



Refurbishing project in safe hands

What staff from one of Tools for Self Reliance's partners in Uganda don't know about tool refurbishing probably isn't worth knowing! Victor Turyamureba and Everest Kabaru of Uganda Rural Development Training (URDT) have recently spent two months working alongside volunteers in the UK learning all about the art of refurbishing.



Everest and Victor with volunteer Simon Cockwell

The training will have a significant impact on the number of artisans that can access tools and training in western Uganda, as Victor and Everest now intend to use the skills and knowledge they've acquired to set up and run a new tool refurbishing and training centre in Kagadi town. According to Everest, URDT desk officer, "This will promote self-reliance and strengthen groups in mid western Uganda."

The collaboration, which has involved not only staff and volunteers at Netley Marsh but also volunteers in other refurbishing groups around the country, has been deemed a great success, and as a result could become a blueprint for future training efforts.

"We have discovered the steps involved in refurbishing tools ... and have expanded our horizons."

Victor Turyamureba, URDT

There have been some other spin-offs for Tools for Self Reliance. According to Jon Dunkley, workshop manager at Netley Marsh, who helped put the training programme together:

"Victor's and Everest's training has led us to re-evaluate the skills and knowledge needed to run a refurbishing centre. Hopefully we can share this with our volunteer groups in the UK and apply it to future refurbishing workshop projects in Africa."

We are eagerly waiting to see how the refurbishing centre project goes and will of course be keeping you posted.

Zambia talks

Tools for Self Reliance's chief executive and partnership development officer packed their bags for Lusaka in November to talk to potential new partners in Zambia.

For the full story turn to page 3.

Mabaale metals on the move

Members of the Mabaale Metalwork Group in Kibaale district are enjoying the fruits of their labours following a five-fold increase in their income since the group received tools from Tools for Self Reliance back in 2001. Three of the group have moved into new premises where they are able to improve the services on offer. The group has bought a generator from the profits of its sales.

The changes that are taking place at Mabaale are typical of the positive impact the tools and training programme is having in Uganda. A recent survey by our partners URDT uncovered a number of positive outcomes for artisans:

- basic needs met
- reinvestment in the business
- better community relations.

Others to benefit from the tool sending programme include Byamukama Dan who runs a small shoe repair business in Kagadi town. Dan and Sons Shoe Repair workshop received tools from Tools for Self Reliance in 2003 and have since bought a plot of land to expand the



Mabaale metal workers

business. Byamukama is now able to pay school fees for his children who are at secondary school and his whole family are benefiting from Byamukama's regular income, not to mention new pairs of shoes!

With the right package of support many of the skilled workers are also able to offer training and take on new employees. After receiving a small joinery kit earlier this year the Kyarwakya United Carpentry group now provide furniture for the local community and it has started to operate as a carpentry training centre.

Talking tools on the radio



KKCR on air

them about the support that URDT and Tools for

The local airwaves are being targeted in a bid to focus minds and empower skilled workers in western Uganda. Kagadi Kibaale Community Radio (KKCR) is just one of the ways being used to reach out to the residents of towns and villages in Kibaale district to tell

Self Reliance are able to offer through the Artisan Support Programme.

The radio broadcasts make it possible for URDT to access an unprecedented 1 million people and over 3000 skilled workers in the region. They are used both to publicise the tools and training programme, and to deliver some of the training.

For many skilled workers it is prohibitively expensive to attend training workshops, despite that fact that this type of face-to-face training is known to be highly effective. So the broadcasts get around this and provide the opportunity for radio phone-ins and studio discussions on various topics of interest to artisans.

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It's what I do:

Interview with Everest Kabarú, URDT desk officer



Everest Kabarú is desk officer with URDT's Artisan Support Programme. On his recent visit to the UK we persuaded him to put down his saw file for five minutes to tell us a bit about what his job at URDT entails.

“I've been doing the job of desk officer at URDT since June 2005. I'm actually the fourth desk officer in the 12 years of the Artisan Support Programme but the first to be funded by Tools for Self Reliance.

