

IDEAS fellows build fundraising tradition Students work together to share Vietnamese culture

Working together over the course of the 2012-13 college year, the 24 Irish Aid IDEAS fellows at the UCD business school raised over €6,300 for the Vietnamese charity 'Only Rice Is Not Enough' (ORINE). In so doing, they inspired the incoming group to continue the work, a commitment they made before even reaching Ireland.

"Deep down we all felt like we wanted it to happen. We knew about it from last year and they did brilliantly," explains Nguyen Ha Phuong, a current Masters student in Project Management at UCD. "The IDEAS cohort from last year were quite daring. We are very thankful for them kick-starting the idea, how they put it together and made it happen."

The previous group organised a diverse range of activities aimed at sharing Vietnamese culture. The largest event was held in February 2013 to celebrate Tet, Vietnamese new year. It required the group to undertake months of planning and preparation alongside their studies. Roles such as marketing were allocated in line with students' course specialities, and the fellows also showed their versatility by contributing singing and dance performances, catering and a host of other talents to the event. The night drew an attendance of around 400 people, who also had the opportunity to avail of a quiz, a photo booth with national costumes, souvenir sales, children's entertainment and, of course, delicious Vietnamese food.



A performance from the 2012-13 IDEAS fellows



Celebrating success at the end of Tet 2013

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Whilst Tet may have been the colourful centrepiece of the year's activities, fellows did much else besides.

Returned fellow Duong Ha Phuong explained her role organising Vietnamese cookery classes: "There is quite a big community of parents who adopted Vietnamese children in Ireland. One lady helped us connect with other Irish families who wanted to learn how to cook Vietnamese food for their children in an authentic way. She was very nice to let us borrow her kitchen for several classes and we managed to raise more than 1,000 Euro."

Similarly, a number of fellows became involved in delivering language classes to the children adopted from Vietnam by Irish parents, an initiative that has been continued this year. "The Vietnamese class is more than a fundraising activity," says current fellow Vu Kim Hue. "It 'brings' Vietnam to the adopted children, who were born in Vietnam but do not have many chances to know about their original country. Besides, the children are so adorable and bright, which is an inspiration for our efforts."

Reflecting back on her time in Ireland, Truong Nu Dieu Linh explains the important place ORINE occupied for the group during their studies: "It meant a lot to us. It helped us glue the team together and we have a lot of great memories. Above all, we were able to help Vietnam even when we were far away. ORINE made our time in Ireland really meaningful and colorful."

Vu Thanh Mai, who coordinated the fundraising efforts, says she's proud that ORINE Ireland achieved so much. Across all of Europe, only Germany raised more. "I just want to share our gratitude to the Irish people - our school staff, the Vietnamese adoptive community, our Irish friends - because without their support and their trust, we could not have achieved such successes for the charity."



Louise Staunton of ICOS takes up the invitation to try a traditional Vietnamese outfit at the 2013 Tet event - pictured with Pham Minh Hue.



Vu Kim Hue leads a Vietnamese language class



Building a Tet tradition in Ireland: Current IDEAS fellows kick-off the January 2014 event with a high-energy dance routine

ABOUT 'ONLY RICE IS NOT ENOUGH'

In the poor mountain regions of Vietnam, a child's daily diet has often been limited to just rice and salt. ORINE is a charity programme that is addressing this by funding the provision of food and cooking services in elementary schools to improve nutrition and also aiding basic needs, such as clean water, hygiene, books and learning tools.



Staying connected: Anita Bitegeko

Anita Bitegeko from Tanzania received a fellowship to study in Ireland for an MSc in Pharmaceutical Quality Assurance and Biotechnology. She completed the course at Dublin Institute of Technology (DIT) at the end of 2010. Three years on, *The Link* asked her about her study experience, memories of Ireland and what came next.

I completed my primary degree about ten years ago and joined the Tanzania Food and Drug Authority (FDA), first working as a drug inspector, then in the quality control laboratory as a drug analyst.

