

Newsletter

September 2021 -
December 2022



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Prepared By:
Tools for Solidarity

Welcome to our readers

Since our last newsletter, it has been a crazy busy time!

We have made improvements in the new workshop: the roof has been repaired, and many shelves are growing towards the ceiling. We are getting ready for the next shipment about to happen on the 12th of December!! We have seen the end of the European Solidarity Corps programme and built a new partnership with the French Service Civique. The ESD (Education for Sustainable Development) programme keeps growing with the development of adult sessions, the creation of 2 new sessions about climate change, the beginning of the Irish sessions and a new volunteer from Eirene dedicated to this programme! We get new funding from the Belfast Trust to support and grow the Supported Volunteers' programme coordinated by Stephen and Hamish. Finally Manon, Stephen and Geoff went on a field trip in March to visit our project in Tanzania!

Let's go deeper into some of the subjects! If you want to keep informed about our activities on a weekly bases don't hesitate to follow us on socials: Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn!

Lena Le Sciellour

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International volunteers 2022

Interview with an ESD volunteer

This interview gives an insight into the work of the Education for Sustainability Development (ESD) volunteers. Noel, one of the lead volunteers, explains what he likes about the ESD programme and why he thinks it is important to teach children about topics like poverty, fairtrade and waste issues.



Hazelwood Integrated
Primary School

The ESD programme is a series of workshops delivered by volunteers for children aged 8 to 11 in primary schools. The programme covers the following topics in 8 sessions: inequality; poverty; natural resources and reducing waste; fairtrade; relative and extreme poverty and climate change. If you would like to get to know more about the programme, have a look at our website: <http://educationforsustainabledevelopment.weebly.com/>

Interview with an ESD volunteer

Could you introduce yourself to us and your role in the ESD group?

My name is Noel and I am a lead volunteer within the ESD group. An international volunteer and I attend primary schools and deliver the programme to P6 students over 4 weeks. The following year we return to deliver sessions on poverty and climate change to the same students when they are in P7. I also assist in generating the teaching material

Why did you start volunteering in the ESD Group?

I had been teaching science and environment in a middle school in Thailand before the pandemic. I really enjoyed this experience and wanted to continue teaching as a volunteer when I returned to Belfast. I found Tools for Solidarity and the ESD programme on the internet and gave them a call. I have been helping out when I can ever since!

The programme teaches children (aged 8-11) about poverty, fairtrade, waste issues and more. Why is it important that children get to know about these issues?

These issues are some of the most pressing challenges that we face in our society. The students are always curious about these issues but may not come across information in mainstream media that is tailored for them to understand, nor are they routinely covered within their school curriculum. Even when they are, a topic is taught in isolation, so that it is difficult to see how all of these issues are linked together. The children can become advocates for change within their own homes and also feel empowered to have a meaningful impact on the big issues facing our society and the environment through their own actions

Interview with an ESD volunteer

What do you like most about the ESD programme?

I like that these important issues are presented to the students in a fun and interactive way, while appealing to different learning styles. It is very focused on participation and engagement, allowing the students to ask questions and explore ideas openly, without being 'taught at' all the time. It is also a fun break for them every week, and it always amazes me how much the students remember from one week to the next. I really enjoy the energy and enthusiasm that the students have for the topics and their curiosity in the culture and language of our international volunteers.



Roisin Sloan at Hazelwood
Integrated Primary School



Aurelia Bonn at Hazelwood
Integrated Primary School

Aurelia Bonn

Education For Sustainable Development: A Word on Good Practice

Tools for Solidarity (TFS) always tries to make sure that the Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) programme is informed by good practices within the Global Citizenship Education sector. Therefore the ESD group has recently made the commitment to become a member of the Code of Good Practice for Development Education (devised by members of the Irish Development Education Association). The Code comprises principles and indicators which we, in the Development Education sector, should implement in our work. One example is '[exploring] the root causes of local and global injustices and inequalities in our interdependent world'. The 12 core principles are listed in the poster. It is essential that we learn from our own practice and that of others who are carrying out similar work. The Education Officer is a member of the Centre for Global Education in Belfast. This has proven very beneficial, allowing TFS to access quality resources and materials. The ESD group also tries to encourage other organisations to share good practices and collaborate. They co-organised an event on Wednesday the 9th of November 2022 which was held online. This gave attendees the opportunity to learn about each other's work as well as identifying how they might go about improving their practice. This event was run by CADA (the Coalition of Aid and Development Agencies N.I.). This event enabled an exchange of ideas and thoughts which will prove useful to the ESD group going forward. By joining the Code of Good Practice for Development Education we hope to keep improving the quality of the workshops and learning resources that we provide. The ESD group is looking forward to the opportunities for collaboration and partnership which will no doubt ensue from this new venture.

