



# Forging Links Newsletter Autumn 2021



**TOOLS FOR  
SELF RELIANCE**  
Practical help for practical people since 1980

## Chickens before tools

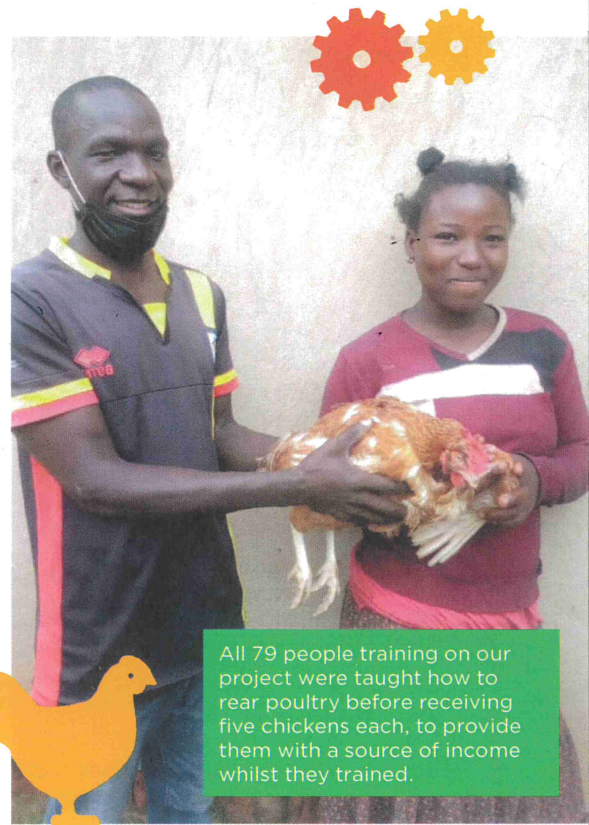
### How trainees are earning an income whilst they learn their trade

A two hour drive East from Kampala, brings you to our in-country partner, TA Crusade's, Vocational Training Centre sitting at the heart of the Nabbaale district in Uganda.

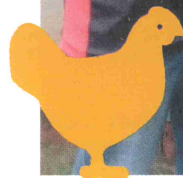
Despite the disruption last year brought from national lockdowns, social restrictions, and a presidential election, 79 young people from surrounding rural communities successfully graduated in Spring from their 12 month vocational training.

For some trainees – the decision to commit to twelve months training is not made lightly. There is great excitement about these life changing opportunities, but also concern that whilst training there is little free time to undertake any work and earn money. For those who are already economically disadvantaged, this can mean that they are not able to take up this opportunity.

This is why it is so important that our projects include opportunities for trainees to earn money in a manageable way alongside their training.



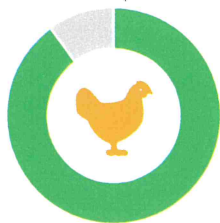
All 79 people training on our project were taught how to rear poultry before receiving five chickens each, to provide them with a source of income whilst they trained.



## Chooks away!

So, to address this a demonstration poultry farm was set up at TA Crusade's centre and the trainees received training in poultry-keeping skills before receiving five chickens each to rear at home. Selling eggs and chicks provided them with a sustainable income, whilst ensuring they were able to keep up their attendance at the training centre.

This new initiative was such a success that **nine out of ten of the trainees have successfully continued with their chicken rearing enterprise today** – and almost half of them have saved enough money to start their own businesses.

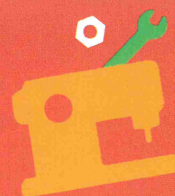


With a number of our projects over the past year we have looked to identify ways to extend our support into the communities our trainees live in. To this end, as part of this project, building and welding trainees constructed a three-roomed kitchen block and two latrine blocks at Nakiwaate

Primary School. These newly constructed facilities, which have been handed over to the school authorities, have greatly improved sanitation and hygiene, and will help to reduce the risk of communicable diseases. Tailoring participants also learnt how to make re-usable sanitary pads which were distributed in local schools. This is a product that the tailors will be able to make and sell to generate their own income once they graduate and start work.

