



NEWSLETTER

of Tools For Solidarity

Give a new life to your old tools!

Tools for Solidarity

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Oversea Project

This year was a milestone for TFS. The tailoring project that was started in 2007, in Mwanza, has come to the end of the 3- year funding period. A visit was undertaken by TFS to discuss the future and celebrate the success of the project.

During the visit in April and May several other projects were visited along with some of the groups who have received support from MSTC (Mwanza Sewing and Tailoring Project) This is a brief summary of those visits.

Tanzania

In Mwanza 2 districts were visited, Magu and Ukewere and a new region Kigoma.

1. Magu - this is a district close to Mwanza urban and MSTC. Over 400 sewing machines have been supplied to tailors in this area. There is still a high demand from here but a fair allocation must be made to ensure that other tailors can benefit from the project. The local network built up in this area has enabled the manager of the project to successfully deliver the support and training to the artisans. The area also has 2 sewing machine mechanics who have been trained at MSTC. One of the mechanics visited has been able to increase his income by using these skills and helping to maintain the machines for other tailors. He generates 50,000 Tshs/per month, about half of that he generates from his tailoring activities.

2 Ukewere - an island district in Lake Victoria is the location of a small support programme to supply PWD (People With Disabilities) with sewing machines and extra training. Several tailors were visited and they were all very satisfied, and, more importantly, using their machines which were well maintained. On a smaller island a group was visited which had 10 sewing machines from MSTC and they had problems with 2 of them. The problems were sorted out but it did highlight the fact that no mechanics had been selected and trained at MSTC to cover the islands in this district

3. Kigoma - a new region. We visited 3 groups to discuss possible partnership. All the groups were very small and involved in tailoring. The access to sewing machines is more difficult for tailors in Kigoma and TFS is looking at a small project to help build some capacity in the area.

Uganda

Last year TFS sent 11 kits of tools and sewing machines to VTC (Vocational Training Colleges) in the west of Uganda. TFS was supposed to visit these organisations and assess the programme's effectiveness. Unfortunately the tools had not yet arrived. The trip was also undertaken to investigate further support to other VTC's and to consider the possibility of establishing smaller tailoring projects. This possibility is being reflected on and will be presented to the committee next month.

(From John)

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Members OfWAD, Kigoma,

Future

An interview with John Wood and some volunteers about how they envisage the future for TFS, by Maïke and Marta.

M&M: John you visited MSTC only a short time ago. We have some questions about where this project is going... But first of all: What is your vision for this project?

John: It would be great if MSTC could support the whole tailoring-sector in Tanzania. But that means we need a national strategy. Also, MSTC could become a training- and- maintenance model that other organisations could follow...

M&M: What are the possibilities of MSTC becoming a national organisation ???

John: It isn't possible, but it can provide a small training-support at national level.

M&M: When would MSTC be ready to become this kind of organisation ????

John: Definitely not at this moment. MSTC needs something around two and a half years to be able to deliver more training and a maintenance strategy.

M&M: In the last AGM we discussed possibilities and opportunities for the next project. We came to the conclusion that our next step should be a small tailoring project. How do you see this in the light of your last visit to Africa?

John: It isn't possible to build up a new tailoring-project at this moment, the organisation there hasn't got the capacity. But MSTC could help eventually. We must keep it as an option.

M&M: Would the next project include cooperation with SIDO ???

John: I don't know. Well, yes. We need to work with SIDO because of MSTC and when we want to develop the idea of a national-strategy for MSTC, we need SIDO. So we will continue to work with SIDO.

M&M: So since a tailoring project isn't a possibility for the moment, would it be an idea to open a tools project over there?

John: There is always a possibility, but I think the model must be tied to a vocational school because a tools project couldn't stand alone without any support. [...]

We are of course also interested in the dreams of other volunteers about TFS...

M&M: ...So, my friends, what are your dream /desire for the future of Tools for Solidarity???

Hector: Mmmhh... Sort out all the tools and send them to Africa. I know ... quite unrealistic.