Róisín Sloan



Lena Le Sciellour, Roisin Sloan, Aurelia Bonn, Sofia Tagliani, Sam Ruscice

Code of Good Practice for Development Education

12 Core Principles

Educational Practice



01 Contribute to **Knowledge** in Ireland about global development



02 Explore the **Root Causes** of local and global injustices and inequalities in our interdependent world



03 Be explicit about the **ethos of Development Education**



04 Encourage **Critical Thinking** in our exploration of local and global justice issues and seeking of solutions



05 Use **Participatory, Creative** methodologies



06 Produce and use **Quality Resources and Materials**, based on continuous learning



07 Build **Skills for Informed, Meaningful Action** that is **Collective** in nature



08 **Imagine and Explore Solutions** for a better world



09 **Actively and consistently Reflect and Learn** from our own Development Education practice and participants' feedback

Organisational Practice



10 Have a clear **Development Education Strategy and Action Plan**



11 Reflect the **Key Values** of Development Education



12 **Advocate for Quality Development Education**

Supported volunteers news

Our big news is that we are happy to announce that for the first time in our history we have secured local government funding for our supported volunteer programme from the Belfast Trust!! This funding is in particular to support people with a learning disability.

With the ending of most Covid restrictions in Northern Ireland last Spring, there have been many organisations and families looking for placements for their clients and family members, to enable them to regain some sense of structure back in their lives after the enormous disruption of the Covid lockdowns. We have consequently had many requests from organisations like Leonard Cheshire, Sense, Inspire, Orchardville and L'Arche.

With the securing of funding for our work, we decided to increase the number of available places from 12 to 16. We now run our programme for volunteers who require extra support with mental health, brain injuries, autism and or a learning disability on Mondays and Thursdays. The supported volunteers learn skills of simple repairing and cleaning of hand tools and sewing machines and the tasks they undertake are matched to their abilities. They have also been well supported this year by our talented international volunteers, Joel from Germany, Sofia from Italy and now by Solene from France. We are looking forward next year to continue this very worthwhile work!



Joel Janssen, Mickael Weir,
Hamish Arrowsmith



Mickael Weir, Joel Janssen

Supported volunteers news

Here are 2 quotes we recently received about the benefits of our programme:

"Tools as it is affectionately known provides opportunities for people who have been disadvantaged and excluded in society due to their disabilities. Tools enables the Volunteer to participate in worthwhile and valuable work giving them a sense of self-worth and a sense of purpose. The staff at Tools are professional and provide an excellent opportunity for individuals to develop their work skills and social skills in a safe and supported environment."

Maria Daly, a case officer from the
Cedar Foundation

"M has attended Tools for Solidarity's supported volunteer programme for almost 6 years. He really enjoys his time there and has learned so many new skills. The supported volunteers help to support M with all his tasks and are always very friendly, patient and helpful. This support has helped M's confidence grow as well as helping him learn how to act in the work place. The woodworking tasks completed at Tools are a great way to engage attention and help participants focus on their work. M. also enjoys speaking with the volunteers, who come from various different countries in Europe, and learning about their different countries of origin and cultures. Overall, Tools is a fantastic place that supports participants both in terms of work skills and social/communication skills."

Leah Yarr, a support worker from
Orchardville society

Hamish Arrowsmith

2 month volunteering with Tools: Mehdi's testimony

My name is Mehdi. I am 23 years old. Before my civic service, I worked as a commercial diver, which is construction work underwater.

I decided to volunteer with the french service civique programme to improve my English while doing something useful for African workers. Indeed, Tools for Solidarity is a charity supporting artisans by selling good quality tools and sewing machines and providing training to improve the technical and business skills of local artisans in Tanzania and Malawi.



Mehdi Hridane

2 month volunteering with Tools: Mehdi's testimony

I am now part of the tools section of the charity. In the beginning, it was very complicated for me to understand the instructions and make myself understand. Belfast accent is very particular, and my English level barely allowed me to line up 2 words. After 2 months at Tools for Solidarity, I have made some progress in English, and the charity even provides me with English classes during my working time. Today I can talk with my co-workers even if I still have to improve my level...

