

DECEMBER 2020 - AUGUST 2021

NEWSLETTER



Welcome to our readers

Since our last Newsletter in November once more a lot of positive things have taken place, as you might know thanks to our publicity group.

However, with our team back from their field trip, it's time for us to look back on the past months and focus on some of the highlights and issues facing us.

- Welcome / Goodbye
- Christmas hampers
- New Building
- Field trip in Tanzania
- ESD report
- New strategic communication
- Free Fossil Non Proliferation Treaty



Welcome



Goodbye

by Jennifer

It's time to say goodbye to Andrei, Jessica, Ecem, Zeinab, Anton...

At tools we often forget that our volunteers are here only for a year. So when it's time to say goodbye it's always heartbreaking. It's even worst when our volunteers stay longer.

We would like to say a huge thanks to Jessica and Andrei for staying longer and training our volunteers in the sewing machine section. Their kindness and support during the pandemic time was enormous. We wish you all the best!

We also want to say thank you Ecem and Zeinab for staying with us during this difficult year. Your willingness smile and happiness have been more than appreciated. We are hoping all the best for your futures.

Anton volunteered a couple of months before working with MSF. We are sure that you will have a great impact. We will miss your accent!

Unfortunately Rodrigue has also left us. Good luck with your new job Rod!

...and welcome to Pavel, Rafaela and welcome home, Daria!

Christmas Hampers

By Jennifer



At tools, we love Christmas! We used to organise a lunch and invite all our former and present volunteers, as well as our friends, to enjoy a good craic.

This year, unfortunately, we haven't been able to organise our lunch because of the restrictions due to the Covid-19.

But we are resourceful, so we decided to prepare for our volunteers a Christmas hampers!

Thanks to a grant from Food for Life Get Together, we decided to give our volunteers a hamper - 100% reusable. Christmas is time for celebrating, not waste!

Chutney, apple juice and jam have been made by Geoff from Mourne Grange and Ken Orr our treasurer. Thanks to them it was delicious!

After preparing our hampers, we delivered them to our volunteers in their homes.



NEW BUILDING

In our previous newsletter, we mentioned about to get a building to store our boxes and sewing machines for our next shipments.

Finally, we've found it! In January we've got the keys and started to work there. After a few weeks, we realised that we needed shelves. So we built it and stacked our box of tools.

Afterwards, we've been able to tidy our workshop in Sunnyside and get new workbenches for our volunteers.

During this period we became aware of the humidity inside the building and particularly the walls. Subsequently, we took off the paint from the walls and we will remove some part of the outside wall to put new bricks in the next following month.

Moreover, because our team of volunteers is not that huge anymore, we still have to sort out some stuff and check our boxes to keep a record of them.

As you can see, there are a lot of things to do! So if you want to give us a hand, you're more than welcome!





Field Trip Interview

As you might know, our partnership worker Manon and our workshop coordinator John worked in Tanzania for over 3 months in order to open a new centre in Njombe, the southern highlands of Tanzania. After coming back from Tanzania, Manon has kindly answered our multiple questions.

What was the hardest part of your work?

One of the difficult parts for me was to start the project from the very beginning. NASTC (Njombe Artisan Support and Training Centre) opened about 6 months ago. The trip was to help set it all up. It was the first time that I have worked on a project from the very beginning, and it was challenging as everything was new to me. However, I learnt and enjoyed it a lot. It was such a great professional experience!

Another difficult part was taking account of the situation and reality on the ground. I mean, you plan everything, you schedule everything, but then it would simply not go the way that you expected. For example, the electricity is not working for a few hours or days and you're not prepared for it. Simply because here in Belfast we're so used to have it all the time. Hence you have to find other or new ways to move on, get used to what you have and keep working efficiently.





What was the best part of your work?

Although it was really hard, I do really appreciate having this opportunity!

It's also worth mentioning that the best part of the project was to work with the partner that I've been in the contact with for more than a year and to finally meet them. I also had an opportunity to guide Janeth - our NASTC workshop coordinator - and to show her how everything is working. I saw her learning, discovering and enjoying her new job and this new life opportunity. I also had the chance to meet our target group, the tailors and artisans. It is at that point that I realised how Tools For Solidarity does such great and important work.

It was an amazing time that I will never forget!

Was it difficult to speak with locals?

Apparently, it was not difficult for them to understand me. Probably because I'm not an English native speaker so I know the feeling of learning English! I was quite lucky because most of the partners know English well so it was easy to speak with them.

