



CASE STUDY OF CHANGE-ORIENTED ADULT LEARNING

*Learners as Leaders: Developing Democracy
through Change-Oriented Community
Education in Ireland*

Monday 1st March 2021

1. Critical Dialogue & Empowerment

Learners to Leaders – Local to Global

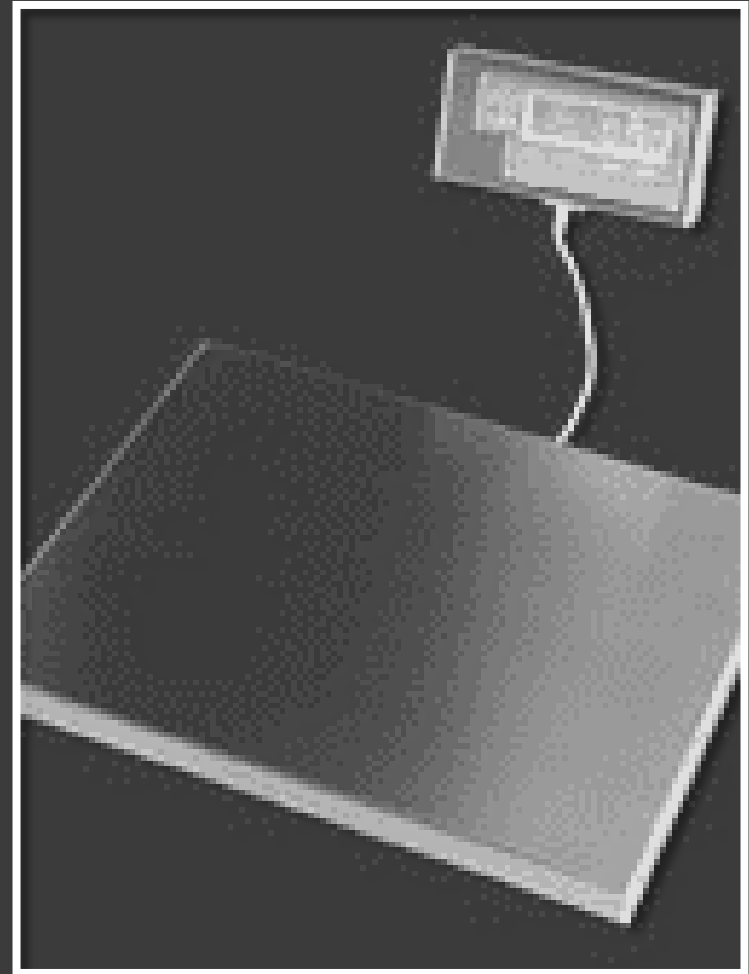


2017 - RWN Charity Shop Volunteers were having conversations about the amount of textile waste in the shop

2. Imaginative Thought & Research



Feb 2018 volunteers visited the Rediscovery Centre in Dublin to see how they were upcycling and get inspiration



RWN Charity shop volunteers purchased a second hand industrial scales to quantify the volume of waste to support their case

