



FELLOWS WELCOMED TO IVEAGH HOUSE



The 2016/17 fellows in attendance at the Irish Aid reception in Iveagh House with Minister of State for the Diaspora and Overseas Development, Joe McHugh, TD, and ICOS' Director, Sheila Power

On the evening of May 17th, Minister of State for the Diaspora and Overseas Development, Joe McHugh, and Irish Aid welcomed 40 of this year's fellows to a reception at Iveagh House, the headquarters of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade in Dublin.

Minister McHugh spoke at the reception about his time in Kenya and Uganda, and in particular acknowledged Uganda's efforts in providing refuge to hundreds of thousands of migrants, and the need for European countries to support these efforts.

Two of the fellows also spoke: Abdul Koroma from Liberia and Duth Kimsru from Cambodia.

Abdul recounted his personal and career journey to date, and spoke poignantly about the years of crisis in Liberia during the outbreak of the Ebola Virus. Abdul also presented some slides with photographs representing his experiences in Ireland.

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Duth Kimsru speaking at the reception at Iveagh House



Abdul Koroma speaking at Iveagh House



The 2016/17 Fellowship Training Programme fellows in attendance at the Irish Aid reception in Iveagh House with Minister of State for the Diaspora and Overseas Development, Joe McHugh, TD, and ICOS' Director, Sheila Power



Minister of State Joe McHugh with South African fellow Naomi Molefe



Minister of State Joe McHugh poses for a selfie with some of the fellows from Uganda



Minister of State Joe McHugh with Kader Asmal fellows



Minister of State Joe McHugh with Mwangi fellow Joanne Muchai

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Kimsru recounted her time in Ireland and spoke of her work with her organisation in Cambodia, PEPY Empowering Youth and their partnership with a Dublin School, Donabate Portrane Educate Together. (Read more about this partnership on page 8.)

With the formalities completed, Irish Aid and ICOS staff were able to speak to fellows on what was the last formal occasion at which this year's fellows will meet, and so for many it was an occasion to say goodbye.

ICOS and Irish Aid would like to wish all 2016/17 fellows the best of luck in their exams and dissertations in the weeks ahead, and look forward to maintaining connections into the future after they return to their home countries in the coming months.



Fellows enjoying the address by Minister of State Joe McHugh at the reception in Iveagh House



Some fellows enjoying the reception at Iveagh House



Staying Connected: Jeremiah Ben Mumandwe Sakala

>>The Link spoke to Jeremiah five years after he came to Ireland to study on the MEngSc in Sustainable Energy at University College Cork. Jeremiah works as a WASH Project Manager at World Vision Malawi.

Before coming to study in Ireland under the fellowship programme, Jeremiah worked for Concern Universal as an engineer, managing construction works related to improving Malawi's water and sanitation infrastructure.

He had studied mechanical engineering for his undergraduate degree, during which his main interest was in energy issues. With the focus of the government in Malawi turning ever more towards issues surrounding energy supplies, energy security and climate change, in 2011 Jeremiah thought it was the perfect time for him to apply for a masters in the area that interests him most.

Having been awarded a fellowship, he applied to the MEngSc in Sustainable Energy at University College Cork (UCC) in the south-west of Ireland. "The knowledge that I expected to get from this course I thought would enable me to deliver any projects better than I could at that time because after the course I would have acquired better knowledge, which would be better for planning as well."

Thankfully, Jeremiah's course lived up to his expectations: "The modules were all exciting, and I also found the staff very encouraging ... There were not so many of us doing

the masters – maybe 15 or so – and the guys I met, especially the Irish guys, were so good. I didn't take too much time to settle in.

"I thought I would be doing electronics, something mechanical ... but I found the course so diverse in terms of the modules. Climate change issues were incorporated in almost every module and, instead of just thinking about energy generation, we were also trying to explore ways to link energy projects with the populations that would be served – the social factors – and it gave me some better perspective on how engineering projects are planned."

Upon completing his studies, Jeremiah returned to his role at Concern Universal in Malawi and was promoted a short time later. However, wanting to put to use everything that he had learned at UCC, Jeremiah soon began to look for new opportunities and has now been working at World Vision Malawi since August 2015.

"At World Vision I am managing a water, sanitation and hygiene project where we are working on water supply with a number of technology mixes. For example, to pump the water we are installing solar-powered pumps. Before I only had basic information about

solar energy, but now I am so comfortable incorporating solar energy into water supply projects.

"I am also using knowledge about hydropower that I learned at UCC to improve how we supply water to rural communities – my research topic was about pumps and hydroelectric power and energy storage."

However, Jeremiah's ambitions do not end there: "I am very much interested in the scaling up of bioenergy services in Malawi. If we are able to generate power from gas, from biomass, we will be able to reduce issues of climate change, and we will not be felling so many trees. Gas is more efficient ... With firewood, most of the energy is wasted – it is difficult to focus the energy into what we want."

