



Celebrating 25 years of practical help

Welcome to this special birthday edition of *Forging Links* which marks 25 years of providing practical help to practical people in Africa.



Glyn Roberts' keynote address

The 25th birthday celebrations kicked off on 17 November with an informal reception at Romsey Town Hall. Among about 100 invited guests were a representative from the Ghanaian High Commission, the Chair of Hampshire County Council and the Mayor of Romsey.

The keynote speaker was founding member Glyn Roberts, who charted our progress from humble beginnings to the present day. Glyn praised the spirit of all the people who have been involved with Tools For Self Reliance down the years and presented a special award to long-serving volunteer Eddie Grimble. In Glyn's own words, "there is no one who has done more for TFSR than Eddie".

Jon Dunkley gave a personal account of where Tools For Self Reliance is now, and a cheque for £250 was gratefully received from Southampton West Rotary Club.

"I and my colleagues wish you every success in your coming 25th birthday as a charity and we say "Happy Birthday" to you at TFSR. Best wishes to you all."

F E Sauwa, Regional Manager, SIDO

"We would like to congratulate you on your 25th Anniversary on 10 October. It is belated, but better late than never."

Raymond Darku, TRAX Ghana

"All good wishes."

Richard Briers



Volunteer Julie Horsman and Elaine Williams, GIGDEV's representative in the UK



Eddie Grimble with his wife Hilary

URDT continues to change lives



From an original sketch by Susan Hartley

The TFSR partnership with the Uganda Rural Development and Training Programme (URDT) has made a difference to the lives of thousands of young artisans in western Uganda since its inception in 1996. The programme, which continues to generate incomes and improve livelihoods, received a boost earlier this year with the provision of new office space and the appointment of a full-time desk officer in Kagadi.

The Uganda partnership is not just about sending tools. TFSR is also helping URDT to expand its activities into areas such as capacity building, including business management training, networking and the setting up of mechanisms to make it easier for artisans to access micro-finance.

The impact on the groups has been very positive. Feedback from the groups points to a number of tangible benefits for the artisans and their families. These include greater income to spend on essentials such as food, health care and children's education, and on household goods, as well as greater standing in the community and wider participation in the local decision making process. In addition, there have been educational spin-offs for the artisans – for example, some of them have been able to attend adult literacy classes.

According to Nyakoojo Vincent, one of the beneficiaries of the programme, "I started with a capital of 30,000 shillings, now it has increased to 250,000 shillings. I can afford to pay school fees for my five children."

There have also been benefits for the wider community, including training and employment opportunities that didn't exist previously; a wider choice of affordable locally made goods and services, particularly carpentry, metalwork, auto-mechanics and tailoring; and improved community credit facilities. There is also evidence to suggest that the TFSR programme is targeting the people who need it most.

Derby container bound for Uganda

On 26 October we bid farewell to a container of refurbished tools destined for the Network of Local Artisans (NOLA) and URDT. This shipment is the result of a successful tool appeal, and awareness raising and fundraising effort, masterminded by Ian Care of the Derby group, as has been reported previously on these pages.

After the last of the toolkits has been unloaded and distributed to the artisan groups in and around Kasese, the container has one more function to fulfil. As part of NOLA's artisan capacity building programme being supported by TFSR the Derby container is to be converted into an office and a secure store.



Last pallet being loaded into the Derby container

Shipping news

As we come to the end of the year all noses are to the grindstone to finish the remaining shipments for 2005. The final few kits for a Tanzania shipment were completed at the end of October and should arrive in Dar Es Salaam by Christmas.

The valuable space created in the TFSR warehouse is now filling up with the next consignment of kits for Uganda, which we hope to send by the end of November. Before packing up for Christmas we will have a shipment to Ghana ready to go.

As ever, it has been another busy year with a total of ten shipments sent to support artisans. This has been supplemented with skills, business and marketing training, provided through our partner organisations.



During the course of 2005 we have also provided tools to a range of organisations to support projects across the world. One such organisation is Mercy Ships who have taken tools to help with building projects undertaken by their volunteers.

