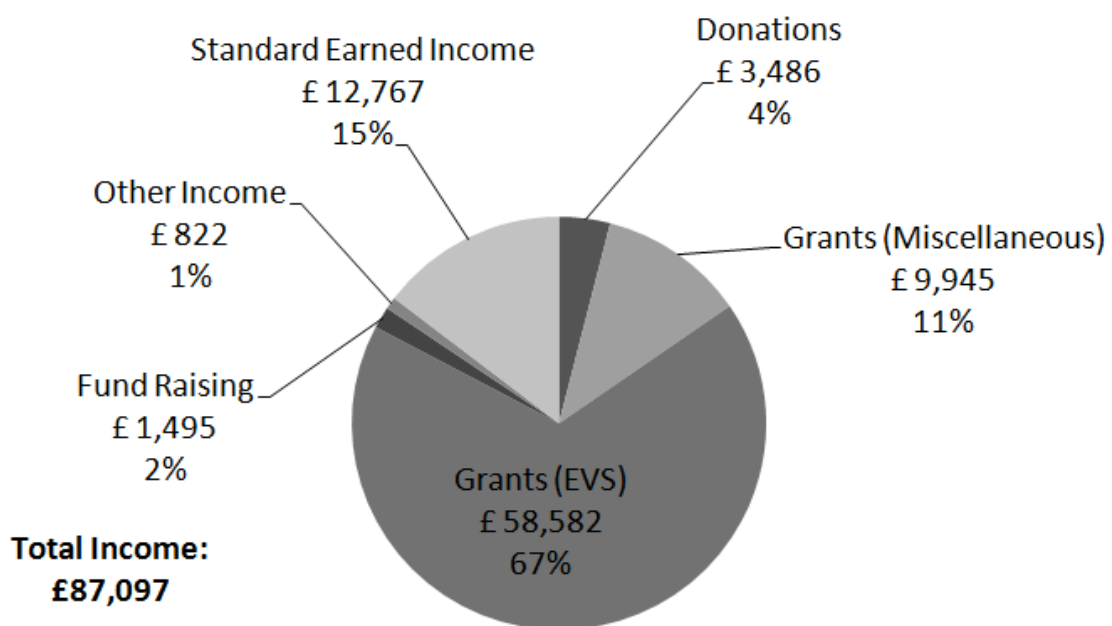


Figure 3: Pie chart of the Tools For Solidarity Income during the period of 2011-12.

Table 2: TFS Profit and Loss report.

2010-11	INCOME	2011-12
£11,591	Donations	£3,486
£18,730	Grants (Miscellaneous)	£9,945
£45,121	Grants (EVS)	£58,582
£1,127	Fund Raising	£1,495
£3,271	Other Income	£822
£10,520	Standard Earned Income	£12,767
£90,361	Total Income	£87,097

2010-11	EXPENDITURE	2011-12
Direct Expenses		
£8,851	Workshop Operation, Materials & Transport	£10,453
£220	Cost of Fund Raising	£203
<u>£9,070</u>	<u>Total Direct Expenses</u>	<u>£10,656</u>

Overheads		
£10,405	Rent & Rates	£9,231
£3,624	Heat, Light & Power	£2,593
£4,177	Travelling Expenses	£790
£1,593	Printing, Stationery Tel & Internet	£1,427
£8,529	Maintenance	£5,361
£6,478	General Expenses	£6,949
£8,058	Partnership – Mwanza / Uganda (Direct Transfer)	£9,000
£12	Bank Charges and Interest	£0
£21,902	Volunteer Remuneration & EVS Expenditure	£29,715
£165	Professional Fees	£351
£52	Miscellaneous	£31
£4,551	Workshop & Office Equipment	£77
<u>£69,547</u>	<u>Total Overhead Expenses</u>	<u>£65,523</u>
£78,617	Total Expenditure	£76,179

£ 11,744	Profit / Loss	£ 10,918
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Liabilities		
£ 5,000	MSTC	£ 0
£ 4,000	EVS	£ 0
£ 9,000	Total Liabilities	£ 0

£2,744	Profit / Loss less Liabilities	£10,918
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TFS Expenditure 2011-12