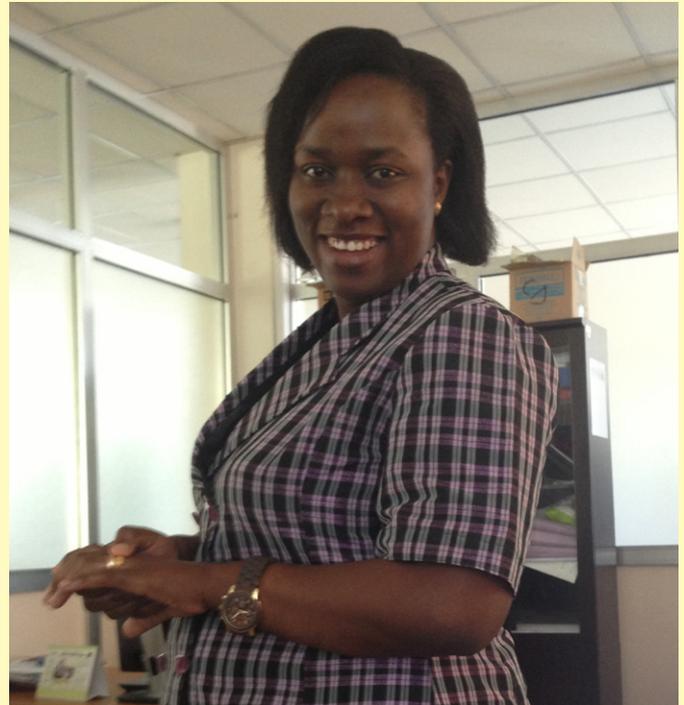
Before applying for further studies, I'd developed an interest in quality assurance for pharmaceuticals manufacturing and biotechnology. I was looking for a course covering these areas and felt that the modules at DIT would cover the gap I had. Also, the course would allow me to research my MSc dissertation in my own country, so I could look at the best way to apply what I had learnt to the situation here.

Looking back to my time in Ireland, I remember the culture – the St. Patrick's Day march was a new experience; another thing was the Irish dancing – I've never seen that kind of dancing. Also, the accents and language are so different. When you talk with a person from Cork, it's different from a person coming from Dublin. Coping with a new culture had its challenges but I liked it anyway.

Honestly, I felt terribly cold through the time I spent in Dublin. I've never experienced that before. I tried to adjust but really I just had to live with it!

During my studies, I appreciated the advanced technology, especially in relation to pharmaceutical manufacturing and measurement. The technology used in developing countries is obviously different. One thing which I gained and is still very valuable is that I came to understand different international regulations. We can try and combine and incorporate those ideas into our own environment to improve the regulation of pharmaceuticals.

When I came back, I presented what I had learnt to my Director General and was promoted to another department where I am now a Senior Drug Registration Officer. We review medicines for market authorisation. In Tanzania, we have a few medicines made locally and many that are imported so we have to register them and ensure their quality, efficacy and safety. We import almost all vaccines and biologicals so we have to evaluate them before



Anita at the Tanzania Food and Drug Authority

releasing them. That's just what my course was about so I'm enjoying my work, translating what I learnt into the real pharmaceutical world. I need to enrich my knowledge more, though. What I learnt was like a trigger, but technology is changing and to stay competent in this area I cannot stand still.

We work as a team looking at how best we can improve our regulatory environment and I'm still sharing ideas that I learnt at DIT. I couldn't share everything straight away because the technology in Ireland is more advanced; slowly but surely, though, the capacity is going up in Tanzania and I can share more. Also, there is a former Irish Aid fellow in a different department of the Ministry and we sometimes meet up and exchange what we learnt.

In my future career, I hope to advance more in this area. The Tanzania FDA is aiming to be the leading African authority in ensuring safety, quality and effectiveness - and I feel myself being a champion for that. I'm confident I have the knowledge and can work harder to improve the evaluation process. I feel blessed for the fellowship - but I'm still ambitious and want to build on what I learnt in that time.