Jeremiah still has contact with his classmates and lecturers at UCC, and he has some advice for Irish Aid fellows who are about to complete their courses in Ireland shortly: "After finishing, it is important to keep in contact with fellow classmates as well as the teaching staff, as they may be required at some point in time when you get back to work. There are some things you will see differently when you are in school compared to when you are on the ground in the

community, and you might need their expert advice and to learn from their experiences, as they are people who have been there before.”

On his hopes for the future, Jeremiah proclaims that he is “always optimistic” while also recognising that there are always challenges and frustrations along the way. “I’ll continue on my path because I want to do a lot more in the energy sector. I’ll go entrepreneurial, apply my knowledge to create jobs for myself and for other people, probably around bioenergy interventions. And when the opportunity comes I will probably also go for a PhD – that has been a dream for some time.

“But for Malawi it is not all rosy. We are developing at a very slow pace, especially in the energy sector. Our main energy source in Malawi is hydroelectricity, but hydroelectricity only reaches to less than 15% of the population. And the reason is that we are not diversifying enough.

“In Ireland, there is wind energy, there is a little hydro, there is gas, there is coal, but for Malawi it is only hydro. And if we talk about energy security, Malawi is not secure. If anything happens to the water we rely on we are doomed. Just last year some of our lakes dried, or the levels dropped ... What if we don’t have rains for 4 or 5 years in a row? It means we won’t have energy.

“If we diversified we would have more power, it would reach more people than we are doing now, and there would be positive effects for climate change because we would be cutting down fewer trees ... Others are thinking along the same lines. I hope someday we get there.”

Jeremiah was interviewed via Skype in May 2017.



Jeremiah at Fort Charles in Cork in 2012.



Jeremiah celebrating St. Patrick's Day in 2012



Jeremiah at the Mishoni Gravity-fed Water Supply Scheme, a World Vision Malawi project completed in December 2016.

COLLEGE SPOTLIGHT:



UNIVERSITY of LIMERICK
OLLSCOIL LUIMNIGH



Health Sciences Building at University of Limerick in the South-West of Ireland (Credit: William Murphy)

The National Institute of Higher Education was first opened in 1972 in the west of Ireland on the River Shannon, before being officially established as a university and renamed University of Limerick (UL) in 1989.

UL is located just 15 minutes outside of Limerick city – Ireland's third largest – but feels isolated, surrounded as it is by a relatively unspoiled natural environment. In this way, the campus enjoys the best of both worlds!

There are 12000 students currently studying at UL – 2000 of them international students – and the university offers more than 70 undergraduate courses and a further 100 taught postgraduate programmes.

Famous alumni include Riverdance's Jean Butler, the former Prime Minister of Georgia, Nika Gilauri, and the former President of the European Parliament, Pat Cox.

The first Irish Aid fellow to study in UL did so in 1993, and since then 10 fellows have followed. These fellows have come from Lesotho, Sudan, Uganda, South Africa, Vietnam, Malawi and Zimbabwe. UL is becoming increasingly popular, with the MSc in Project Management in particular attracting many applications from Irish Aid fellows.



Kemmy Business School at UL



Irish World Academy (Credit: Luke McCurley)

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Irish Aid support to Education

Ireland's policy on International Development: One World, One Future sets out six priority areas of action that will guide future aid and policy engagement. Improving access to quality essential services (including education) is one of these priority areas. Our specific policy priorities include:

- Working towards the provision of more and better education, including improving access for marginalised groups.
- Seeking to address the quality of education, so that all children attending school achieve basic numeracy and literacy skills.
- Continuing to focus on girls' education beyond primary school level in the knowledge that girls' education leads to improved health and nutrition in society.
- Working to ensure that education systems are responsive to the needs of labour markets.

In 2016 Irish Aid allocated €33 million to education programmes in developing countries. This amount represents approximately 6% of bilateral Official Development Assistance (ODA). Irish Aid's support to education is provided through four complementary channels:

- Direct aid to the education sectors of selected Key Partner Countries: Uganda and Mozambique. In Uganda much of our support is provided to the Karamoja region, where we work with both UNICEF in terms of Teacher training and development and girls' education, and the Belgian Technical Cooperation

where we are developing a comprehensive approach to technical and vocational education in that region. In Mozambique, we support both the development of national systems to deliver equitable and inclusive education, and civil society in terms of capacity building empowering citizens to demand improved education services and outcomes.