3. Identifying the Need, Inclusive Collective Action

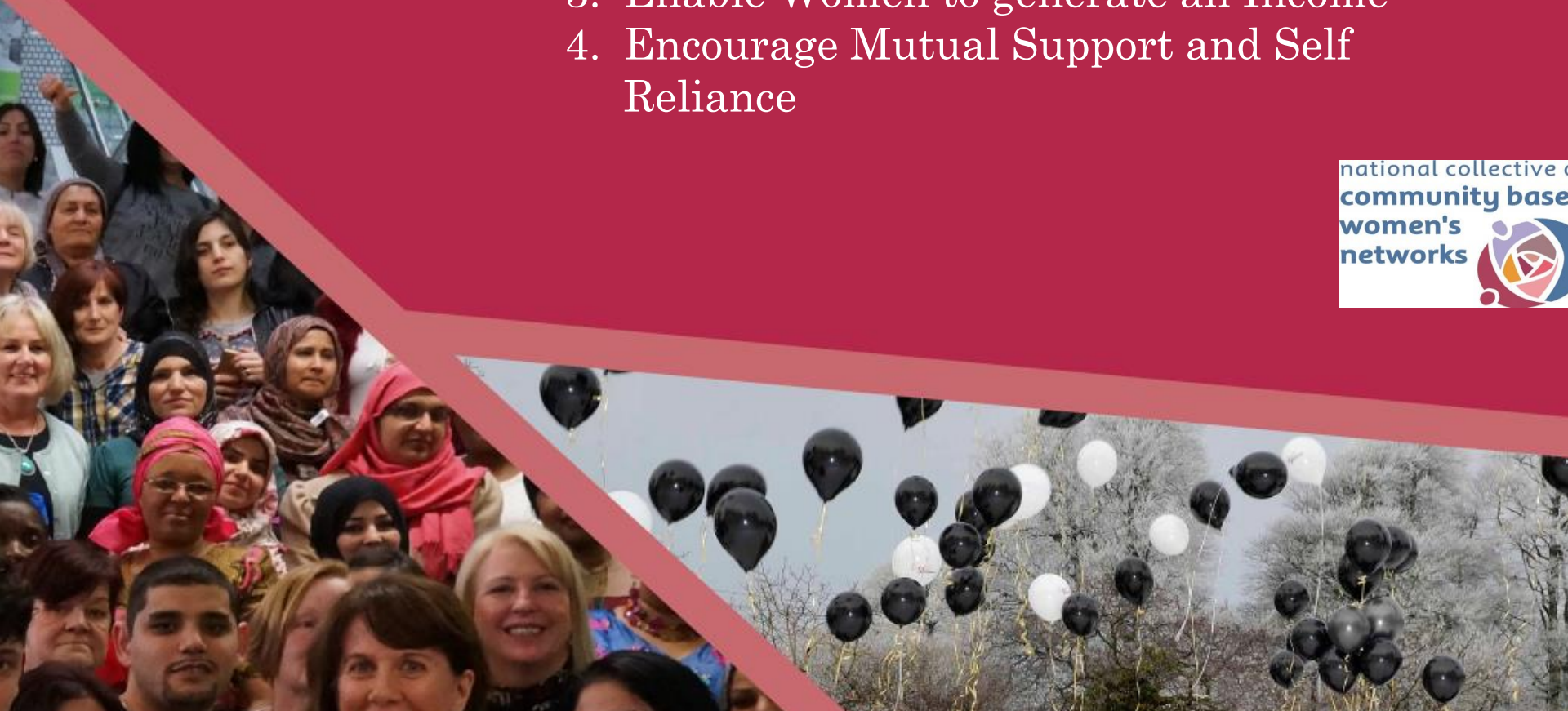
Strategy statement Roscommon Women's Network



RWN Four Strategic Priorities

2019 -2024

1. Sustain our Networks and Alliances
2. Protect Our Environment
3. Enable Women to generate an Income
4. Encourage Mutual Support and Self Reliance



4. Community Education & Collaboration

Community Environment Action Fund (Local Agenda 21)
2019 Application Form plus GRETB Tutor hours



March 2019.



Some of the women on the course never even threaded a needle before but wanted to make a difference

