



FORGING LINKS

MARCH 2017

 **TOOLS FOR SELF RELIANCE**
Practical help for practical people

Sierra Leone was slowly recovering from the impact of the long civil war when the Ebola disease outbreak further decimated the nation. Although it has since made some progress, poverty and unemployment are still widespread with 60% of people living on less than \$1.25 per day. Tools for Self Reliance is playing a part in reducing poverty through our projects in the country, supporting people through tools and training. Our Chief Executive Sarah Ingleby, and Head of Africa Programme Clare Nolan, recently travelled to Sierra Leone to visit some recently completed projects. Clare describes her experiences;



Considered reasonably new to the Tools for Self Reliance team at the time, I was so excited to be travelling to Sierra Leone (which was also a first for me) to not only visit and meet our partners and trainees, but to understand the context in which our partners work, and the challenges that they face.

We visited Mobility Sierra Leone, Craftshare and Future Focus

Foundation. Combined, these projects supported 160 participants across various trades including tailoring, building and construction, welding and fabrication, carpentry and wheelchair and bicycle maintenance- we met and interviewed close to 100 graduates.

Although every person made an impression, there was one particular group that has reserved a long term spot in my mind - Gbotima Fashion Boutique, a business group made up of 7 women, none of whom had a reliable way of earning an income to support their families. They all shared a desire to overcome this; the commitment and determination to see through a 12 month skills based training course, and the resilience and spirit to change their own lives.

After completing the training Gbotima Fashion Boutique was set up in a small village based roadside shop, repairing and making garments from school uniforms through to celebratory dresses. Their income enabled them to save and invest in materials to expand and diversify their product range, and means they can pay for health care, food, and school fees for their families.



“ I lost my father and could not complete school. My partner also died from Ebola and he supported me and my family. I sacrificed a lot to train and look after my child. To train is one thing, but now I can live, provide food and care for my children. ”

-Jennifer Mosiri

LOOKING AHEAD

As well as planning for the longer term with our new strategic plan, we have also been busy getting ready for the challenges of 2017!

There are shipments planned to Ghana, Malawi, Sierra Leone and Uganda, with two shipments going to Tanzania, so our volunteers will be hard at work refurbishing the thousands of donated tools that will be needed for our training programmes. We will also be piloting a micro-credit scheme with three of our partners in Sierra Leone – providing small loans to trainees starting up groups of their own, enabling them to invest in what they need to get started – purchasing materials, or renting a workshop, for example. This pilot has made possible thanks to funding from the Rotary Club of Ringwood. Throughout the year, Tools for Self Reliance will be working with our in country partners in Malawi, Zambia, and Sierra Leone to run in country workshops – bringing together partner organisations to share knowledge and best practice.

The next twelve months will be a busy time, as we continue to grow and develop our work.



AFRICA WORKS



We recently launched our ambitious five year strategy, Africa Works, setting out how we plan to grow and develop our work to have a greater impact for people in Africa. You can read the plan on our website – go to tfsr.org/about/publications to view it, or contact us to request a copy.



TEA FOR TOOLS



We recently held our first Tea for Tools week, inviting supporters to hold tea parties and coffee breaks in support of our work – this was a great success, raising over £2,500, and we were delighted that so many groups, churches, and businesses got involved. We are looking forward to making the 2017 event even bigger – there will be more details in the next newsletter, but in the meantime please contact Nuisha on **023 80869697** or Nuisha@tfsr.org for more details.



Uganda has the world's youngest population, with 77% of people aged under 30. This youthful population comes with significant challenges, particularly in the job market. One of our largest country programmes is in Uganda, with over 400 people currently being trained through our projects, with in-county partners. Ian Limbrick and Jon Dunkley, from our UK team, recently visited projects there. Our partners in Uganda are spread across the country and vary from very rural to urban locations. Ian recounts his experiences of the visit:

It was humbling to meet some of the project participants trained by our partner the Green Ribbon Foundation of Uganda (GRFU) in the North. Many of these young people were abducted and forced into the Lord's Resistance Army as child soldiers. As a consequence they received no formal education. The vocational, business and life skills training provided by GRFU in partnership with Tools for Self Reliance has given these unemployed young people opportunities that they never thought they would ever have - to see them starting up in business and earning income for the first time in their lives was wonderful. Bosco Okello, a graduate of the welding and fabrication training, was working as an apprentice but his plans for the future are well thought out, he intends to start a group with two other people and set up locally on the main road.