My job involves coordinating with artisan groups and networks such as the Network of Local Artisans and the Kibaale Artisan Network. I explain to artisans about the programme and the support available, which often involves visiting them in their workshops or at home and helping them to fill in an application form.

URDT gets many more requests for toolkits than the programme can meet so unfortunately we have to turn some people down. I forward the successful applications to Sarah in the UK and then it's a case of waiting for the day the tools arrive. Once the eagerly awaited day arrives I organise freight from Kampala to Kagadi, collect contributions from the artisans for the tools and organise local distribution. Each artisan group receives one day's training before they are allowed to take their tools away. This is an

important part of the process as it ensures they take ownership of their toolkits. Delivering the training and distributing the tools is only part of the story. We try hard to monitor the impact the tools have by visiting the groups and asking them about the changes that have taken place.

I have found the training at Netley Marsh very useful. We now have a general picture of how to run a refurbishing centre, including the techniques and knowledge required.”

With the move towards project-based working Tools for Self Reliance is seeking ways of supporting its partners with packages of support that include training, networking, access to micro-credit and tools. We are working closely with URDT and other partners to identify suitable projects, and we hope to involve Everest in this process.

Forging new links in Zambia

Over the past 18 months we have been looking at ways we might extend our partnership support activities into new countries in Africa. After a comprehensive desk study the possibilities have been narrowed down to two countries – Zambia and Malawi. These will be investigated in more detail over the coming months.

To this end Chief Executive Officer Jan Kidd and Partnership Development Officer Sarah Ingleby visited Zambia in November. They took the opportunity to meet with a number of prospective partners and explore ways we might work together. Organisations visited included Oxfam and Care International, as well as smaller indigenous organisations such as Kara Counselling – a local HIV/AIDS support network.

We will report more fully on the outcomes of this visit in the coming issues of *Forging Links*.



Since the last edition of *Forging Links* we are delighted to report that the shipment of kits to projects in Ghana has arrived and the tools are now in the hands of the artisans. Included in this shipment are kits for the Pro-Link project which are being used to support vocational training for HIV/AIDS orphans and street children, and toolkits for TRAX Ghana (see page 7 for further details).

At the beginning of November the shipment of tools sent to Zimbabwe in partnership with the German Development Service (DED) and the Organisation of Collective Co-operatives in

Shipping news

Zimbabwe (OCCZIM) arrived in Durban and it is now on the road to Gweru. From there it will be cleared and then distributed to income generating groups in seven districts of Masvingo.

Our September shipment to Uganda was the first to make use of the Revolving Fund established with our partner Uganda Rural Development Training (URDT). This fund allows URDT to organise clearance of containers as soon as they arrive in Kampala rather than having to wait until all the artisans have made their up-front payments for their kits. URDT have told us what a big difference the fund has already made and that it will help them to ensure kits get to artisans as quickly as possible.

We have completed a shipment for Tanzania which should arrive before the end of the year, with another to follow hard on its heels in the new year. We are now on course to complete the last shipment of 2006, which is bound for Uganda.

As ever, 2006 has been another year of hard work and dedication by all those involved in the tool sending programme. From our collectors who travel far and wide to collect donations, to our network of tool refurbishers and supporters who make such a huge contribution to our work – a big “thank you!” to you all. Here’s to 2007 and more grease to our collective elbows!

Company law reform – a significant first step

Trade Justice Movement

Under new legislation, UK businesses will now be accountable for the impact of their activities on the poor and the global environment.

The Companies Bill, which has been the subject of intense campaigning and impressive media coverage over the last year, has completed its journey through Parliament and received royal assent. The Companies Act 2006 will help to prevent UK companies from profiting at a cost to local communities, workers’ rights and the environment. While significant concessions were gained on environmental and social reporting, and directors’ responsibilities, there were also calls from organisations such as the Trade Justice Movement and the Corporate

Responsibility (CORE) Coalition, for the provisions to go further. For example, the Government, they say, should examine barriers which prevent UK companies from being liable for abuses committed overseas.

The Trade Justice Movement (www.tjm.org.uk) campaigns for changes to the unjust rules and institutions governing international trade so that trade works for all.