- Aid to selected Global Partners working in Education. Currently these are the Global Partnership for Education and the Global Monitoring Report. The Global Partnership for Education is a major partner of Irish Aid to whom we currently provide approximately €4m a year. The Global Partnership for Education supports 65 developing countries to ensure that every child receives a quality basic education, prioritising the poorest and most vulnerable, and those living in fragile and conflict-affected countries.
- Aid from the Emergency and Recovery section of Irish Aid to UNRWA (United Nations Relief and Works Agency) for its support to Palestinian Refugees, and also to the Palestinian Authority for implementation of its education sector plan.
- Irish Aid also supports selected civil society partners, including Concern and Plan Ireland, who implement education programmes in multiple countries. The education work undertaken by Concern and Plan Ireland focuses on gender equality, inclusivity, and strengthening community demand for accountability in education service delivery. A considerable amount of their work is in fragile states that have high populations of children out of school.

PEPY Empowering Youth: An Irish-Cambodian Partnership

Duth Kimsru is one of this year's Irish Aid fellows and is studying at DCU. Here she tells the story of a special partnership between her organisation at home and a school in Dublin which first began in 2013 and has been changing lives in Cambodia and in Ireland ever since.

PEPY Empowering Youth (PEPY) and Donabate Portrane Educate Together National School (DPETNS) have been partnering since 2013 to provide the best learning experiences for children and young adults both in Ireland and Cambodia. This partnership started with a parent in DPETNS, Nadine Ferris France, who urged DPETNS to look for a school in the developing world to partner with in order to expand the scope of the students' learning. In July 2013, four Irish teachers travelled to Cambodia and visited many different organisations. When they arrived in PEPY in Siem Reap, they knew that, despite the age difference of the students (primary school in Ireland, young adults in Cambodia) that they had found a perfect match. Colm Byrne, one of the original teachers, returned to Cambodia in 2014 to volunteer with PEPY for a year and he is still living there! He is currently serving as a board member at PEPY.

From small beginnings that first summer, this partnership has grown and flourished. Both organisations have been recognised by Ashoka, an Irish non-profit organisation that supports social entrepreneurs, as "Changemakers" because of their commitment to developing the skills of empathy, creativity, teamwork and leadership and their efforts to bring about systemic change in the world.

Human Rights Education is central to the ethos of both organisations. Both schools place a huge emphasis on the promotion of equality and



Duth Kimsru with Dublin City University President, Dr. Brian MacCraith

justice by teaching about wants, needs, rights and responsibilities.

Students come from a variety of backgrounds and both schools promote respect and understanding for those of all beliefs and none.

These shared values underpin the many different activities and programmes undertaken. Activities have included cultural exchanges, summer learning programmes in Siem Reap, shared lesson plans on topics of mutual interest including positive mental health, climate change, identity, history, and goals/dreams. The partnership is built on strong principles of trust, reciprocity and equality and a formal review of

the partnership with members from Ireland and Cambodia takes place every year to ensure reflection and set joint goals for the year ahead.

Each year, four Cambodians (two teachers and two students) come over to Ireland to teach and share their stories with students and teachers in different organisations. These trips are a two-way learning experience. PEPY staff and students learn about the Irish education system, teaching methods, and curriculum.

In March 2017, four Cambodians arrived in Dublin and were greeted with a warm welcome. They engaged with a number of different organizations while they were here.

During their visit the teachers and students improved their English communication skills, and their understanding of Irish culture through their home stays with Irish families. For all the students who came on the exchange program, it was their first time seeing the sea and their first time on an airplane. Sithong Pip, a PEPY scholarship student, was astonished when he first came out of the airport and he could see his breath. He had never before experienced temperatures so cold that he could see his own breath! You will find more about their trip in this [video](#).

Similarly, four or five Irish teachers travel to Cambodia to teach for three weeks each year. The lessons are based on the PEPY students and staff's requests/needs. For example, the students might need to learn about writing CVs and cover letters, preparation for job interviews, everyday math, while the staff might wish to learn different teaching techniques, lesson plans, curriculum development, organisational management and classroom decoration. Last year, two children, accompanied by a parent, joined the teaching team for one week in Cambodia.

These three weeks usually go by very quickly and the students get to experience different learning and teaching styles which make them more capable and more creative. Particularly, they can practice speaking English with native English speakers. To learn more about the activities of the program, please click [here](#).

Throughout the partnership, DPETNS has been raising funds to support young Cambodian students to achieve a third level education. This is quite literally changing lives as the students get the opportunity to lift themselves and their families out of poverty.

Relationships and friendships are at the heart of this partnership. The involvement of the whole community makes it particularly special. Many friendships have been forged that will undoubtedly last a lifetime. Almost everyone in Donabate is aware of the partnership and has heard about PEPY and Cambodia through their children or their neighbours. This year, more schools got involved. These exchange programmes could not have happened without the support of the Irish National Teachers' Organisation, Irish Aid and the partnership communities, parents, and students. Thank you to everyone for being a part of the exchange.