Claudia: I think that the ultimate aim for this kind of organisation is to "disappear". By this, I mean that TFS's help isn't needed anymore because the people who needed help in the past are now independent.

Selim: To have a working area with better conditions -that means more space for all the donated tools. Also to send more sewing machines to support more sewing-machine projects like MSTC.

...Oh!, and also, a workshop without Maïke ;)

Maïke: Thanks Selim ... Very kind of you!

Chris: My field-trip gave me the opportunity to see our tailoring project work and I was really impressed! So my dream would be to develop further the tailoring-sector in Africa with another centre and to find a



My plans for the future are to uncross my legs and grab a couple of those potato chips.

way to start up a tools-project.

My dreams for here ? Find more core-volunteers for Downpatrick and Belfast

Peter: That it should go from strength to strength, that the aim of TFS, to supply tools and other items to

Our Friends

Isle of Man

On Friday we sent off another crate of sewing machines and tools on The Mezeron Shipping Co. Silver River from Ramsey to sunny Belfast. I once hitched a lift home to the Island from Belfast on the Silver River - they even gave us our own private cabin - you couldn't do that nowadays due to international maritime regulations.

At Ramsey we drove along the quay to the Mezeron. The forklift lads unearthed the famous crate which the Mezeron kindly held onto for us; this crate usually ends up buried in miscellaneous cargo. I nipped upstairs for that all important bit of white paper; then we loaded up the crate until we couldn't squeeze anything else in (like John Cleese "wan waffer thin meent") and we legged it out of there.

Bye for now and keep up the good work.

Guess what !!!!

We have 47.5 kg rice in the workshop kitchen !!!

(From Thurston)

Downpatrick

Currently in the Downpatrick workshop we are basking in the glory of our new heating system and enclosed work area, although we won't really feel the full benefit of it until the winter. This would not have been accomplished without the help of Hugh who took charge of this mammoth task and with the occasional "interference" from Chris. Hugh described working with Chris like "being handcuffed to a lunatic". He still managed to do a first class job. We would also like to introduce our new volunteers who have been warmly welcomed by everyone - Sam Weatherall, Jim Curry and Charles, who has joined Allan on Monday. Brian, who had worked with us for a while, unfortunately had to stop coming and is greatly missed. John Morgan has joined John Jordan on Tuesdays to work on sewing machines; Danny Murray has joined the sanding team and Natania, our one -and- only local female volunteer puts up with us three afternoons a week; John Corry, Francie Geddis and John Martin will be starting on Thursdays. We're very pleased to work with them and have high hopes for their future with TFS.

The group from Ardmore school have moved their day from Monday afternoon to a Thursday afternoon and continue to be very enthusiastic and provide a new energy to the workshop. Jim, our master sander, is still demanding a rise, so we're going to let him work upstairs. Stephen's presence on Mondays and Tuesday's is still missed and probably always will be.

(From Chris and Natania)

Mourne Grange

Mourne Grange is always a great help for TFS!!!! Last March we collected a huge number of refurbished tools which were repaired by our friends in the Camphill community.

Claudia and Stephen and I had the pleasure to escape for a day, the dust from Belfast, to collect these tools and were warmly welcomed. Claudia and I were in Mourne Grange for the first time and were impressed!!! Jeff, and all the others, create a brilliant community where you feel yourself at peace.

(From Maïke)

Garvald

So now about our mates in Edinburgh J

This little craft-house in the middle of Edinburgh is a place which comes close to your heart; the people, the atmosphere, the tidy workshop. (no... not a hint to our workshop).

In this tools- workshop they are working on sewing-machines and tools refurbishment. (John: "I never saw things so clean before!!! "). Last June we sent 29 sewing-machines of one type only- 99K - because they were short of them.

(From Maike)

Field Trip and Evaluation

Evaluation

The last 3 months have been a period of reflection and evaluation for the MSTC. In April Kirsti trav-



SIDO regional manager to discuss the idea of opening up a centre!

However with the ending of external funding it was vital to plot the future direction for the MSTC. TFS has given a commitment to continue to support the centre with sewing machines and technical/managerial for the next 3 years.

