

# Year in Review 2020-2021



## Welcome from our Chief Executive

Across the globe 2020 has been an unprecedented time and one which has inevitably impacted our work in the UK and in our Africa Programme countries.

In Africa, the pandemic has been much more than a health crisis with significant impact on people's income, security, and prospects. Many graduates have faced incredible challenges when they have not been able to work and have seen significant reductions in income. We very much hope that they will soon be able to return to their workplaces and generate the income they need to support themselves and their families. We applaud the work done by our partners to ensure safe delivery of training and for their work to support COVID prevention activities.

Here in the UK our focus was very much weathering the storm and keeping basic operations running. I would like to thank our staff team who showed great understanding and fortitude. From those who worked throughout, to those on furlough who remained committed and ready to jump back into work when restrictions lifted. Thanks also go to our loyal volunteers who continued to support our work from home.

Ending 2020 in a stable financial position was in no small part as a result of funders great and small who not only contributed funds for our programmes, but also unrestricted funds to maintain operations in a year that saw most of our income generating events cancelled.

Whilst 2021 will still be marked with uncertainty, we are confident that together we will recover and thrive.

*Sarah Ingleby*

**Sarah Ingleby**  
Chief Executive



## Finance and fundraising

Unsurprisingly, finances and fundraising were impacted, particularly unrestricted income from sales and events. However, we are very fortunate to have so many committed supporters who continued to make generous donations throughout, including the many new supporters who gave to our BBC Radio 4 Appeal – presented by our volunteer Janet Moody. Grant making trusts continued to invest in our work, including the Turing Foundation who are supporting a programme training and empowering women in Sierra Leone. We are very grateful to everyone who donated to us in 2020, and who continues to give – it is thanks to you that we have been able to restart and continue projects, and to plan for the future.

**INCOME:** £619,837



- Donations and grants £399,696
- Gifts in kind (donated tools) £111,135
- Sales & trading activities £64,331
- Job Retention Scheme £44,675

**EXPENDITURE:** £632,645



- Direct charitable expenditure £514,292
- Cost of raising funds £118,351



## Africa programme in 2020

As we started 2020, the majority of our active projects were drawing to a close. However, from March, delivery of projects was inevitably impacted, a number did not start as planned. Five did start as planned, and where training was ongoing, partners adapted delivery to ensure compliance with the guidance and restrictions in their respective countries, prioritising the safety of the trainees and the trainers. We were also able to send two shipments, to Malawi and to Sierra Leone, containing a total of 15,700 tools.

Commitment to completing training remained high, despite these challenges. Overall, there was a less than 10% drop out rate. In response to the situation and to support their communities, partners also undertook a number of COVID19 awareness and prevention activities including joining forces to co-ordinate community responses, distribution of hand washing buckets, soap, and hand sanitisers, participating in local radio programmes explaining how to prevent the spread of COVID and much more.

Alongside our vocational training projects, four extended projects were delivered during 2020. These projects aimed to augment the impact our vocational training programme through the delivery of additional activities which address issues affecting the trainees, their families and their communities.



**“ The main problem at hand is that people in our communities are navigating the COVID-19 pandemic with the added challenge of living without access to safe water, sanitation and hygiene.”**

TA Crusade, our in-country training partner in Uganda

Communicable diseases and inadequate sanitation facilities are already an issue for many communities in which we work. In Uganda, local organisation TA Crusade partnered with Nakiwaate Primary School to address the lack of access to decent toilet facilities and menstrual management challenges which affect school attendance.

79 trainees completed the programme; building and welding trainees built a permanent kitchen block and two new latrine blocks. Tailoring trainees made and distributed reusable sanitary towels to girl pupils, meaning they won't have to miss school during their periods. As the schools in Uganda fully reopen, these changes will benefit thousands of pupils, and it has given trainees the opportunity to practice their skills in the local community, and prepare them for running their own businesses.

