

## **Start & Grow Investment Impacts 2013-14**

This report looks at the social impacts achieved by the first four businesses 18 months on since receiving their Start & Grow investments. The businesses are Stepwell Consultancy Ltd (Stepwell), UCAN Learn Work Live Ltd (UCAN), Rainbow Turtle Just Trading Ltd (RTJT) and Next Step Initiative Ltd (NSI). Impact and outcomes from the investments are measured in three areas; social, economic and environmental. The Information presented here was obtained from a mixture of monitoring reports, telephone interviews and visits to investees.

Economic information is the simplest to report on as the businesses routinely record and keep this information. Not all the businesses have a consistent way of measuring and recording evidence of social impact The RSL Evaluation & Learning panel are considering the case for requesting evidence of social impact via a number of options; including video and sound recordings. These would be agreed by RSL and the investee at the point of making the investment. RSL may, in future, consider funding primary research from selected third-party companies.

## **Impact Summary**

**RSL investment in the businesses in the year April 2013 -2014**

**Grants £70,404, Loans £140,808**

### **Economic Impacts**

- Employment training for 169 people (varied from half day modules to 6 month placements)
- 16 were given in depth training in work placements ranging from 6 and 10 weeks to 6 month programmes
- 34 found work placements subsequent to completing training
- 34 went on to participate in further education subsequent to completing the training
- 18 trainees went onto find work outside these four businesses  
12 full time and 9 part time additional jobs were created within the four businesses

### **Environmental Impacts**

- Waste reduction (Stepwell)
- Energy and fuel poverty reduction (NSI)
- Improvements in the local building infrastructure (UCAN, Stepwell and RTJT)

## Social Impacts

The following are stories gleaned from telephone interviews with key people in the four businesses. These show the potential for gathering evidence of this nature, but in future reports personal testimonials and pictures will provide a will fuller picture.

**Stepwell** Managing Director Steven Watson says of his staff at the Fresh cafe *“We are like a family in the café and discuss the value of working and having aspirations for the future. Three out of the four full-time staff that run Fresh are former trainees. It gives me great pride to know when I walk into the café it’s being run successfully by young local people that could be unemployed if they hadn’t had the opportunity offered by training and jobs created here”*. One of the former trainees comes from a family where two generations hadn’t worked; they couldn’t understand why she wanted to work. Kara, 22, went through Fresh’s work experience training at the bistro and now works full-time for them. Her job is the additional job created with the Start & Grow investment. Two part-time jobs have also been created for local people who were recruited by parents or young people coming into the bistro to enquire about vacancies. Stepwell have asked Kara to write a little about her personal story and what it’s like working within such a supportive environment.

- **UCAN told us about a** 25 year old with learning difficulties who has now learnt to cook for himself and feels confident enough since the training to travel to the centre by himself. He has been able to reduce his care services; he no longer needs to be picked up or have a carer go to his accommodation to cook for him in the evening. He has also been able to go through UCANs work placement programme where he can earn subsistence money whilst gaining work experience. He now plans to buy a computer with his savings to enable him to communicate and engage with more people through social media and further study. UCAN have started to evaluate their 10 week training programme to inform them how they can target their training to be more meaningful in producing the outcomes of jobs and life skills for the participants.
- **RTJT** deliver social impact in two communities in Mozambique and Paisley. In Paisley they have been working with their local job centre and have taken on three people through Enterprise six month supported work placements. In each case RTJT have continued to employ the person after the six month programme is complete. This year, one young man they took on for a six month placement and subsequently employed full-time has been put forward for their employee of the year award. RTJT also ran a week long work experience programme for two 16 year-olds with learning difficulties. They learned about the business and helped contribute to ideas for hampers and products

## **Measuring the Impact Start & Grow investment has made to the businesses**

**The Start & Grow investment in UCAN was** timely, in that it enabled them to rapidly grow and deliver on their forecasts for jobs and training. Director of UCAN, Matt Buckman, said *“the Start & Grow investment gave us confidence and enabled us to expand much more quickly. We want to create an income and jobs; the investment has helped us do that. We have been able to deliver more services in less time to the community we work with and we look to the community to recruit from and give back to”*.