White Band Day 3



Saturday 10 December is the third White Band Day of 2005, when across the globe world leaders will again be reminded that the rest

of the world is watching and waiting for them to act to Make Poverty History. The focus this time is on trade justice and it comes just three days ahead of December's crucial World Trade Organization (WTO) meeting of 148 countries in Hong Kong.

Both events come on the heels of the mass lobby of Parliament on 2 November which saw thousands of people rally in London to call on the UK Government to make poverty history by delivering trade justice – not free trade – at the world trade talks.

Org strat

Many thanks to all those who took part in the recent organisational strategy consultation days and who sent in the questionnaires. We are now consulting with our partners before putting together our draft document. This will be available in May, ready for next year's AGM.

Debt deal endorsed



The debt cancellation deal proposed by the G8 in the summer was endorsed by all shareholders of the World Bank and IMF at a meeting in September.

The deal proposed by the G8 Finance Ministers in June and supported at the G8 summit in July offers 100% cancellation of outstanding debts to the World Bank, IMF and African Development Fund for 18 impoverished and heavily indebted countries.

Debt cancellation works. Funding released by debt relief has been used directly for poverty reduction in Africa. For example, it has been used to recruit and train new teachers in Tanzania (teacher numbers there have doubled in three years); provide access to education (primary school fees in Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia have been abolished); and fund healthcare programmes (a childhood immunisation programme has been implemented in Mozambique).

Some significant moments



◀ **1986:** Mwalimu Julius Nyerere and Bishop Trevor Huddleston become TFSR's first patrons

1987: 100,000 ▶
refurbished tools sent to Africa – celebrities Lenny Henry and Richard Briers in attendance!



1988: HRH The ▲
Princess Royal visits Netley Marsh to mark our 10th birthday

1991: TFSR stalwart ▶
Eddie Grimble on the road – helping us to celebrate our 250,000th refurbished tool



ts from our first 25 years



1994: Raising our profile: the Half a Million Tools Road Show arrives in Leicester. Brian Davis and Judith Barrett wield the hammers! ▲



◀ **1995:** Archbishop Desmond Tutu becomes a patron, and tries our T-shirt for size!



1997: Partners and volunteers group photo at the inaugural Cutting Edge Conference ▲



1999: Visiting Tanzanian blacksmith Joseph Mashinji receives first prize at the New Forest Show ▲



2005: Supporting the Make Poverty History campaign: one way TFSR is helping to raise awareness of the causes of poverty in developing countries ▲

TFSR tools to Ethiopia stand test of time

Thanks to Dick Richards from London for a fascinating account of his experiences of sending carpentry tools to Africa in the 1980s. On a working visit to Ethiopia in 1982 Dick found out about a vocational training scheme for famine and war orphans in Addis Ababa and he vowed to help set up the new workshop.

On his return home, Dick approached TFSR with a request for some carpentry tools, then set about turning his Volvo estate car into a box for the tools. With the help of friends Dick ran a tool appeal and arranged for a consignment of his and TFSR's refurbished tools to be flown to Addis in a Hercules transport plane from Brize Norton in Oxfordshire.

In a letter from a friend visiting Ethiopia in 2004 Dick learnt that his efforts of twenty years ago had achieved a great outcome – the young orphans who had received the tools in 1984 were now earning their living as carpenters.

School children thinking global, acting local

A workshop in Tamale, Ghana, is the beneficiary from some global thinking and local action by Year 9 pupils at Ringwood School. During an environment day, which was organised by TFSR volunteer Cliff Lewis, the children discovered how TFSR works with partner organisations in Africa to help artisans fight poverty. The children then carefully prepared a crate of hand tools for Adam's Mechanical Workshop in Ghana.



Year 9 pupils at Ringwood School

Carol completes a trip of a lifetime



Volunteer sewing machine refurbisher Carol Swift had the opportunity to visit Ghana earlier this year with her daughter, and grabbed it with both hands. Together, they spent four weeks at the Reverend Alec Jones Methodist Memorial School at Cape Coast. Although not on official TFSR business, Carol took with her two of the sewing machines which she'd refurbished and even had an opportunity to show some of the

school children how to use the machines. As Carol recounts:

"The gift of two Singer sewing machines from TFSR brought the lessons alive, enabling the girls and boys to examine the parts and to sew a few inches each. They were excited and thrilled. The children were a delight to be with – their keenness, energy, enthusiasm and joy were an inspiration."