The Corporate Responsibility (CORE) Coalition (www.corporate-responsibility.org) is the UK’s most active voice on corporate accountability, supported by over 130 campaigning, community, faith-based and academic organisations, and trades unions.

Income from Itumbauzo bees

With a little training and the right tools, locally produced honey from locally built hives would appear to offer a win-win situation for honey producers and carpenters alike. But is it really that simple? Well, in one corner of Africa they seem to think so. Development worker Polly Eaton describes how a bee keeping project in Abia State, south-east Nigeria has benefited from a little help from Tools for Self Reliance.

I moved to Amaudo in Itumbauzo kingdom, Abia State, three years ago. I live and work in a rehabilitation community for people with mental illness. I was keen to develop bee keeping in the area as a means to assist the local young people with a sustainable and appropriate form of technology.

Although honey was a much desired product, bee keeping was not practised in the area and it was a revelation that people could “keep bees”. I was assisted with the project by a local bee keeper, Israel Onyemaechi. Funds were raised from friends overseas who were invited to “buy a hive” or “equip a bee keeper”. Gradually each member of the project was supplied with five hives and basic equipment (smoker and hive tool) and clothing (veil, garment, boots).



Constructing the hive

In further efforts to ensure the sustainability of the project it seemed valuable for the bee keepers to be able to construct their own hives. Timber is readily available in Itumbauzo and one bee keeper was already trying to construct his own hives. Although the result was rather lacking in uniformity or recognisable angles I was encouraged by his enthusiasm. With my parents visiting for Christmas I felt sure that my father would want something to keep him busy, and proposed he run a hive making workshop! Although an experienced carpenter he had never made a bee hive before and set about researching designs on the internet.

He arrived with plans for the Kenya Top Bar hives, and a wonderful selection of tools provided by Tools for Self Reliance including saws, hammers and an intriguing little tool for making grooves. On arrival I introduced him to Monday, the local carpenter, to make the final plans for sourcing the timber and running the workshop.



Pressing the honey comb

The two-day workshop was a great success. Everyone showed huge enthusiasm and energy, and were reluctant to stop for breaks! They all quickly picked up the techniques. Seven hives and a swarm catching hive were made altogether. Some of the other revelations included the complete absence of the use of screws in any carpentry, a curious sawing technique and the value of a plane in compensating for vast variations in wood thickness.

Any training wouldn't be complete without a closing ceremony. We had a lovely evening of certificate giving and touching speeches. The Association were presented with the tools for them to continue. With the first harvest complete we look forward to greater yields in the months and years to come as the bee keepers are equipped and skilled to build more hives.

I wish to express a huge thank you to Tools for Self Reliance who helped make this project such a success.

Further information about bee keeping as a way of strengthening livelihoods in rural communities is available from UK based charity Bees for Development www.beesfordevelopment.org, tel: 016007 13648.

Over 1000 kits for TFSSR!

Why are hard-working tool refurbishers in Carlisle, TFSSR Cymru and Milton Keynes celebrating?

Well, 2006 marks a significant individual milestone for each of the groups. In March 2006 Carlisle TFSSR group completed their 200th kit – a small furniture making kit for the Igembe Carpentry Group in the Mbeya region of Tanzania.

In October TFSSR Cymru started work on their 400th kit – a shoe repair kit for the Mwongozo Shoe Repairers Group, Tanzania. And in November Milton Keynes celebrated their 500th kit – a carpentry training kit for the Ilemi Parent Teacher Association, also in Mbeya.

Congratulations to all of you!



Members of Milton Keynes TFSSR pictured during a group visit earlier this year

Secrets from Carlisle

In October Bob and Rob visited groups north of the border and also took the opportunity to drop in to see the Carlisle group. Carlisle TFSSR, who refurbish tools in a converted railway arch in the centre of the city, consistently manage to attain a very high standard of refurbished tools. Group member Bill Mitchell puts at least part of Carlisle's success down to the fact that they have an unwritten policy of appraising each other's work. Fortunately the group members know each other pretty well. So while a constructively critical

approach like this might not work for all groups, it seems to work for them. According to Bill, when the lid of the toolkit comes off, the recipients should take delight in what they find – it should create a 'wow' factor!