In Bukadea, in the East of Uganda our partner Apoola Na Angor (ANA) had trained 60 tailors and 10 carpenters. This project was funded by a consortium of our UK volunteer groups in the South West of the UK. All the graduates we visited were in employment and earning money. St Charles Lwanga Carpentry Group were a group of ANA carpentry graduates working together in a small rural roadside workshop. James Ogwang told us that the biggest change to his life is that he feels more in control - he says that some friends were digging in the fields all day with no prospects, but he feels he now has a future. In 5 years time, he expects to be in an enlarged workshop and to have power tools.

Everywhere we went fledgling businesses were growing and young people were, for the first time in their lives, looking forward to the future with confidence.

INTERNATIONAL VOLUNTEERING

We are once again welcoming volunteers from Europe, who join us as part of the European Voluntary Service programme. Sebastian and Moritz have joined the team, from Denmark and Germany respectively. Both are enjoying their experiences so far, and getting involved in a wide range of activities. If you are interested in finding out more about EVS, or you know someone who may be interested in the programme, which offers up to a year of supported volunteering in Europe for young people aged 18-30, please visit britishcouncil.org or contact Jo Shannon: jo@tfsr.org



A VERY BIG THANK YOU!

We were delighted to receive a generous donation of £1,000 from Rotary Club of Fareham Meon towards one of our projects in Uganda, delivered in partnership with the Green Ribbon Foundation. This is a local organisation which works with some of the most vulnerable people in the community, including former abducted child soldiers. Our project will provide tools and training to 70 people, enabling them to learn a trade and look forward to a better future. The cheque was presented by club members, who visited Tools for Self Reliance, and toured the workshops, seeing firsthand how donated tools are refurbished for our training programmes. We are very grateful for this support - thank you!

If you are part of a Rotary club interested in finding out more about our work, please contact Jo Shannon on **023 80869697** or email jo@tfsr.org



DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Tools for Self Reliance will have a stand at the following events:

JUN
4 **Solent Gardeners Fayre**
Wide Lane, Southampton

JUN
6-9 **New Forest Folk Festival**
Plaitford

JUL
21-23 **Netley Marsh Steam and Craft Show**
Netley Marsh

JUL
25-27 **New Forest Show**
Brockenhurst

AUG
26-27 **The Oak Fair**
Stock Gaylard

SEP
23 **Dorset Do**
Ringwood

If your goal for 2017 is to take on a new challenge, why not sign up for an event and test yourself, while raising funds for our work?

APR
23 **ABP run**
Southampton

AUG
26-27 **The South Coast Challenge**
Eastbourne

SEP
23-24 **Tough Mudder**
Crawley

OCT
22 **The Great South Run**
Portsmouth

OCT
TBC **Walk the Test Way**
Romsey

OCT
9-15 **Tea for Tools Week**
See page 2 for more information



LEAVING A LEGACY

Leaving a gift in your will, often called a legacy, is a wonderful way to ensure that you can continue making a difference for many years to come.

You could help Tools for Self Reliance change lives for future generations through our training programmes – to find out more, please contact Jemma on jemma@tfsr.org

WWW.TFSR.ORG

Our new website was launched at the end of last year, and is a more up to date way for us to share news from our projects. Please do visit, and read some of the inspiring stories of people who we have supported to change their lives through learning a trade and developing a sustainable income. You can also sign up to receive our monthly e-newsletter and get regular updates.

SUPPORT US TODAY!

Whether a one off donation, or a regular gift, every single penny we receive is appreciated and makes a difference. If you would like to help change the lives of people in Africa, you can make a donation to support our work. For more information, please visit www.tfsr.org and click “Donate.”



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