However, when I was in the village by myself with local people it was really hard to communicate. The town that we lived in is quite small so locals are not used to tourists and foreigners. They couldn't understand me and I couldn't understand them. Hence I always tried to speak with them using sign language and my few words of Swahili. Usually, locals were amused by seeing me struggling and at the end, we used a universal language: laughing together!





NEW STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION

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.

So let's take a look at the main aspects we want to improve in the next few months when it comes to Publicity:



Video production and content creation

It's important to keep our followers updated with our news. However, the era of snapping a picture, creating a description and posting it online has gone. Nowadays, to capture the audience's attention, you need to work hard for every post you create. Not only that, but social media platforms don't make the lives of digital marketers easy because they update their algorithms monthly. Can you believe it?! Therefore, our group will keep on creating content for our socials with caution to each platform. It means that with the same piece of content we will create a post with a picture on Facebook, a video on Instagram and a short tweet on Twitter. In other words, same information - different approaches.

Start on e-mail marketing

Tools For Solidarity has a subscription form on our website and so far we have gained more than 1,000 followers on MailChimp. However, it'll be all for nothing if we don't use this marketing tool. From August 2021 Publicity group aims to create at least one e-mail a month with the latest news of the charity. We will try to build each letter as engaging as possible so that our readers could read it on the go.

Get free access to some Digital Marketing Platforms

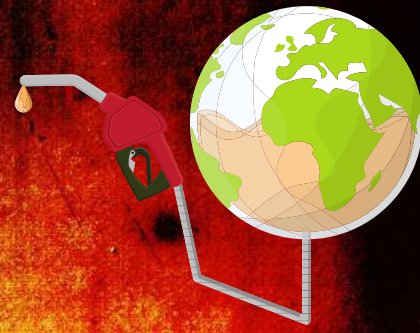
Plenty of digital giants provide free access to non-for-profit organisations to their most desirable tools. The publicity group is aiming to try and get access to such platforms as Google Ads to promote our charity on Google search, Facebook and Instagram Charity Support to be able to fundraise on these platforms directly. It requires a lot of work, however, if we can get it, we will find creative solutions to some problems.

These are the main goals for the Publicity group in Autumn 2021. Although it might not be understandable for everyone, we will try to make it as clear as possible when the time comes. As for now, support us, follow us and like us on our social media platforms!

Daria Pudovkina, Publicity Officer



FOSSIL FREE NON PROLIFERATION TREATY



Human use of Fossil Fuels is bringing about a world that Humans will no longer be able to inhabit. The figures are mind-numbing. In 1950 global emissions of CO2 were 6 billion tonnes, this had risen to 22 billion by 1990 and 36 billion today. CO2 continues to rise despite 27 global conferences to address the issue since 1995, despite the Kyoto Protocol, despite the Paris agreement.

The latest IPCC (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change) report screams we are at the point of no return. At least 15 countries since 2016 have declared a climate emergency – the UK and Ireland included. Yet Fossil Fuel usage has continued to grow year by year up until the start of the Pandemic – Germany is set for the biggest rise in greenhouse gases for 30 years this year.

In an emergency, you act – as quickly, directly and effectively as possible to avoid catastrophe. Yet for the Fossil Fuel Industries and governments, it is business as usual. The consequences are all too easy to see EVERYWHERE. Huge fires in Canada, Australia, Greece, USA, Siberia, Turkey... Flooding in Japan, China, Germany, France, Belgium...

Ten years ago millions of people's lives were affected directly by the Climate Crisis, today 100's of millions of people suffer. Within 5 years it will be billions. Coordinated action now is essential.

In March this year TFS signed up to the Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). Fossil Fuels are in effect weapons of mass destruction. The Paris agreement has very few mechanisms for stopping or slowing down the production of Fossil Fuels – it is primarily concerned with emissions. The NPT was started last year to mobilise and garner support for the ending of Fossil Fuel use and for a Just Transition to a sustainable way of living on this planet. It calls for transparency and accountability for Fossil Fuel Production, ending of any new exploitation and the rapid phasing out of existing production

Momentum is growing – over 600 organisations have signed the Treaty and 13 cities. TFS has approached a local politician in Belfast with the idea of Belfast joining the list - it is a very small action but one that all of us can do - enough cities signing up can shift governments and create movement so desperately needed. It needs to happen now. Collective action is our only hope.

By Stephen