5. Focusing & Responding

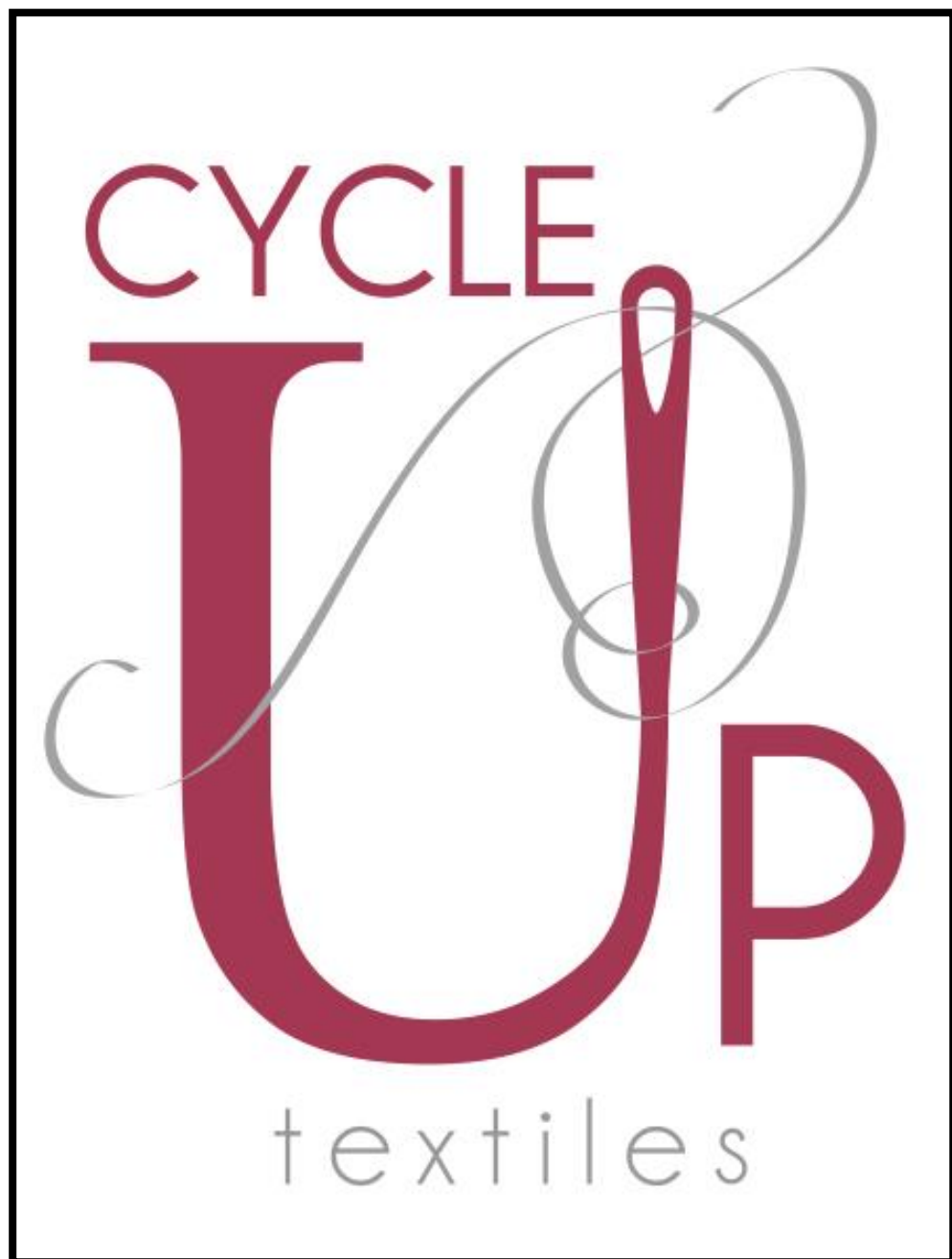


Repurposed Curtains and Denim Jeans

6. Personal Transformation – Social and environmental change



7. Rethinking & Reorganising



CYCLE Up
is an Environmental Social
Enterprise led by RWN
where we upcycle unsold
textiles from the RWN Charity
Shop into unique products,
lovingly designed and
handcrafted by our
team of Upcyclers.



8. Reflective – Act of doing led to deeper conversations

The impact of textile waste

Takes 2,700 Liters of Water to Make One Cotton Shirt



Enough Water for One Person to Drink for 2½ Years



www.National Geographic

WORLD RESOURCES INSTITUTE

- Making a pair of jeans produces as much greenhouse gases as driving a car more than 80 miles.
- Discarded clothing made of non-biodegradable fabrics can sit in landfills for up to 200 years.



