

ANNUAL REPORT

2016



Tools For Solidarity

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Background Informations

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 critical examination of development issues, environmental sustainability and ethical working practices.

The Aims of TFS

- Promote self-reliance by furnishing overseas projects with high quality recycled hand tools and sewing machines.
- Involve individuals, organisations and the public in development and environmental issues. Utilise working methods that develop and support a sense of international solidarity and promote volunteering and ethical working practices.
- Tools For Solidarity will have appropriate premises, personnel and funding to meet the agreed outputs and objectives of the organisation.

How Can I Help

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.

Please, contact us at:

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Belfast BT7 3EX

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@214s



Chairperson's Address

The organisation continued to ratify its base within its new premises. We spent a year sorting out all the tools that had come over. It has been an ongoing work that we will carry on for at least another year to sort out the backlog tools that we brought over from the other workshop.

The workshop looks amazing. All the work has been done. For instance, we set up our Supported Volunteer Programme. So in many ways, it is great to be in our new workshop.

Unfortunately, there has been a real setback with our partner in Uganda. We left it in April when we went over for a visit. It began to work very well. When we went back in September it seemed to be achieving the results. But the partner had not adhered to the Partnership Agreement and after some accounting oroblems were found. On the top of that, we had very little communication with our partner who had been creating real problems. Although members of the committee in Uganda tried to help to resolve these issues with the partner, finally we needed to take serious action against our partner.

On the plus side, we developed a partnership with BWB, a Dutch organisation in order to work together on projects overseas. This year they sent 360 sewing machines to the *Mwanza Sewing and Training Centre* in Tanzania. It meant a genuine help for us because we could concentrate on trying to get the Ugandan Project working as well as going through our stock of tools and sewing machine in the workshop.

The success of our ESD Programme has been continued this year with a further funding from an individual. This significant fund enabled us to secure the programme for the following year.

The number of volunteers is still at a very high level. During the year we had a Strategic Development Plan in order to help the Organisation Plan for the next 3 years. This is required because of the high reliance on international volunteers



which needs to become more structured in terms of dealing with the problems that may come in the future.

All in all it has been a very successful year. The organisations finances have remained strong even though we have a mortgage for the new building. Hopefully by the end of the next year we should have been able to pay off our loan.

Congratulations to everybody who has been involved.

- Boglarka Benke

Partnership Development and Support

There were very mixed fortunes with our partners over the past year. MSTC (Mwanza Sewing and Training Centre) maintained its positive output, supporting tailors through the Lake Victoria Zone of Tanzania following the departure of Jane (MSTC manager for several years).

Within MSTC Athuman carried on as the mechanic responsible for refurbishing machines and training other mechanics. Christine was promoted to training officer and has been working hard to ensure that tailors receive their training. They have both the skill and enthusiasm which has made the project theirs and together MSTC should go from strength to strength.



The new workshop rebuilt after a fire in 2013 destroyed the building and contents. Athuman and Christine working to support tailors within the Lake Victoria Zone.



In the past year MSTC has supplied:

	Sewing machines	Training Received	Sewing machine mechanics trained	Treadles produced
Number of Tailors	217	154	2	120

During the year BWB (Tools for Change), our Dutch tools partner, shipped its first container to MSTC and gave MSTC the possibility of 2 organisations willing to supply sewing machines to it. There were however some problems with clearing the container which meant MSTC had to use up some of its reserves. During the visit a new budget was planned and there was also a plan to build a reserve within MSTC of 15m TShs over 3 years (approx. £6,000).

Shipment to MSTC (From BWB)

1. 344 sewing machines
2. 5 knitting machines
3. Boxes of threads, rolls of cloth and spare parts

The project in Uganda which was established in the first quarter of 2015 and had shown some initial successes had to be closed at the beginning of January 2015. This was not an easy decision by TFS but the partner had failed to live up to the responsibilities within the project agreement by withholding financial records. Subsequently the person managing the project has effectively stolen the resources from the project not only dishonouring herself but has let down members of her own committee and the people of East Uganda, who would have benefited from a long term project. TFS is in the process of taking action, with the help of WOR (Women's Rights Initiative) committee members, against her in order to recover the resources from the project and allocated them to the target group of the project.