Irish Aid launches Fellowship Training Programme in Sierra Leone

Sierra Leone became the newest member of the Irish Aid Training Fellowship Programme (FTP) when the Embassy of Ireland/Irish Aid launched the scheme for Sierra Leonean students in October 2013.

The fellowship programme was extended to Sierra Leone as a result of the country being named earlier in the year as one of Irish Aid's nine Key Partner Countries. Membership of the scheme, which aims to contribute to capacity building within developing countries, reflects this commitment made by Ireland to deeper and longer-term engagement with Sierra Leone.

As in other member countries, the FTP in Sierra Leone is aligned to Irish Aid's development strategy for the country. This focuses on three main areas: nutrition and food security; gender, particularly gender based violence; and governance.

Eligible partners for this year's Fellowship Training Programme include the Ministry of Health; Ministry of Social Welfare, Gender and Children's Affairs; Ministry of Agriculture Food Security and Forestry; Ministry of Justice; Ministry of Lands, Country Planning and the Environment; Human Rights Commission in Sierra Leone; United Nations Development Programme; United Nations Children's Fund; Food

and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations; Helen Keller International; Action Contre La Faim; International Rescue Committee; World Food Programme; Save the Children and Welthungerhilfe.

At the launch event which took place at the Embassy premises, Irish Aid's Administrative Officer, Davida Macauley encouraged the staff of eligible partners and Ministries to take advantage of this excellent opportunity to access higher education.



Davida Macauley (Administrative Officer at the Irish Aid Mission in Freetown) displaying the Directory of Postgraduate Courses suitable for Fellowship Awards

HEALTH: Using mobile phones to improve care for expectant mothers

Irish Aid is supporting an innovative project which uses mobile phones to increase frequency and quality of care that is available to new and expectant mothers, reflecting one of its important goals in Key Partner Countries.

In Sierra Leone, one in eight women risk dying during pregnancy or childbirth, but pre-natal and antenatal healthcare could significantly reduce the risks that these women face and improve the health and survival chances of their babies. Now, using a specially designed application installed on a mobile phone, Community Health Workers with World Vision Ireland can receive reminders about household visits to pregnant women and mothers; make emergency referrals to health centres; and collect real time information about the health of over 22,000 households in the Bonthe District of Sierra Leone.

A team of doctoral researchers in the Centre for Global Health in Trinity College Dublin (TCD) are looking at how this mobile application can be used as a human resource for health management tool for community health workers and the social and cultural impacts of mobile health projects.

The project, which is also being carried out in conjunction with the Sierra Leone Ministry of Health and Sanitation and the University of Sierra Leone, was recently awarded the African Development Bank's Innovation for eHealth Solutions for Africa Award.

The project is an example of how low cost technology, such as mobile phones, can be used in innovative ways to help with the delivery of essential services.

Focus on: How Irish Aid responds to emergencies

Typhoon Haiyan hit the Philippines in November 2013. Irish Aid quickly got to work....



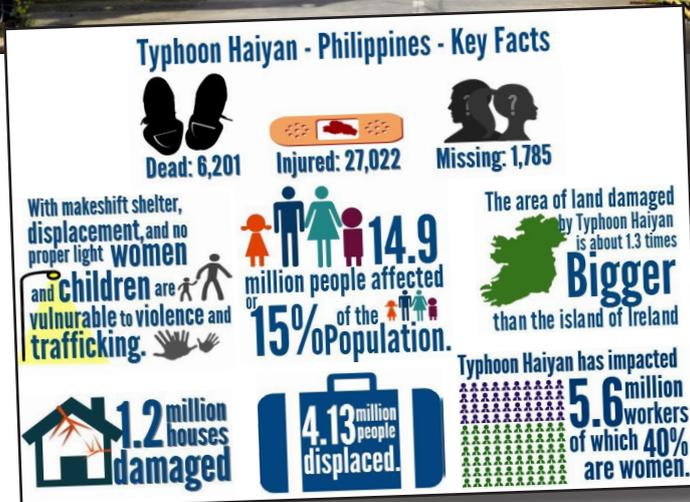
Ireland was one of the first countries to respond in the aftermath of Typhoon Haiyan, which made landfall across the Philippines on 8th November 2013.