This project is supported by



The Textile Upcycling Project is supported by the Creative Ireland Programme, an all-of-Government five-year initiative, from 2017 to 2022, which places creativity at the centre of public policy. Further information from creativeireland.ie and ireland.ie



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Textile Upcycling Training Project



9. Empowering through small scale collective actions



Farmers Market Stall in Boyle and Roscommon Town

Further Beginners courses started in September 2019 Advanced courses started in February 2020

Products for sale in two local outlets

Then Covid-19

Courses and Markets stopped in mid march

Women took home sewing machines and started researching, designing and practicing making
Facemasks in April 2020

Using WHATAPP group to stay connected



CRNI - Athlone IT Future Jobs and Skills seminar and exhibition



Selling at Friday Roscommon Town Farmers Market

10. Social aspect – Sense of purpose and belonging



Members of the Castlerea Upcycling group made and donated Facemasks to organisations working with vulnerable groups during Covid-19 lockdown.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ibP9XeHSRYg>

11. Social Enterprise



CycleUp Online Shop launched for Christmas 2020

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ibP9XeHSRYg>

12. Recognition and Reward



AONTAS
STAR Awards 2021

Category:
Sustainable Development
through Education

STAR Award Finalist

#STARAwards2021

 **QQI**
Quality and Qualifications Ireland
Dearbhú Cáilíochta agus Cáilíochtaí Éireann

 **ocn**
northern ireland

 European Union
Investing in Your Future
European Social Fund

 Rialtas na hÉireann
Government of Ireland

 **SOLAS**
learning works

 The Open University

 **CONCERN**
worldwide

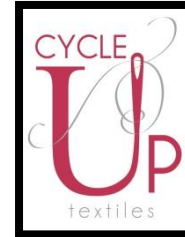
 **AONTAS**
The Voice of Adult Learning

February 2021 - Our RWN CycleUp trainees and volunteers are thrilled to be finalists in [#sustainabledevelopment](#) through education category at the [AONTAS #starawards2021](#)! [Concern Worldwide](#) is the sponsor of this category

W.E.C.A.N - Jan 11th 2021

Women's Environmental Community Activation Network

Women growing a sustainable social enterprise creating awareness, providing training and flexible employment in the Circular Economy supported by and in collaboration with ;



Local community & Local Businesses



Community Environment Action Fund (Local Agenda 21)



What the women say

- ❑ “it is accessible and inclusive and not elitist”
- ❑ “I think we keep coming because we feel respected, we are heard, we trust each other here, compared to others places I have been and we are making progress together”
- ❑ “it is a safe space and that is not something to be taken for granted”
- ❑ “I really don’t know how I would have coped during Covid without this work and linking in with the girls every week”
- ❑ “We challenge each other in different ways and grow together”
- ❑ “I feel part of something and I feel valued , we all learn from each other”
- ❑ “transforming waste into something beautiful and saleable is a lot more challenging than I thought it would be, I really had to get creative and get out of my comfort zone, its invigorating, its been life changing for me and for my family”
- ❑ “I was so proud to give the facemasks to the local nursing homes and when we got the Thank you cards it felt so good to be able to help and be appreciated”
- ❑ “I've learned so much about fast fashion and the damage to the environment, I had no idea!! It has really changed my attitude to shopping, I'm a convert now and I am converting my friends slowly...”
- ❑ “I made some much needed money for Christmas selling the decorations, I am thrilled”
- ❑ “Im learning more than I expected, like about designing, marketing, selling. I never used a smart phone or a laptop and now I have both, my daughter is delighted and she helps me as she is working from home during Covid, and I'm using WhatsApp and Zoom, I would have never thought sewing would lead me to that, how did that happen?”

Why Community Education Works

- Local and accessible
- Brings people together
- Inclusive, respectful and empathetic space
- Delivered with a flexible approach
- Peer to Peer learning
- Reflective space
- Change-oriented and innovative.
- Empowering and supportive
- Building Capacity as a group and as individuals
- Individual and collective action
- Common goal and purpose
- Progressive and transformative
- Effecting real change