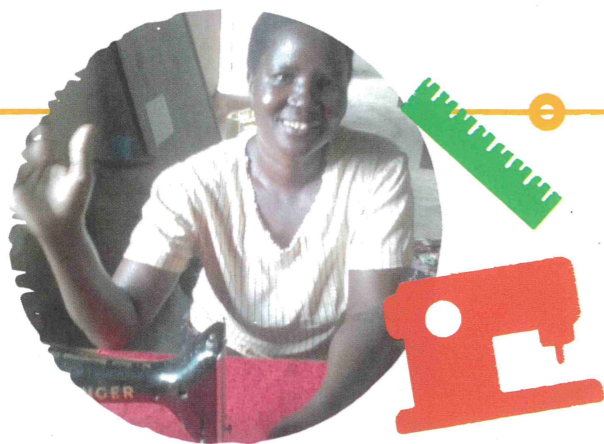
In the next six to twelve months, we anticipate almost all of the trainees will either be employed or have established their new business. And from previous projects, trainees have seen their income increase seven times to what they were earning before training.

**Read on to hear Jeneth's enterprising story – she is halfway through her tailoring training, is already earning an income and has great plans for the future.** ➔



## Meet Jeneth and her brilliant entrepreneurial ideas

60 young people from Kitgum Northern Uganda have reached the half-way milestone in their 12 month vocational training programme, delivered by our partner Green Ribbon Foundation Uganda (GRFU).



**Meet Jeneth**, an entrepreneurial tailor who, halfway through her training, is already earning money and is now able to support her family.

After an accident at work, Jenneth's husband is no longer able to work so she is now the main breadwinner for the family, which includes four children.

Within weeks of starting her training Jeneth put her new skills to work and began making clothes for babies and young children to sell in her village. She saved this money to invest in buying cassava which she also sells after her training classes.

**“I used all the knowledge and skills I obtained from the project.”**

In May, she planted groundnuts and is expecting to harvest 6 to 8 bags which she will sell. Boosted by this success she has been inspired to test growing onions in sacks. She has also grown tomatoes which provided her with enough money to buy basic necessities for the family.

**“I had never imagined owning my own tailoring shop, but with the support this project gave me, encouragement and counselling, I regained confidence that one day I could be out of the hard situation.”**

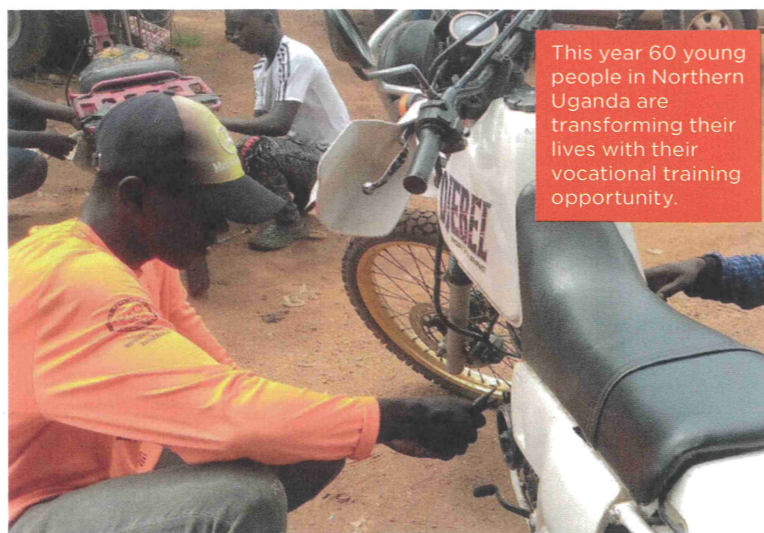
Based on her own life changing experiences over the past six months, Jeneth is actively championing the benefits of training and being part of savings groups and hopes that this will encourage others in her community to take part in the next GRFU project.

Jeneth is now looking forward to the remaining six months of her tailoring training and beyond and is already planning a new venture which will see her rearing chickens and turkeys alongside setting up her own tailoring business once she graduates.

**GRFU have many years' experience of delivering vocational training projects designed to relieve poverty and improve the lives of people affected by the conflict in Northern Uganda.**

The current project is being delivered at their training centre five days a week. Sixty trainees are specialising in either carpentry, tailoring or motorbike repair.

To further diversify their income, participants will learn beekeeping and each business group will receive three beehives. Tailoring trainees will learn how to make reusable sanitary pads for two local schools, and for selling, after the project has ended.

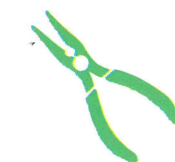


This year 60 young people in Northern Uganda are transforming their lives with their vocational training opportunity.



Tailoring trainees from our project with Baptist Women's Union in Sierra Leone have been learning to make clothes using donated sewing machines.