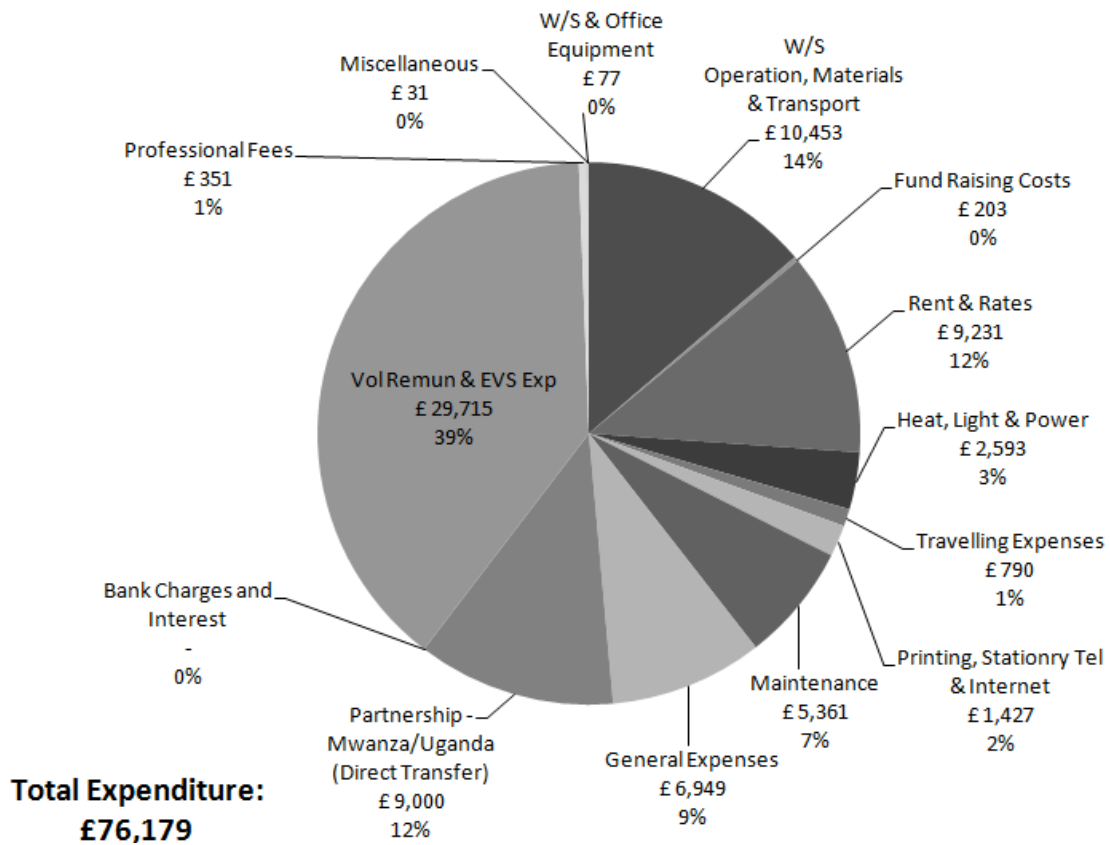


Figure 4: Pie chart of the Tools For Solidarity Expenditure during the period of 2011-12.

Table 3: TFS Balance sheet.

2010-11	ASSETS	2011-12
£135,000	Fixed Assets (Premises)	£135,000
£3,000	Current Assets (van, equipment, etc.)	£3,000
£6,632	Current Account	£6,709
£58,000	Building Reserve	£78,000
£37,005	Other Building Society	£31,005
£46	Petty Cash	£115
£0	VAT on Vatable Purchases	£1,434
£241,790	Total Assets	£255,263
2010-11	LIABILITIES	2011-12
£5,000	Debt to MSTC	£0
£4,000	EVS	£0
£9,000	Total Liabilities	£0
£232,790	Total Assets less Liabilities	£255,263

Although these accounts provide some indication of changes in certain areas of activity over succeeding years it should be borne in mind that as a voluntary, non-profit, development organisation the financial accounts show only a very limited surface reflection of the actual level of activity taking place within TFS. While conventional for-profit businesses use financial accounts as an indicator of the level of activity - materials and labour inputs and sales output, etc. - the same does not apply to TFS. In addition to labour being voluntary and immeasurable by standard wage / hour rate indicators, the vast bulk of TFS's materials are donated and collected without monetary charge and its finished products (refurbished, gleaming as-new sewing machines, tools and equipment) are supplied to its partners in sub-Saharan Africa without charge bringing no "sales income".

It is safe to say that an equivalent level of activity within a conventional business would generate costs many multiples from those of TFS, but as the operation would be driven by the pursuit of profit rather than need and as a high "sales price" would then be required for the finished products, it is also safe to say that the project would never get off the ground or that the invaluable sewing machines, tools and equipment would never reach those most in need.

TFS has integrated a new computer accounting system for processing this year's accounts. While the initial transfer from the previous system involved some inevitable teething problems overall the transfer has been a success. Recording of transactions has been simplified, the layout of the main financial reports has changed somewhat and internal management accounting capacity has been enhanced.

It has been possible to compile these accounts thanks to the meticulous receipt, invoice and laborious record keeping of John, Stephen and other volunteers.

Jim - TFS Treasurer

Special Thanks

Tools For Solidarity takes this opportunity to gratefully acknowledge the contribution of different individuals and organizations to this undertaking:

[Action Mental Health](#)

[All-Route Shipping](#)

[Autism Initiatives](#)

Ardmore House Special School,

Downpatrick

[Ashfield Boys' High School](#)

[Belfast City Council recycling centres](#)

[Cedar Foundation](#)

[Combined Services Third World Fund](#)

Conor and Andrea Cleland

Damian Ch'anga, [Small Industries](#)

[Development Organization](#) (SIDO)

Regional Manager, Mwanza

Geoff and Tina Claxton

John Alibankoha, Rural People in Action
for Development

[Headway](#)

Lindsay Alexander, Youth in Action,

[British Council](#)

Mary Hegarty, [Bryson Charitable Group](#)

[Mourne Grange Camphill Community](#)

Pam and Tara, Patchwork Goose

Pat and Heather, Kilkeel

Patricia Stevenson

[South Belfast Quakers](#)

[Northern Ireland Public Service Alliance](#)
(NIPSA)

Ralf Zeigler and Eirene

[Small Industries Development](#)

[Organization](#) (SIDO)

St Malachy's College Old Boys
Association

[The Co-operative Society](#)

[The Orchardville Society](#)

[Tools for Self Reliance \(TFSR\), Garvald](#)
[Edinburgh](#)

Tony and Brid Weeks

[Unicorn Food Co-operative](#)

[Volunteer Now](#)

To all the Tools For Solidarity volunteers at Belfast, Downpatrick and the Isle of Man, and to all those who have collected / donated tools, money or time over the last 12 months, thank you very much.