UCAN have extended their services to include an extended training kitchen, land for growing food (with poly-tunnels), a gym and a music recording room. This coming year they hope to expand further, opening a café and installing further poly tunnels. They have also just undertaken a review of their 10 week training programme to ensure it delivers its best to match training to jobs appropriate for those they work with. They will share the feedback they get from their clients on the 10 week review start collating pictorial evidence and testimonials within their social impact report.

**Stepwell** was the first investment made by Start and Grow. The Fresh cafe was initially takeaway only, turning over roughly £50,000 a year. Stepwell used the Start & Grow investment to expand into the unit next door, creating a sit down café as well as the takeaway. This expansion tripled their takings, protected three jobs and created an additional fulltime and two part-time jobs. Stepwell are planning to replicate this success and increase their services locally by opening another bistro in Greenock. This will create eight new jobs and 12 training places. Stepwell are currently in discussions with RSL about a Making Enterprise Happen Investment.

**Rainbow Turtle** not delivered any info on this

**NSI** work with African communities in Glasgow and across the west of Scotland - 90% of those they support are of African descent. The Start & Grow investment has allowed them to upgrade the facilities at their offices in Govan, and has enabled them to deliver the following:

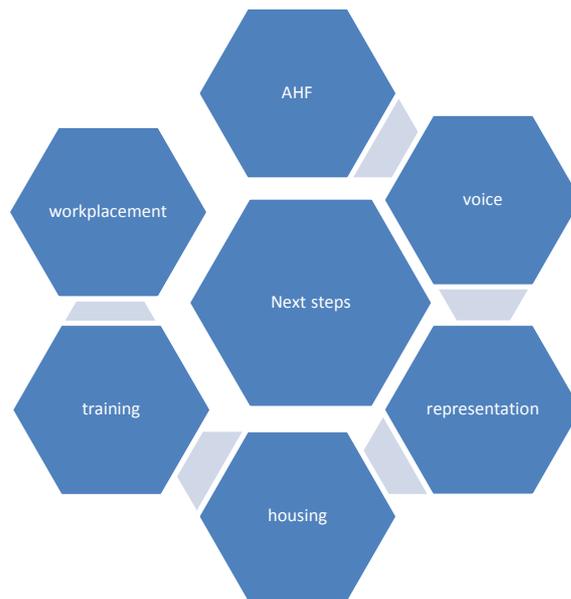
- Upgrade the recording studio facilities.
  - Increase the number of volunteers they have put through the fuel poverty and budgeting training and so deliver on the climate change programme.
  - Increase the types of training on offer.
  - Attract new business and new rental agreements supporting local African businesses.
  - Run empowerment, training and work placement opportunities.
- (See diagram A).

One of the recent projects to come out of the recording studio since the Start & Grow Investment has been the Engaging African Youth project; the writing, recording and performance of a song by

the young people involved with the African Music Academy. This creative project highlights the dangers and need for clean water for many communities living in Africa and was videoed by a former volunteer who now runs a video production business within the NSI premises.

**The Youth Climate Change Programme** has been running for approximately four years and is funded by the Scottish Government. However, the Start & Grow investment enabled NSI to put an extra 30 volunteers through their climate change training, increasing the financial and environmental benefits to local African communities. A total of three days training was given in fuel poverty, budgeting, climate change and community engagement. The output of the extra 30 volunteers was 600 visits to 300 homes helping residents save 32 tonnes of Co2 through energy efficiency and a total of £25,000 of financial savings.

Diagram A



## Learning

What can we learn from these first four brief evaluations and what can we do better to record the impact of Start & Grow, particularly the social impacts?

Should the expectations be the same for Start & Grow and Making Enterprise Happen?

### Assessment - when and what?

RSL must decide what to measure and why, and what data to collect and in what form, (qualitative, quantitative, survey, focus group, video, sound testimonial, monitoring forms etc.) See **Appendix 1** for the three types of assessments made to date and options for data collection.