Response to the disaster was through four primary mechanisms:

- Pre-positioned funding drawn on by the UN, International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, and NGO partners;
- Four separate airlifts to dispatch essential non-food relief items, e.g. shelter and water equipment;
- Immediate deployment of five Rapid Response Corps members to UN agencies;
- Direct funding of €2.675 million channelled through NGO partners (Christian Aid, Goal, Oxfam, Médecins Sans Frontières, Plan Ireland, Trócaire and World Vision) for interventions in health, shelter, food and water services, and protection of women and children.

Following the immediate rescue phase, the Tánaiste Eamon Gilmore and the Minister for Trade and Development Joe Costello requested the deployment of a Technical Team to affected areas to assess priority needs for the recovery and transition phase, and to make recommendations to inform Ireland's medium-term response to the disaster.

The team's mission was conducted over six working days. During site visits to Tacloban City



and Leyte Province they interviewed beneficiaries and local responders and witnessed firsthand how Ireland's contribution had assisted the most affected communities in the typhoon's immediate aftermath.

Key recommendations of the mission were:

- In view of the enormous scale of this disaster Ireland should make a meaningful contribution to the disaster response efforts in the Philippines for at least a period of 12 to 18 months.
- Recovery assistance should be directed at reinforcing the Government of Philippines leadership in overseeing the recovery plan, strengthening the capacity of local government and communities and flexibly responding to emerging needs.
- Support should be channelled to a limited number of key operational partners with a demonstrated capacity to respond. Support should focus on a limited number of key sectors in which needs have clearly been identified. This will avoid spreading resources too thinly, thus diluting impact, while also facilitating more effective monitoring and follow-up.

Based on these recommendations, Ireland will continue to make a meaningful contribution to the ongoing disaster response efforts in the Philippines for some time to come.

New fellows from Uganda receive good wishes and advice from alumni at embassy event



2013-14 awardee Beatrice Mugambe introduces herself at the annual dinner in Uganda

By Janet Shimanya, Embassy of Ireland Uganda

Every year, in August, we hold a dinner for new fellowship awardees from Uganda - a total of 16 this year. The purpose is, firstly, to congratulate them for having successfully completed the fellowship competition and to wish them well. Secondly, it gives them a chance to meet Embassy of Ireland staff and fellow awardees. Thirdly, we share with them about the fellowship programme and what Irish Aid expectations are in relation to the award they have received.

We also invite alumni of the fellowship to share their experiences with the new awardees. This year's guests were Gertrude Rose Gamwera, a regional fellow of 2010 and Samuel Waliggo, a 2011 fellow. The dinner was hosted by the Head of Development, Mr Keith Gristock and Pronch Murray (Development Specialist), Diana Sekaggya (Education Advisor), Daniel Iga (Senior Advisor) and myself (Fellowship Administrator) were in attendance.

Gertrude shared with us the advantage she has had as a regional fellow because she was able to continue

with her job having just been promoted to the position of Secretary General in her organisation. Thus, she was able to be around most of the time whilst also undertaking part-time studies in Arusha, Tanzania. She said that the course has prepared her very well for the job she is now undertaking and was grateful to Irish Aid for the fellowship.

Samuel shared the experience he had in Ireland. He advised beneficiaries that there will be adjustments to the new environment, not just in food and drink, but in things like weather as well - a change that he explained had affected him at a personal level. He also informed applicants travelling to Ireland that the professors are very helpful and the method of learning is very good and that they should never hesitate to ask questions.