Training Room At WORI

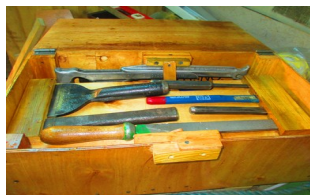


Workshop built for WORI project

While the project was unable to continue there were valuable lessons learnt which TFS can use in developing other projects. Unlike Tanzania the targeting and approach to identify artisans was more diverse requiring innovated and different approaches. The visit to several large Vocational Training Colleges lead to the development of small starter kits for young people starting up in their new trade but needing some tools to get started. These will be used as marketing tools in the next project to be developed.



Starter Kit for mason shown to students at training colleges



TFS personnel visited Uganda and spent 3 months to help establish the project, which included infrastructure and training to Ugandan staff. When the TFS personnel left the project started to deliver the programme and supply sewing machines and tools to artisans in East Uganda. A second visit was required in September 2015 to check up on reporting and progress and table 1 below illustrates that the project was delivering most of the targets that had been set.

Target	Project – year 1 (12months activity planned)	Results – year 1 (after only 5 months activity)
Tailoring		
Sewing machines	50	45
Training tailors	40	27
Other artisan activities		
Tools	2500	1111
Training	120	0
Breakdown of sewing machine provision	<p>80% of machines to women</p> <p>70% to rural areas</p> <p>2 machines to PWD (provided free)</p> <p>10% to VTCs</p>	<p>85% of machines to tailors went to women</p> <p>78% to rural areas</p> <p>4 machines to PWD (2 provided free)</p> <p>30% to VTCs(90% of VTC students were women)</p>
Breakdown of tools provided		<p>Starter kits – 8</p> <p>VTC kits – 4</p> <p>Number of artisans supported 164</p> <p>(trade fair allowed 100 artisnas to access tools)</p> <p>2 women artists</p>
Area supported		<p>79% of tools and sewing machines to village areas</p> <p>Tools – 70% to youth and 1% to women</p>



There were however several serious issues that needed to be addressed, the theft of hundreds of tools, failure to disclose information and the reports around irregularities in the training programme. While we tried to be optimistic 3 months after returning back we had no option but to close the project.

During the visit in September we took the opportunity to visit several SIDO (Small Industries Development Organisation) to discuss the possibility of establishing artisan projects. These would initially be small pilot projects and would involve sending tools and sewing machines.

The response was very positive and this will be investigated further with both SIFDO and our Dutch partners

- John Wood

Volunteer Report

TFS has an ethos which strives to support people in their personal and economic development in the spirit of solidarity. In their time here volunteers have the opportunity to gain an awareness of environmental issues, support for people who are marginalised or who have limited opportunities in their lives.

In working for TFS as volunteers we develop empathy for people in need and learn a renewed respect for them and the environment that we share. This helps to reinforce and improve the spirit of volunteering. The volunteers work on different tasks for TFS, from collecting and sorting tools to checking sewing machines for shipments abroad. As TFS volunteers we also have the opportunity to work on publicity, fundraising and evaluating potential new projects.

An important segment of what TFS does is working with supported volunteers. The supported volunteer programme, which had been temporarily stopped in the last period because we moved to a new premises, was reinstated in May 2015. This started slowly, first taking on former supported volunteers who had been with us at our old workshop, after some time we began to take referrals from Cedar, Orchardville and mental health teams, this has brought us to today where we have 8 regular supported volunteers.



As well as supported volunteers from April 2015 to March 2016 we had more than twenty international and local volunteers working with TFS for different periods of time. The international volunteers have played an increasingly important role in



our organization since the first international work camp was organised in 1984. Today our international volunteers mainly come to us from the European Voluntary Service (EVS), an EU programme under the Erasmus+ programme. Their placements last from one month to one year and this past year we have had volunteers from Finland, France, Germany, Italy,

Russia, Spain. We also still host one volunteer each year from Eirene, a German organisation committed to international peace work.

TFS has a network hundreds of people who give their time, energy and enthusiasm to help us achieve our objectives. It is an inspirational experience as many visitors to our workshops will testify. We are also very thankful those organisations and institutions that help us in finding and funding our volunteers especially the British Council for their role in the Youth in Action Programme and Volunteer Now for their local volunteer recruitment.

- Ruska Landy

Activity Report

The previous year was marked for us by a number of events and activities aimed at developing the organization and building up new relations as well as maintaining existing ones.