One of the key areas, entitled by Kirsti in her evaluation, was the difficulty MSTC has had in getting artisans to attend the training courses that are provided free as part of the cost of buying a machine. Although we know that many artisans want training, they have been put off by the cost of attending, particularly accommodation costs. A solution was found during the workshop - MSTC could rent one or two houses for the year and thus provide accommodation free to all those attending the courses. For the rest of the year the houses can be used to generate an income!

The final dotting of the I's is not complete but there was overall agreement that the MSTC would work towards becoming an exemplar of training, particularly of fundis. This one element alone could have a major impact on improving the sustainability of the maintenance programme for sewing machine provision in the Lake Zone and beyond.

MSTC has been recognised in the upper echelons of SIDO in Dar es Salaam as a project that has delivered high quality training. The aim is to build on this success, develop the training of fundis on a national level and use the MSTC to support smaller scale tailoring initiatives in East Africa.

Guess what !!!!
John can eat his lunch
in 6 min.
When he need to bit ;)



Uganda

After Mwanza Stephen, Chris and Johannes (an Eirene volunteer working for RUPAD in Uganda who was trained as a sewing machine mechanic last year at TFS) began the road trip to end all road trips. For the next 13 days they covered 1500 miles by bus, car and motorbike around the southern shores of Lake Victoria to western Uganda and from

Ride and Hoot protest leading to the arrest of many of those involved. We hope that the people there find a peaceful way to bring about the changes needed to help the ordinary people of Uganda.

(From Stephen)

Team „Tool“ :)

Many of our team mates have been coming and going over the last year and everyone wants to be named in this section. Why not begin with our strikers ?

Two of our ace-strikers left us during the last few months ...

Let's talk about our aggressive player (whoever played against her at gaelic football would certainly agree ;P) Lorette was a core-member of our team. She was not only a sporting legend (20 sm per day !!!), she was also a great mate after the game. This French woman had a most particular relationship with the English tongue: -Wanna go out in the mountains on a "high jacking" trip? Let Lorette be your guide! (Sometimes too much of a guide when you had a hang-over ;)).

Guess what !!!!
We drink about 149
cups tea and coffee per
week !!

Emi, the Belgian... small but very quick!! She was our left ace-striker with strange ideas (snowboarding without snow was one of them ...), but she is one of the toughest with a smile on her face. She was also an organizing genius and a little craft-wonder.

Another of our strikers will leave us soon. Our Turkish friend Selim was the one who always made the surprise goal. Without him we wouldn't have won so many games :) . Our 'All right, man?'-man knows how to bring us safely out of a shortage crisis and sings us happily out of the dangerous boredom doldrums.... After a game he is also the 'let's go to the happy hour'-man!

But, hey, we got some new strikers: Corentin, from France, and Marta from Catalunya.

Corentin AKA Coco, Cocopops, Bastardo -or whatever new moniker Liam creates for him every other time- became the left field-striker and he already became the man for our trainer John Wood (= man for everything) (all jobs?) He is a great climber and his deep laugh scares every enemy out of his way :)

Marta is also a very tricky player. She is trained as an actor so you never know..... Is she..... For real? Or a paid look-alike from the bet-office? Perhaps she is scheming to take over Selim's place Who knows? Not me, that's for sure! ;) Her subtle understated irony doesn't help in this case :))

But let's talk about our midfield.... In our current situation you can find Hector the Spaniard and Louis, a true and true covert Scotsman who hides a kilt under his overalls. ;)

In the past we had a midfield with 3 teammates , but sadly they all left. Daniel was our Swedish Macho with strict rules in his life (;). He was a genius to bring our teatime-conversation to a completely new level. Elena, our little Italian whirlwind. She was one of the best hold player , doesn't matter if it is in her position in the box-department or in the sewing machine section. She is a connection point. Her cuisine was also very welcome in our football team :) She was our Italian cooking- angel ("Give me a P-A-R-M-I-G-I-A-N-O, give me a Parmigiano "). Our other hold player is Elodie (shortened to Ell'o) . Our exhibition curator extraordinaire was also a glue point, ie: Someone who brings people together and lets them enjoy their time.