On behalf of the group, one of the new students, Marshall Alenyo, thanked Irish Aid for giving them this opportunity to study. He promised that they will not disappoint but will work hard and come back to implement what they have studied.

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- **Malawian alumnus wins UN research award**

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College Spotlight: Dublin Institute of Technology



» The Link looks at the history and future of Dublin's first technical institution

Dublin Institute of Technology (commonly referred to as DIT) has a history dating back to 1887 with the establishment of the first technical institution in the city at Kevin Street.

Although this site, near St Patrick's Cathedral, remains one of DIT's key locations, it is impossible to pin the institute down in simple geographic terms. Its courses are delivered from a large number of sites around Dublin, including Mountjoy Square, north of the River Liffey.

This, however, is set to change with a relocation and consolidation of teaching and learning to a new site at Grangegorman, just to the north of Dublin city centre. The new development represents a total investment of over €1 billion, the largest investment in higher education in the history of the Irish state. From 2014 to 2017, over half of all DIT's education and research provision will transfer to the new campus.

Thus, DIT is entering into a period of significant reinvention that is expected to go much further than a new location.

In October 2011, DIT was one of three higher education institutions in the Dublin metropolitan area to announce their intention to jointly seek designation as the 'Technological University of Dublin', the others being Institute of Technology



Blanchardstown (ITB) and Institute of Technology Tallaght (ITT). The move followed a wide-ranging review of higher education in Ireland and, in January 2014, the Irish government published the 'Technological Universities Bill' which paves the way for this merger and a broader re-casting of the Irish higher education sector.

There will, of course, be as many continuities as changes and the institution can be expected to remain especially well-known for its programmes in engineering, pharmaceuticals, construction, architecture, optometry, hospitality, marketing, music, journalism and digital media.

Irish Aid Fellowships at DIT

Irish Aid Fellows at DIT have studied a range of subjects including Pharmaceutical Quality Assurance and Biotechnology, Molecular Science, Child, Family and Community Studies, Accountancy, and Hotel and Catering Management. Overall, the most common area of study has been Biomedical Science.



The DIT Library at Cathal Brugha Street with Gabriel Hayes' distinctive 'The Three Graces'.

NEXT ISSUE:
TRINITY COLLEGE
DUBLIN



Our World Awards

“A Better Future for all the World’s Children”



Irish Aid

Government of Ireland
Rialtas na hÉireann



Minister of State for Trade and Development, Mr Joe Costello T.D., launches the 2014 Our World Irish Aid Awards at Scoil Bhara Primary School in Innishmore, County Cork.

Our World Awards is an annual awards programme for Irish pupils from third to sixth class. Pupils work in pairs, as a class or as a whole school to present a project exploring the 8 Millennium Development Goals and the work of Irish Aid.

The aim of the Awards is to raise awareness among Irish pupils of the lives of children and their families in developing countries.

The Awards give primary school students in Irish classrooms a wonderful opportunity to explore development topics and the work of Irish Aid through project work.

Teachers are provided with lesson plans, information and pupils magazines as well as support and advice throughout. Children present their ideas in a range of media including, artwork, drama, photo, film, new media, music, and traditional project presentations.

2014 is the ninth year of the **Our World Irish Aid Awards** programme for primary schools. More than a thousand schools and thirty

The Irish Aid Our World Awards give primary school students in Irish classrooms a wonderful opportunity to explore development topics and the work of Irish Aid through project work.

thousand children, aged 8-12, all over Ireland took part last year.

The Awards seek to raise awareness among Irish children of the United Nations 8 Millennium Development Goals. By taking part, children also learn of the work of Irish Aid and their partners around the world in the fight against poverty and hunger.

The 2014 Awards theme, “A Better Future for all the World’s Children” encourages pupils to explore the links between their lives and the lives of children and their families in developing countries.

» The Link is published by ICOS on behalf of Irish Aid.

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