The beginning of it was particularly productive. The first few months were dedicated to putting up shelves and organising the space in the new workshop building. In summer we started to transport the remains of the stock from the spare parts room in Crumlin Road to the new building. All of these activities were completed by end of August which meant that we definitely finished the move and settled in the new place.

In June 2015 Tools for Solidarity along with other local NGOs participated in a Citizenship Education event organised by Methodist College. Our volunteers spent three days doing practical workshops and teaching various useful skills. During the sessions students could learn how to fix a bicycle, how to use a sewing machine, some basic plumbing and carpentry. In the course of the event we tried to demonstrate the importance of tools and sustainable living.

In summer 2015 Tools for Solidarity was happy to acquire its first sponsor. Suki Tea, a fairtrade company based in Belfast became interested in our work and wanted to support us with a generous supply of ethically produced tea.

After the presentation of Tools that Lisa, Betta and Francesca gave at Strabane Council in June the Minister for the Environment, Mark H Durkan launched a scheme to collect tools and sewing machines for us throughout Derry and Strabane. By September with the help of Julie Hannaway, Derry City Waste and Recycling Officer we received 22 sewing machines and more than 300 tools.

In January we sent 2 99K sewing machines with kits to Ibba in South Sudan. Diane Graham, the coordinator of an organisation called Days for Girls brought them to Sudan as part of her trip. Their aim is to equip girls and women with feminine hygiene kits, which helps to create more sanitary and safe conditions and



allows women to stay in schools which in turn helps them to get a better education and creates more equal opportunities in the future.

Last February our workshop was visited by a member of TÚS, a Community Work Placement Programme initiated by LEADER Partnership in Kilkenny to help people suffering from extended unemployment. Derry Gaham came for a meeting with John and Stephen with an intention to find out more about how to set up a tools refurbishing group for long-term unemployed and marginalized people.

In the beginning of March a group of volunteers from our partner organisation Tools for Self Reliance at Garvald Edinburgh stayed with us for almost a week. The connection between our two organisations goes back to 1988 and all this years we have been a great support to one another. In the course of the last year they managed to collect more than 40 treadles and lots of sewing machines to support our shipments. It was a true pleasure to have them visiting the workshops in Belfast and Downpatrick and working alongside with our volunteers.

It is very stimulating to know there are so many people interested in our work and willing to help. We are thankful for all the tools and sewing machines donations and for all the support we receive.

- Elena Vitoshko



Financial Report

Company Number: NI52306 (Northern Ireland)

Registered Charity Number: NIC100614

The Financial Year 2015-2016 was a quieter one than the previous year due to the move from Crumlin Road to Sunnyside Street being completed. As a result we now have a clearer picture of our running costs year on year.

Financial security remains problematic due to the dependency upon grants in general and EVS in particular. Grants were £51541 in total of which £29935 came from EVS. Income has been augmented by a healthy income from donations, £19327, but of this over 50% came from one source (Roger Waters).

Expenditure is kept to a minimum due to the work carried out by volunteers and the majority of tools, sewing machines and materials coming from volunteers.

In addition the mortgage of Sunnyside Street has been significantly reduced from £26137 to £10619 which means the net Financial Assets of the organisation have increased from £27888 to £34000 over the year.

Balance Summary

	1st April 2015	31st March 2016
Building Society	40443	30769
Bank Account	12948	13393
Petty Cash	334	135
Paypal	300	322
Net Cash Assets	54025	44619
Mortgage	26137	10619
Net Financial Assets	27888	34000

1st APRIL 2015 to 31st MARCH 2016

PROFIT & LOSS REPORT

INCOME

2015-16

Building Society/Bank Interest	£5
Donations	£19,327
Grants (EVS)	£29,935
Grants Other	£21,606
Other Income	£53
Other Sales	£2,430
Rent Income	£12,940
Scrap Metal Sales	£619
VAT Refunds	£3,817
Total Income	£90,732

EXPENDITURE

2015-16

Direct Expenses

Purchase, Parts, Materials	£5,239
Fixed Assets	£3,779
Repairs	£597
<i>Total Direct Expenses</i>	£9,615