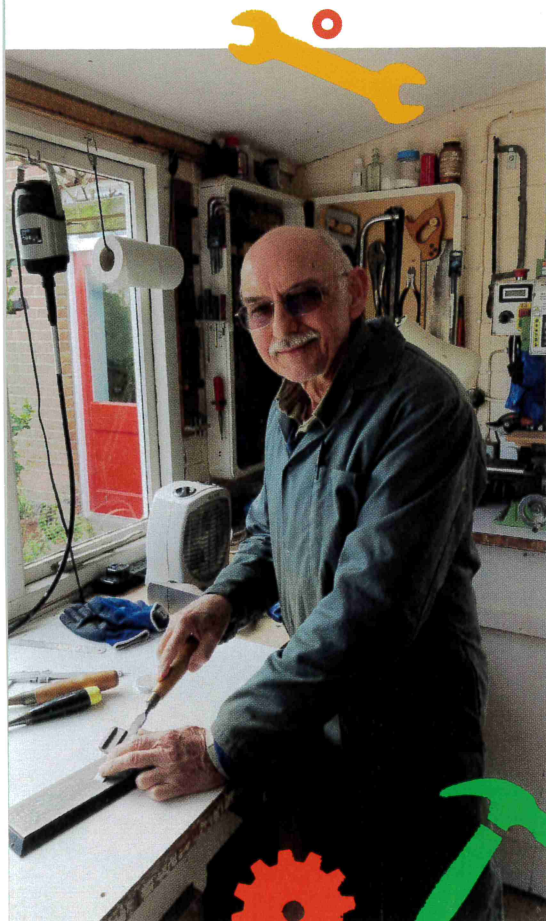


## UK programme in 2020

At the start of 2020, volunteer groups were all set for another year of giving up their own time to work hard supporting the charity. By the beginning of March, they had already sent numerous deliveries of tools and sewing machines to our main workshop, and were on course to beat the 2019 fundraising record - until COVID-19 arrived.

With around half of volunteers being aged 65-75, and a third over 75, many were in the “at risk” group. The decision was therefore taken to close the Netley Marsh workshop and advise groups to do the same, or at least halt all but solo activities.

Despite these restrictions, volunteers still supported us in any way they could. Groups kept in regular contact via email, phone, and Zoom, and many volunteers with their own workshops took tools home to refurbish. During the months when social restrictions allowed for groups to meet, they implemented COVID-safe measures. Volunteer fundraisers also helped offset some of the fundraising losses from cancelled events. By the end of the year, they had raised over £36,000 – a 37% drop from 2019, but much less a shortfall than originally anticipated. This is a significant achievement, and is testament to the volunteers' enthusiasm, hard work and determination.



**“ COVID-19 has impacted every aspect of our lives and the way we work has changed.”**

Street Girls Aid, Ghana

Another project that was able to complete despite the disruption of the last year was led by Street Girls Aid (SGA) in Accra, Ghana. This was another project which explored how vocational training could form part of broader community activities – in this case, parenting support for street connected young women living in the capital in vulnerable situations.

Alongside 15 full time vocational training participants learning tailoring, SGA aimed to work with 180 young mothers, running three month workshops on parenting, accessing support services, and craft skills training. Despite the challenges of lockdowns, SGA managed to reach a total of 265 women, and expanded the project to include COVID-19 outreach education sessions. They were also able to adapt their training to enable as many of the tailoring trainees to complete as possible, and those that couldn't will be able to return to the next project.





## The road ahead – Africa and UK programme in 2021 and beyond

At this time, it is challenging to plan ahead in terms of projects in Africa, given there is still a high degree of uncertainty on the rate of recovery from the COVID19 pandemic in each of our programme countries, and how this will impact on the ability of partners to safely deliver their projects. However, 17 projects are currently planned - we will continue to work with partners to agree when best to continue or start new projects and remain responsive to the prevailing situation in each country and any restrictions in place.

As and when restrictions are lifted, we will visit programme countries to review projects and to reconnect in person with our partners. Until this is possible, we will continue to make use of online platforms which can be used to hold virtual meetings.

**“ I was relatively new to TFSR so just starting to get to know the other members and the work that they do. It was great to meet people from my local community who I wouldn’t have come across in my day to day life. They are such a fun, interesting, active and inspiring set of people. I miss learning new skills and doing something practical and useful. My day job is all computer based so its lovely to be doing something practical and finding a new lease of life for items that might otherwise have been thrown away.”**

**Kate Hickman, Didsbury Group**

The huge obstacles faced in the last year have really brought home the dedication of our UK volunteers, and highlighted just how essential their support and contributions are to the charity. We are thrilled that volunteers are returning now to their roles as collectors, refurbishers, fundraisers, speakers, and much more.



## Fundraising

We hope that in the coming months, we can look forward to a fuller calendar of events and activities, including tool sales, the return of Tea for Tools, and maybe even our always popular quiz night!



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