### Monitoring of for Start & Grow

To date Start & grow investees have been asked to complete an annual monitoring form, reporting on the three RSL outcomes and their required indicators, economic, social and environmental. We have found that, by talking directly to the investees, we can uncover so much more in terms of impacts delivered and the different ways in which they are delivered. The small amount of research carried out to date would suggest that the more time we give to collecting or drawing out information, the more in-depth and meaningful the information /data becomes.

. With this in mind a revised, simpler monitoring form has been designed, one which allows the investee to report separately on their economic, social and environmental impacts, as well as any other impact they wish to report **The Evaluation & Learning Matrix should also be revised**, linking it to the simplified feedback forms? See visual options at **Appendix 2** for food for thought.

See **Appendix 3** for impacts delivered by Start & Grow investees to date.

Start and Grow 2013-2014	Costs - Grant £70,404	Loans £140,808			Total figure
<b>Economic Employment ,skills support</b>	<b>Stepwell</b>	<b>Ucan</b>	<b>Next Steps</b>	<b>Rainbow Turtle</b>	
<b>Work experience</b> for young people	+4 +2	+8 5 -7 hrs of work a week with subsistence payment		+2 1 week training of 5 x half day	<b>16</b>
Training leading to <b>Volunteering work</b> placements			+30	+4	<b>34</b>
Training leading to <b>work</b>	+2		+15	+1	<b>18</b>
<b>Jobs</b>	3 FT secured +1 F/T created +2 P/T created	+4 FT +3PT +2 FT contractors + 2 PT contractors		+4 (2 PT, 2 FT)	<b>12 F/T 9 P/T</b>
Business support			5 companies using office,20 using facilities, 13 support with connectivity and partnerships		
<b>Education/awareness</b>					
	4 on 30 hrs per week for 6 months 2 on 3 hrs per week	24-5 per day roll of 63 6 and 10 week modules	100 up to 3 day training in ½ day modules	20 school talks and events	<b>169</b>
Successful learners		+18 trainees moved to college course	+16		<b>34</b>
<b>Social</b>					
Confident individuals Improvement in health and well being Increasing aspirations Effective contributors Participating citizens	No evidence	5 have been able to reduce their support they receive.eg can now cook for themselves and travel independently to the training sessions.  Group of trainees involved in Ucan committee, writing newsletters and organising events, barbecues and Xmas party.	+100 training confidence etc. No evidence	No evidence from schools awareness impact  From job training impact  From those volunteering  From those that have been given employment	
Increase in Healthy options food transactions	200% increase in customers				
Communication and connectivity with customers	1000 Facebook users				
<b>Environmental</b>					
Reduction of waste	How much was saved from landfill How many people benefitted. 15% increase in compostable packaging	Growing vegetables and fruit developing allotment area for training in gardening and cooking	600 visits to 300 homes Outcome 32 tonnes of Co2 saved along with £25,000 financial savings.	No environmental evidence re waste etc. given	
		Maintenance of community and public outdoor spaces , walkways embankments , woodlands, playgrounds	40 radio programmes 1045 members on face book 10 outreach workshops 9 people car sharing		
<b>What hasn't worked</b>					
		No time to recycle old		No feedback	

		furniture and sell it No out of hours family service yet No significant funding to local causes			
How has investment helped	<i>Support of the business /Social enterprise</i>				
	<p><i>Secured 4 jobs and provided 6 work placements</i></p> <p><i>Enabled us to prove the bistro business model is a viable one so giving confidence for expansion and further business growth.</i></p> <p><i>Gave us a visual example of a social enterprise to promote to our public sector partners so leading to further connectivity and contracts in other areas of our business</i></p>	<p><i>Breathing space for development</i></p> <p><i>Recruit more staff so freeing directors</i></p> <p><i>To purchase transportation and equipment so helping to increase attendance numbers</i></p> <p><i>Ability to demonstrate and market products and ideas to local authorities and new customers</i></p>	<p><i>Improved the African café, office facilities, training and recording studio leading to more demand for facilities.</i></p> <p><i>Helped attract new contracts such as Wheatley group.</i></p> <p><i>So able to support and facilitate more companies</i></p>	No feedback.	