Life in Belfast is very different from what I experienced in France in Marseille. I come from a region where the sun shines all year round and the days are long and warm. Here it is all the opposite ☹️ But we get used to it quickly. And the warm welcome I receive here compensates for the rainy weather.

I am gradually discovering the culture of Northern Ireland, and I spend a lot of my free time cycling around on my company vehicle: my bike!

Tools for Solidarity aims to be environmentally friendly, so we all travel by bike. In just 2 months I got good frog legs! .

We also eat vegetarians either at the workshop or at the volunteer house. This change in diet bothered me a little at first as I love meat. But the satisfaction tools' restoration brings sweeps away all the disadvantages because I tell myself that my work will help people in difficulty and this is the most beautiful salary I can receive.

I hope to keep improving my English and my skills in tool refurbishment during the coming months. And make the most of spring to discover Northern Ireland!

Mehdi Hridane



Mehdi Hridane

2022 Field trip feedback

At the end of March 2022, Tools for Solidarity (TFS) staff (Stephen, Manon and Geoff) visited both projects in Tanzania: MSTC and NASTC.

During the trip, TFS staff

- visited the artisans who benefited from a machine/tool from both projects to know their feedback
- met with TFS local partner SIDO (Small Industries Development Organisation) to discuss the overall of the projects
- attended a tailor training session at the NASTC centre
- reviewed the finances of the project and their objectives for the next few months

NASTC Pictures



Fausta Mkongwa that receives a KM



Training of tailors with TFS/SIDO/NASTC staff



Sara Judika Mariki that receives a SM

2022 Field trip feedback

MSTC Pictures



Daugi Elisha and Stephen Wood



Amani women group sagata



Michael: trade fabricator



Amani women group sagata with curious villagers from Simiyu region

2022 Field trip feedback

Feedback of tailor _ Matthias Sylvester



Matthias received a straight stitches (SS) sewing machine in 2018 from MSTC and was trained in dress design. He has been a tailor for 10 years. Before he was using a SS Chinese. He does men's and women's clothes. His income increased and he managed to buy a new plot for his agriculture business. The business training helped him to improve as now he keeps records of his sales. In the future, he wants to start a shop that sells materials. There are also other tailors that come to use his SM for 1,000 Tsh.

Achievement of the projects – end of the year.

It's almost the end of 2022! There is only December left and usually, projects in Tanzania are closed during this month. A little throwback to the year 2022 about the 2 TFS projects: MSTC and NASTC.



Doris and Andrea



Doris and Andrea with Janeth and Micheal (NASTC workshop coordinator and junior mechanic)

2022 Field trip feedback

MSTC

MSTC had a quieter year than usual. The reason is that the stock of sewing machines at MSTC was very low, especially regarding the straight stitches. MSTC was unable to deliver training for a few months. However, in July 2022, MSTC received a shipment from our sister English organisation WORKAID with 210 straight stitches, 24 zigzags and 14 embroidery machines. After that MSTC was able to provide 5 training to more than 120 artisans including sewing machines given free of charge to 7 people with disabilities.

MSTC also participated in the famous annual exhibition called "NaneNane". Nane means eight in Swahili and the exhibition takes place every year in August on the same date: 08/08. This event was specially created for farmers and artisans to present their activities. It is an important promotional event for MSTC where the staff introduce the project and the services that the centre can offer.

NASTC

NASTC was quite busy in 2022! The centre delivered about 100 sewing machines and trained 50 tailors over 2 training sessions. NASTC also provided 1000 hand tools, 12 electrical tools and 2 pieces of machinery to artisans. The centre also gave 3 sewing machines and 3 tool kits free of charge to people with disabilities. TFS is also very pleased to congratulate 2 students from the Njombe Vocational Training Centre – Andrea and Doris – who graduated from a tailoring course in November 2022! Both students have participated in the special programme for people with disabilities that NASTC offers in the centre. This program consists of covering all tuition fees for people with disabilities for a year.

This does not include only tuition fees but also accommodation, food, health care, uniform and any other costs related. The students will also receive capital to start their business. Huge congratulations again to both of them!!



Athman at NaneNane

Manon Oger

A Special Thank You

Last week, we lost one of the first people who started collecting tools in Belfast way back in 1984. Thomas Paul Hynes helped the organisation in those early years with his suppers and enthusiasm. He is sadly missed but fondly remembered by his friends.

Thank you Thomas and rest in peace.

John Wood