But of course our new players in midfield are just as magnificent (otherwise we wouldn't pay them this ridiculously high salary ;)))! Hector always knows how to confuse opponents with his constant smile and his cool "Aye"; Opponent (fretting) : Oh my god , where next? Left, right? Hector (smiling): "Aye!" He also has some kind of very very weird posters in his room and they are not about the tools he is working with... (The editor can't give away more details because of the rules of FIFA). Enough said: he is awesome!!

What about Louis then? He isn't a morning person and you don't want to see him when we make morning training and he hasn't had his fix of Italian espresso! Don't try to tackle him then! He is a person who never tires of asking for more details; - "but why?!"... But if you ever want to make a very risky new pull, Louis is your man! Especially if it involves



What's the craic ... about our local volunteers?????

Our hardcore volunteer Liam keeps cheering us up with his superb singing skills and his cheese and onion crisps always after tea break. Another speciality of Liam is nicknames. (See on the other side)

Every Tuesday morning Gary comes very early because he's eager to work hard and share with us the typical Norm Iron slang. Thanks to him every European Volunteer talks about bacon sandwiches and traditional Norm Irish drinks.

Peter, our die hard Man' United supporter, has joined the volunteers again after a short break .

In Liam's words "Gentleman Peter" is still sharing his knowledge about music, movies and tools with all the volunteers. He's also DJ's every Monday and Tuesday. You can tell he's in the workshop when *La vie en rose* mixes in with Radio 2.

On Tuesdays we know that lunch is almost ready when Richard comes up and gives us the thumbs- up; he then devours biscuits when he thinks nobody is watching him.

Half-Iranian, half-Norm-Irish Hadi volunteered with us for a couple of months during which we really much enjoyed his carpentry skills and his open smile.

Hard working, easy going Brendan likes a smoke and a cup of tea with milk and one sugar.

Paul comes in every Thursday and occasionally delights us with his culinary skills and his fancy caps.

Henry, the box maker, comes one afternoon a week and his conversations with Liam are hilarious

We still miss Brian a lot; we hope he'll be able to join us again very soon.

real name	Liam's creation
Hector	Hectorrrrrre, Caballero
Corentin	Coco Pops, Bastarrdo (please don't forget to RRRRoll the rrrr)
Marta	Martha
Selim	Mustafa (I don't know why...), Mucker
Maike	Mica (<u>N</u> o Maike doesn't sing !!!!)
Claudia	Cla
Louis	Brother Louis (poor Louis...)
Daniel	Danny boy

From Hector and Claudia

What happend since the last newsletter ...

AGM

TFS volunteers, supporters and friends gathered in the workshop on a cold November Saturday to discuss the current situation of the organization and to assess new proposals.

The two main outcomes was the decision not to work with a new partner and that our next project will be a small tailoring-project.

Shipment!

On the 10th of December, Tools for Solidarity sent a container full of sewing machines and tools to Mwanza, Tanzania, to help women and disabled people living in rural areas. It was the result of 6 months work and over 25 years of experience in this field. This shipment included about 350 sewing-machines and 814.5 kg of material and it reached Dar es Salaam in March.

Website up and running

It took a while, but now, thanks to our brilliant volunteers, TFS has an updated, shiny new website-blog that you're all invited to browse!

www.toolsforsolidarity.com

Don't forget to register at our Facebook fan page! Selim is taking care of it and it's going to be updated very soon; stay tuned!

<http://www.facebook.com/home.php#!/pages/Tools-For-Solidarity/113408365336999>

Tropical Downpatrick

The new year began with a major refurbishment of the Downpatrick workshop: the volunteers there enjoy now a warm, homey atmosphere thanks to the new heating system. Everybody is eagerly looking forward to another freezing winter!

Last but not least, the walls have enjoyed a new coat of color!

Guess what !!!!