Overheads

Mortgage Interest/Bank Fees	£1,885
Field Trip Costs	£1,364
Insurance	£3,803
Legal & Professional Costs	£2,866
Light & Heat	£4,568
Overseas Payments	£1,899
Rent, Rates & Water Charges	£2,796
Salary	£13,074
Shipping	£608
Stationary & Postage	£310
Sundry	£377
Telephone	£1,084
Travel & Subsistence	£5,487
Vehicleb Fuel/Motor Expenses	£2,000
Volunteer Expenses	£23,444
<i>Total Overhead Expenses</i>	£65,565

Mortgage Payments

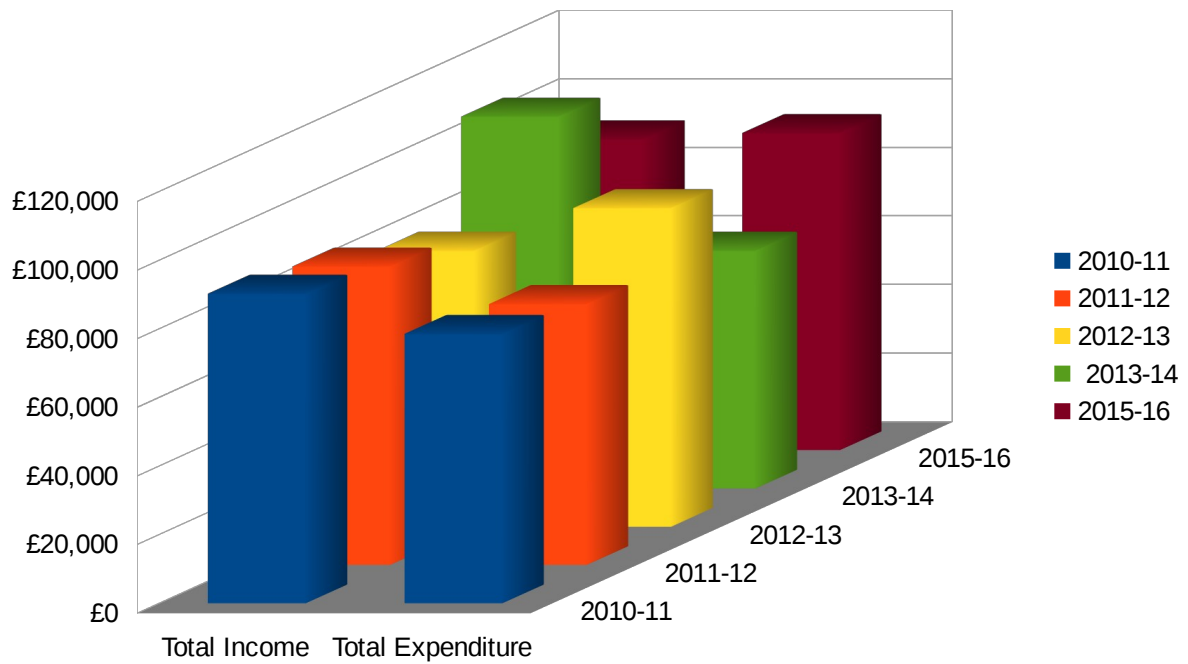
£17,368

Total Expenditure

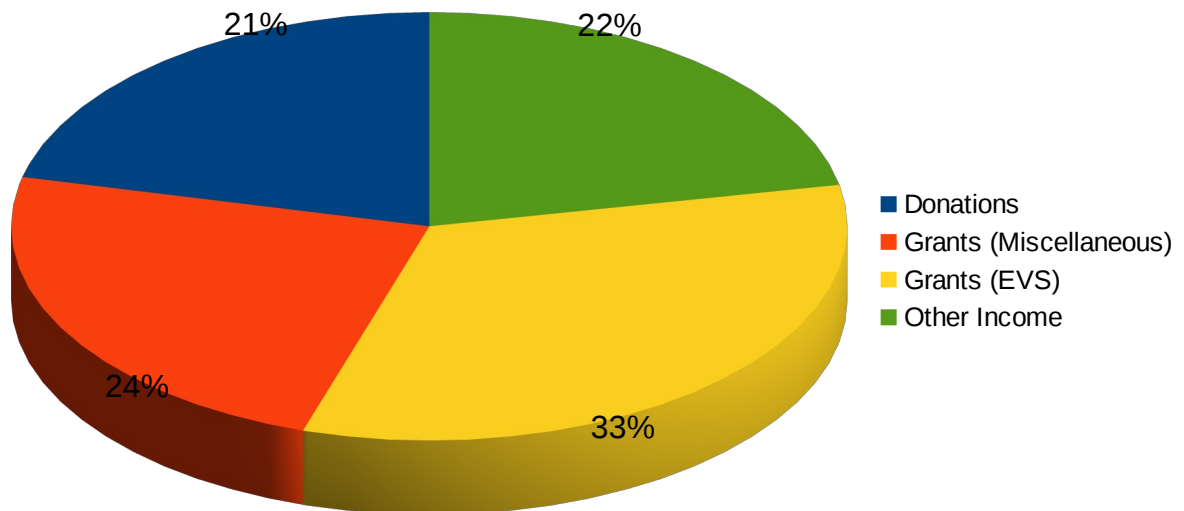
£92,548

Profit/Loss

-£1,815



TFS income and expenditure between 2010-11 and 2015-16



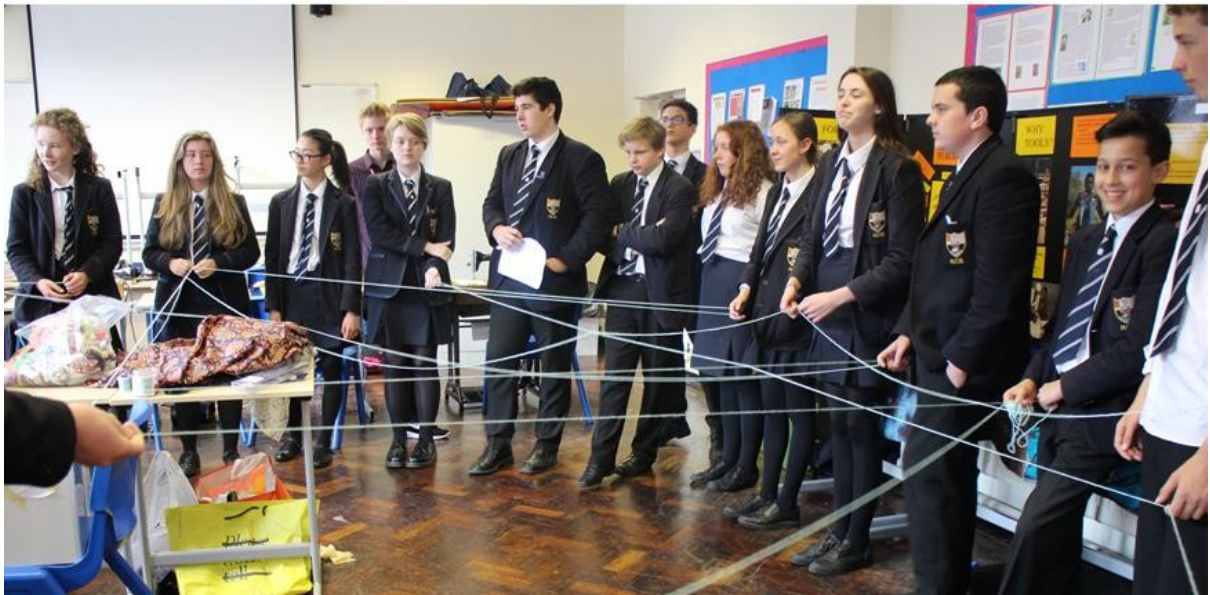
Percentage of the different type of income

Education Sustainable Development

This is the third year of the implementation of the Education for Sustainable Development Programme with the aim of raising awareness through Northern Ireland (NI) about issues of Sustainable Development.

From the end of the last school year (April 2014 to September 2015) the ESD group kept working on communication with several communities and we closed the year with the participation of 6 Primary schools, 4 Post-Primary schools, 1 Women's Centre and a total of 245 participants. This led to an increase of the number of participants by 24.3% from the 1st to the 2nd year.

We also took part on the Citizenship Event at Methodist College Belfast where we developed a special programme combining practical skills with sustainable development topics such as transport, recycling, water and sustainable aid.



To give a more comprehensive view of the development of the programme, from now onwards we are going to focus on the full school year run from September 2015 to June 2016.