Fellowship News

Changes in the IDEAS Fellowship for 2017/18

Since 2009, the Irish Development Experience Sharing (IDEAS) Programme has offered suitably qualified individuals from Vietnam the opportunity to come to Ireland to study on business courses at UCD's Michael Smurfit Business School. In 2013, this programme was expanded to allow a limited number of fellows to study in other areas at other institutions around Ireland. In all, 160 fellows have come to Ireland on the IDEAS programme since 2009.

In 2016, a decision was made to reorient the programme towards courses in the areas of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM).



2016 IDEAS fellows at the reception in Iveagh House with Minister of State Joe McHugh and Sheila Power

This marks a significant shift in the programme and, as a result, 2017 will see IDEAS fellows spread throughout Ireland. Fellows will still be studying on courses at Michael Smurfit Business School and other institutions in Dublin, but a majority will now study at institutions outside Dublin.

More LANITH fellows for Ireland in 2017/18

The Lao National Institute of Tourism and Hospitality (LANITH) scholarships were first awarded in 2013. These scholarships are intended to contribute to the development of LANITH as a regional centre of excellence in hospitality management and tourism education. Scholarships are awarded for study in

hotel management and kitchen operations/chef. Unfortunately, no LANITH scholars have come to study in Ireland since the last group graduated in 2015, but we are delighted that there will be two students travelling from Laos to study at Dublin Institute of Technology in 2017/18.

President of Ireland, Michael D. Higgins, his wife Sabina, Minister of State, John Halligan, and Irish Ambassador to Vietnam, Cáit Moran, with students of the Lao National Institute of Tourism & Hospitality (LANITH) during an official visit to Vietnam and Laos in November 2016



Introducing the Irish Aid Roger Casement Fellowship for Nigeria



Roger Casement (Credit: National Library of Ireland)

In 2016, Seán Hoy, Ireland's Ambassador to Nigeria, announced a new fellowship strand: the Irish Aid Roger Casement Fellowship in Human Rights. This fellowship strand will offer Nigerian citizens the opportunity to study in the area of legal studies at an Irish university at postgraduate level, thus enabling them to carry on the humanitarian legacy of Roger Casement. Below is a brief account of his life and work.

Roger Casement was an Irishman who, while probably best known as a revolutionary in Ireland, is also well-known as a humanitarian, mostly due to his work in the Congo, where he revealed the injustices perpetrated by the private sector against the indigenous population. However, what is less known is that Casement began his African journey in West Africa and served for a number of years as a diplomat in Calabar in Nigeria.

Casement began his journey to West Africa at 15. He did not travel to find his fortune as many other European travellers to Africa did at the time. Rather, he absorbed the environment he lived in and

he came to respect the people he lived among.

He encountered many difficulties as a public official in Calabar because he tried to raise the voice of local people. Casement's biographers describe a man who struggled all his life, caught between his humanitarian drive to support the poor and voiceless in Nigeria, Congo, the Amazon and Ireland, and the personal cost that he suffered for his efforts.

Casement was knighted in 1911 for his work with the British Foreign Service, but resigned from the Service shortly afterwards in 1912. He became deeply involved with the Irish Volunteers – a group dedicated to Irish independence from the United Kingdom – helping to organise the importation of arms into Ireland in 1914. He was also deeply committed to Irish culture and the Irish language.

He gained the trust of the leaders of the Easter Rising in Dublin in 1916 and committed treason by making contact with the German forces in an effort to send both prisoners of war and guns to Dublin. He was caught attempting

to import arms to Dublin in 1916. He was subsequently stripped of his knighthood and executed along with other leaders of the Rising.

Today, Casement is remembered in some of the best literature on Africa and Ireland. He was an acknowledged influence on Joseph Conrad, author of *Heart of Darkness*, and is referenced in James Joyce's *Ulysses*.

In his Amazon diaries, he described atrocities he witnessed as 'a crime against humanity', one of the first recorded usages of this phrase, which later attained legal status in the Charter of the Nuremberg Tribunal and again in the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court.

In 2016, Dan Mulhall, Ireland's Ambassador in London at the time, wrote about Casement's legacy: "I like to think that Casement's internationalist legacy is reflected in Ireland's contemporary profile, in our commitment to human rights, to UN peacekeeping and to the provision of high-quality development assistance, mainly in Africa where Casement registered his greatest achievements."



Irish Aid Fellowship St. Patrick's Day Party

On March 14, ICOS hosted the Irish Aid fellows at a reception in the Jackson Court Hotel in Dublin to celebrate St. Patrick's Day. The entertainment was provided by the GreenWaves band and dancers Ami, Tanya and Stevie, and everyone had a fantastic time, with many fellows learning a few steps themselves and dancing The Walls of Limerick.

As many fellows' last assignments were falling due at this time and they were under pressure to finalise their dissertation proposals, it was a great opportunity for everyone to relax, unwind and catch up with the fellows studying at other colleges.