Feedback from artisans, though always welcome, sometimes comes when least expected. Below is an extract from a letter which Carlisle received in August from the Musget Carpentry Organisation in Sierra Leone. The group's joinery kit was dispatched in November 2003!



Members of Carlisle TFSSR

"It is my pleasure to inform you that the entire population is a direct beneficiary of your kind gesture of tools. We are very grateful indeed for receiving them. All the damaged roofs of houses and vandalised furniture during the 10 years of brutal and tragic civil war has been repaired or replaced. A total of three dozen persons have been trained in the basic carpentry skills and they have now become tutors in their own carpentry centres in their various villages."

Balie Mackotie, Coordinator, Musget Carpentry Organisation

Pro-Link project up and running

The Danfa Vocational Institute in Accra, Ghana, received its first consignment of tools from Tools for Self Reliance in August. Project partners Pro-Link are currently supporting 25 street children at the institute, who are studying construction, carpentry and dressmaking. It is planned to widen the range of courses, opening up the possibility of more toolkits and training being provided by Tools for Self Reliance. Pro-Link also hopes to recruit more instructors so that student numbers can be increased.

The majority of female students in the dressmaking class are teenage mothers. One of the barriers to regular attendance at classes is the need to provide childcare, and Pro-Link are trying to arrange this by talking to their families. The project is also providing information to students on health issues, including HIV/AIDS.

Carol Swift, a TFSR volunteer, on a recent self-funded visit to Ghana, commented: "During my stay in Accra I was very impressed by the dedication and achievement of everyone involved in the vocational centre project."

Blacksmiths boosted by training

The participants of a blacksmithing training course in Ghana have expressed confidence that they will be able to make simple farm tools to meet the demands of local farmers. Four blacksmiths attended the training course earlier this year at the Endurance Metal Works in Bolgatanga, which was organised by TFSR's project partners TRAX Ghana. Hacksaws, bolts and hoe blades are just some of the tools which the blacksmiths made during the five-day course.



Raymond Darku, TRAX Ghana director, at the opening of the training course

The toolkits sent to the TRAX project in August have arrived, which means that the blacksmiths can now start to benefit from the training they have received.

Ensuring high standards of tool quality



All the beneficiaries of tools have to pay to receive their toolkits, and replacements for broken or faulty tools are generally not available. So the tools we send have to be of the highest quality, and our army of volunteers up and down the UK devote hours of their time making sure this is the case. We have to dispose of sub-standard tools, select the best of the rest, and test all the tools that we refurbish.

In an effort to make the testing process quicker and more stringent, we have recently put all our test equipment together in one area in the workshop at Netley Marsh. We have added a few more items with the idea that our refurbishers can use them to test their own work. But it also allows us to test all tools leaving the warehouse.



Festive greetings!

This Christmas tell your family and friends about Tools for Self Reliance's work by sending them one of our Christmas cards. There are three designs to choose from. Profits from the sale of the cards are used to support our work with artisan groups in Africa, and you can only order cards through TFSR! Visit our website at www.tfsr.org or phone 023 8086 9697.

You can make a difference!

Yes I want to help....

Please tell me more about TFSR and volunteering.

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Work exhibited at Mbeya



Local blacksmiths were among the artisans to display their products at the Small Industries Development Organisation (SIDO) Mbeya Exhibition in June. The guest of honour, the Deputy Minister for Industries, Dr David Mathayo David is shown viewing some of the ploughs made using tools provided by Tools for Self Reliance.

Sketchbook of Uganda

TFSR supporter and artist Susan Hartley, who first visited Kibaale in Uganda in 2004, made a return journey this summer, again with sketch book and paints in hand. Susan has very kindly given us permission to continue to use her beautiful illustrations in our publicity material. Packs of



blank greetings cards depicting four of Susan's sketches from her previous trip are available from Tools for Self Reliance priced £2.50.

FORGING LINKS

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