The programme had been working on a voluntary basis in the last two years and this is the first year that it has been funded by an individual supporter. This has allowed us to create some **improvements** such as:

- The development of publicity materials: The ESD report 2013-2015, aimed to collate information about the programme and use it to evaluate the work that has been done over the past two years, was printed and given to school principals and youth leaders to promote and recruit participants.
- Website. Prior to having the funding we had an ESD blog where we published all recent news. After the funding we were able to develop a whole new website where the public can get information about the programme, the objectives, the target groups and see the planned calendar with information on the groups we are working with each month.
- The conceptual framework. We designed a framework to explain in a visual way the main characteristics of the programme and highlight the path we follow during the learning process: From exploring what happens in the world, to question the impact of our decisions and change personal attitudes to achieve positive social impacts.

During this year the ESD group has also made some important **connections with the community**, such as:

- Partnership with Suki Tea, a Fair Trade company based in Belfast who collaborate with the ESD programme in the creation of new activities around Fair Trade and empowerment. They also come to some schools to talk about their story and the impact of Fair Trade on people's lives.
- The Global Learning Programme (GLP).



The GLP is a new formal education project designed to enhance the global learning taking place in schools throughout Northern Ireland. Laura is one of the global facilitators involved giving training to teachers and advising them on how to introduce global learning into the curriculum. This has helped to advertise the ESD programme to local schools and to improve the project according to teachers' needs.

- We have also kept previous connections such as Comhlamh Belfast group and The Coalition of Aid and Development Agencies in Northern Ireland (CADA).

New programme implementations

This year we worked with the Village Youth & Community Centre with participants aged between 8 and 14 years old. We designed a new programme which included more ice breaker activities and focused more on a game based approach. We also changed the time schedule to 2 sessions of 120 min.

We have also worked with an inter-generational programme at the Foot Prints Women's Centre, a programme where we worked with mums and children to bring awareness to the whole family. We worked for one session of 120 minutes and we focused our attentions to the topic of consumerism, Fair Trade and other positive alternatives.

Relevant data

At the end of the school year we worked with more than 500 participants, of which 80% were primary Schools (12) and the other 20% was formed by Post-Primary schools (2), Women's Centre (1) and Youth & Community Centre (1). This is an increase of participants by 100% with respect to the previous year.

Due to the increase of participants in the programme we have also increased the number of volunteers involved in it. We have trained three volunteers on Sustainable Development issues and facilitating approaches.



Feedback

Based on the information received from students and teachers the feedback was very positive. 90% of the participants enjoyed the activities and 95% of the teachers would recommend the programme to other schools or institutions.

Some comments from the teachers:

“Excellent topics, a very worthwhile project. It was a great opportunity for the children to learn about the wider world” Holy Family Primary School Belfast.

“I like the interactive group activities” Rosetta Primary School Belfast.

“The children responded very well, it got them thinking about issues they may not have ever considered” Bunscoil Mhic Reachtain Primary School Belfast.

Conclusion

We aim to create more awareness of how our actions impact the local community as well as on a global scale and to empower participants to make informed decisions that reduce local and global poverty. We are very happy with the development of the activities and the increase of participants taking on the programme. The next step is to focus on new sessions with a deeper knowledge of Sustainable Development, aim to target post-primary school and to increase the basic knowledge already built during the previous years. We hope to get funding to ensure the long term future of the programme.



- Laura Rio Fernandez

Special Thanks

Action Mental Health	All the Schools and Colleges that participated in the ESD programme	Philip Allen	John Foster and Methodist College Belfast
Daniella	Suki Team	Unicorn Food Coop	Northern Ireland Public Service
North Down Recycling Centres	Autism Initiatives	NICVA	Alliance (NIPSA) Clifford Duff and Ashfield Boys' High School
Pam and Tara, Patchwork Goose	Belfast City Council recycling centres	Pat and Heather, Kilkeel	Sewell Charitable Trust
North Belfast Quakers	South Belfast Quakers Small Industries Development Organization (SIDO)	Cedar Foundation	Ralf Zeigler and Eirene St Malachy's College Old Boys Association
Department for Social Development	Mwanza Sewing and Training Centre	Manager, Mwanza Julian Sanders	The Orchardville Society
Friends of Mourne Grange	Tools for Self Reliance (TFSR), Garvald Edinburgh Erasmus+ team, British Council	Geoff and Tina Claxton	Tony and Brid Weeks
Jenny Groves		Volunteer Now	Lloyds TSB Foundation for Northern Ireland - Stephen Wood