## Has the last year given you pause to think about the future?



**The pandemic stripped back our busy lives and forced us all to stay at home with time to think about what matters most to us in life – the people we love.**

A gift of just 1% left in your will to Tools for Self Reliance, ensures that your family is taken care of, but also provides a gift which will have a lifelong impact on families who do not have a financial safety net to fall back on.

A beloved volunteer from a local group sadly passed away last year and left a generous

£5,000 gift in his Will. The kind decision he-made during his life means that women today in Sierra Leone are making positive changes and able to access an opportunity which will build resilience and take them from a place of vulnerability to self reliance.

His gift is supporting 100 women with 12 months practical training in tailoring. They will also learn soap making, bead craft and tie dying, which will provide alternative ways for them to earn an income.

## Welcome Alfiia and Oleg from Russia

**Spring 2021 brought two new enthusiastic volunteers, Oleg and Alfiia, from Russia to our Netley Marsh workshop.**

Their placements are funded through the European Solidarity Corps (ESC) Programme and will give them the opportunity to live and volunteer with us in the UK; whilst equipping them with a raft of practical skills, memories and friendships that will last a lifetime as they support the daily refurbishing and packing of tools in our Netley Marsh workshop.

Despite social restrictions making travel a bit tricky - they have made the best of exploring their local area and absorbing UK culture. So far enjoying fish and chips on the Dorset coast visiting other ESC volunteers in Bournemouth, cycling in the New Forest and taking the Hythe ferry with volunteer Jim.

Their hands on approach was a big help to sending the Ghana shipment in June. Oleg has

enjoyed being taught how to refurbish saws by one of our workshop volunteers and Alfiia recently fully refurbished her first plane.



Don't miss their fortnightly blog sharing their experiences of volunteering and living in the UK at: [www.tfsr.org/european-volunteers-blog/](http://www.tfsr.org/european-volunteers-blog/)





## Draper Tools choose us as their charity of the year

We are absolutely thrilled to be chosen by Drapers Tools Ltd. as their charity of the year and to receive their incredible gift of £15,000 which has made it possible for us to buy a much needed new van.

Our 17 year old van has travelled thousands of miles around the UK, but after much patching and welding is now ready for retirement.

Draper Tools, based in Chandler's Ford, has supported us for over 15 years- generously hosting their own Tea for Tools tea parties, printing our newsletters and more recently

supporting the Ghana shipment with tools. Raissa Verpalen, Community Manager at Draper Tools, shares;

“We are so proud to support Tools for Self Reliance and the incredible work they do. As a business, we're passionate about both tools and empowering people to work with them for a better future. It's been an honour to get to know staff and volunteers at the charity and be part of their efforts to relieve poverty and create sustainable changes in Africa.”



Draper tools team photo from left to right: Stuart Bailey: TFSR, Raissa Verpalen: Draper Tools, Fran Weeks: Draper Tools, Amy Jarvis: Draper Tools, Sarah Ingleby: TFSR, Kevin Fletcher: TFSR volunteer and Draper Tools staff member.



## Online tool auction

18-24 October 2021

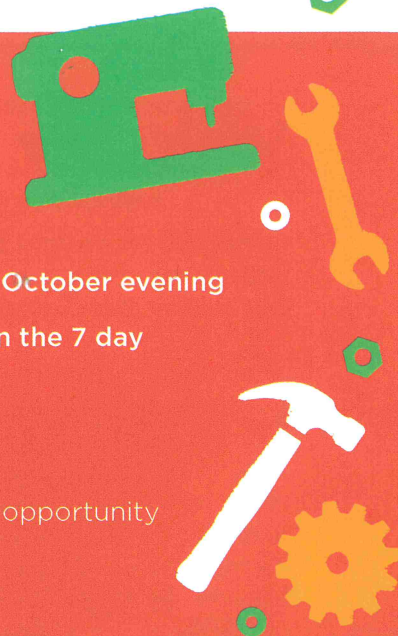
Don't miss our second online auction event, split into two formats:

1. Items will be listed on a 7 day auction – from Monday 18, ending Sunday 24 October evening
2. PLUS an additional 45 minute live auction with different items not listed on the 7 day auction on Weds 20 Oct 7-8pm.

Vintage, garden tools, sewing machines, haberdashery items and many curios to name a few will be up for grabs.

If you aren't able to make our in-person tool and haberdashery – this is a great opportunity to support our fundraising and treat yourself to some wonderful tools!

Register for free today and check out the latest lots at [www.givergy.uk/tfsr](http://www.givergy.uk/tfsr)



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