You hear around 300 times „What “ in our workshop in a week .

Art Exhibition

Magic spread through the Edenderry Mill on the night of February 3rd, when people from Belfast gathered to attend “In Tools”, the very first art event held by Tools for Solidarity.

Local artists and volunteers joined forces to create art representing and inspired by the purpose of the organisation; to collect and refurbish tools and sewing machines that are sent to partner organisations in Tanzania to give impulse to the country's development.

The workshop was extraordinarily transformed into an animated art gallery, where visitors could admire sculptures, paintings, photographs and projections while getting an in depth knowledge of Tools for Solidarity thanks to the enthusiastic volunteers-turned-tour guides. Music by TCBOO showed guests that tools live many faceted lives!

Belfast and Derry gigs

In February French punk band Paranoid teamed up with local acts Running Riot, A-Political and The Reverb for two fundraising concerts at Sandino's and the Pavillion. Great crack was to be had by the people who joined this beautiful event. Thanks to Ello's great work, TFS raised £600!

Garvald

In June we sent 29 sewing-machines to our friends at the Garvald Workshops, Edinburgh.

The tools and sewing machines workshop is one of many there that include a baker's and a carpenter's. They asked TFS for help: they worked so fast they were running out of sewing machines to refurbish!

Finally we sent over 29 machines with handles in their cases and they arrived safely on the 9th of June.

(from Selim and Claudia)

Why Tools boycott Nestlé !!!!

The multinational food companies have a great business replacing maternal milk for milk powder: This practice costs the lives of many babies.

The last UNICEF report says that, because of it, over one million children die each year while over ten million suffer from malnutrition and serious illness.

When Nestlé and the other giants in the industry began their campaign to enlarge their market for powdered milk, they found that the major obstacle to expansion in many countries -especially in the Third World- was the determination of mothers to continue breastfeeding their children. Powdered milk accounted only for a minimal fraction of their total turnover (less than 10% in the case of Nestlé) while they noted an exponential growth for the rest of their activities. To fix it, they decided to hit maternities with massive donations of powdered milk and the associated bottle paraphernalia. Moreover, company representatives were dispatched to hospitals and clinics in the Third World to convince doctors and mothers about the superiority of milk powder over traditional breastfeeding. The personnel of hospitals were regularly rewarded with gifts and money. After all, the same strategy and advertising spin has been successful in the developed countries!

These commercial campaigns have long sought to convince whole societies that modern, artificial feeding is superior to the backward, bothering breast method.

Children, according to the incriminated companies, develop and grow better with specially formulated powdered cow-milk while their mothers are freed from the constraints of nursing and can continue their activities without limitation. Perfection had been reached to get the milk formula, which was baptized 'humanized milk' and 'infant formula'. Soon it became clear that both formula and formulation spelt abuse: A mother returns home with armfuls of powdered milk, bottles, teats, everything needed to prepare the bottles and, worst of all, with the conviction that her children would be raised better by the industrial milk. What became known as the "culture of the bottle".

Out of the hospital, where there are no more gifts of milk, they are forced to buy at a price that can be more than 50% of family income. In many African countries, a doctor's weekly wage hardly covers the expense of a total baby's weekly supply. Some mothers who discontinued breast-feeding found themselves unable to resume nursing after their powdered milk supply run out. More dramatically, many bottles were made using the only water available, often an unsanitary supply...

The history of milk powder is the story of a discovery that has derailed. A milk which was to be a supplement in infant feeding has become a danger for the children, creating controversy around the world and being debated.

(From Marta)

Thanks to everyone who supported us (We wanted to make a special side for the special thanks but John forced us to make only a general thanks... blame him!!!! Bad John !!!!).

And don't forget : Take care !!!!





TOOLS FOR SOLIDARITY

Unit 1B1, Edenderry Industrial Estate, Crumlin Road
Belfast BT14 7EE

Tel/Fax +44 (0)28 9074 7473
tools.belfast@virgin.net
www.toolsforsolidarity.com

Northern Ireland HM Revenue and Customs Number: XR78009
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