The trip has clearly made a deep and lasting impression on Carol, and brought home to her the importance of the work done by TFSR volunteers in the UK.

"Everywhere we saw people making enormous efforts from dawn till dusk to be self-reliant, mainly by selling what they could grow, make or buy... We left Ghana with memories of a vibrant and beautiful country and people."

Sam gets active for TFSR

Have you ever thought what connects two Tanzanian blacksmiths, a prestigious Edinburgh school and the Offa's Dyke trail? The answer is Samuel Elliott, a student at Fettes School, Edinburgh. In 2004 Samuel met blacksmiths Job Msimanje and Isidori Kiyenze, who were visiting Edinburgh blacksmith Phil Johnson. Samuel was so impressed with the idea of tool making and self reliance that when he determined to walk the Offa's Dyke trail he decided to get himself sponsored and donate the funds to Tools For Self Reliance. His efforts have raised just under £1,500 (before gift aid), enough to ship a full container of tools to Tanzania!

Samuel met trustee Alastair Christie and CEO Jan Kidd at the Edinburgh Activity Day in September, where he handed over the proceeds.



Samuel hands over the proceeds from his sponsored walk to TFSR's Jan Kidd. Alastair Christie looks on

Funders meet volunteers

Netley Marsh opened its doors to 20 guests on 4 October for a Funders' Day for some of TFSR's long-standing supporters. The visitors met volunteers in the workshop and learnt about our plans to increase support for artisans in Africa. The day was well received as the following comments demonstrate:

"Everyone's enthusiasm was so obvious, as was the cheerful teamwork from top to bottom."

"Thank you for the excellent day which explained the simple formula for your major contribution to alleviating world poverty, the effective way you implement it and the teamwork of your volunteers and donors in assembling the kits of tools which are delivered so directly to where they are needed."



Bryan Summerfield talking tools with guests at the NM workshops

New faces at NM



L to R: Carmen, Kai, Rob, Sophie and Norbert

There have been five new arrivals at Netley Marsh in recent weeks. These include three new long-term volunteers, Carmen Hoeping, Norbert Niedzialek, Kai Stahlecker, and the welcome return of another long-term volunteer, Sophie Lafollie, who started at TFSR back in 2001. We just can't keep her away! The long-term volunteers are a very important part of our operations – assisting Jon and Sarah in making sure that shipments are dispatched on time and that the warehouse and workshops run smoothly.

The fifth new arrival is Rob Westcott, who has joined the permanent staff as Group Support Worker (Resources). Rob will be working closely with Bob to provide support to UK refurbishing groups and tool collectors, as well as managing our resources and publications.

Dates for your Diary

December

10 December UN Human Rights Day and White Band Day 3

13-18 December World Trade Organization ministerial meeting

March

4 March 25th birthday party

6-19 March Fairtrade Fortnight

June

June (date tbc) AGM

Celebrate 25 with an original TFSR gift

Help us to celebrate 25 years of TFSR by buying a gift from our brand new birthday catalogue. We have nine original gifts to choose from, ranging in price from £4 to £1200!



Christmas cards

There's still time to order your TFSR Christmas cards for 2005! You can order these from Card Aid or you can enjoy savings by buying them direct from us. The profit on the sale of these cards helps us to send tools to Africa, and every £1 enables us to put tools worth £3 into the hands of someone working to support their family.

To order your cards please contact:

Polly Read at Tools For Self Reliance
Tel: 023 8086 9697
Email: info@tfsr.org

(A small additional charge is made to cover postage costs.)

And finally ... a big thank you to all our volunteers!

The contribution of our volunteers continues to be essential to the practical help offered to the thousands of artisans working hard to develop their income generating activities. In this, the "Year of the Volunteer", we recognise how this practical help is underpinned by the ongoing dedication of our volunteers, and we look forward to your continued support in the coming year.

FORGING LINKS

The newsletter of Tools For Self Reliance

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