

**THANK YOU FOR ALL YOUR SUPPORT!**

***YOUR GENEROSITY HAS BEEN CONVERTED  
INTO BRICKS AND MORTAR IN MPIGI,  
UGANDA.***



**THE MPIGI PROJECT  
IRISH UGANDAN AIDS INITIATIVE**

**YOUR HELP IS THEIR LIFE LINE**

### A SUCCESSFUL LAUNCH

As you will remember, the 2005 and 2006 Tulfarris-Uganda Golf Classics' clear aim was to raise funds for the development of a two storey facility to act as a rural HIV/AIDS clinic in Mpigi, Uganda. Over the past two years we have managed to raise €250,000!

Today, all your kind generosity and support has converted into bricks and mortar!

***Saturday, 25<sup>th</sup> November, 2006 saw the successful opening of the Réalta Mpigi Clinic.***

A delegation from Ireland, aptly nicknamed "Team Ireland", arrived to Uganda's capital city Kampala on Friday, 24<sup>th</sup> November 2006. Delegates in the group came from various areas and sectors such as Pfizer, Redquartz, Trinity College, HSE, IAWS, accompanied by such persons as the former South African Ambassador to Ireland and the current Lesotho Ambassador to Ireland, to name but a few. We were all warmly welcomed to Uganda by Dr. Ceppie Merry (Réalta) and every Ugandan we met.

#### QUICK UGANDA FACTS

Population: 28,195,754

Pop below poverty line: 35%

HIV/AIDS: 6.5% of population

Median age:

- Total: 15 yrs
- Male: 14.9 yrs
- Female: 15.1 yrs

Life expectancy:

- Total: 52.67 yrs
- Male: 51.68 yrs
- Female: 53.69 yrs

Government type:

- Republic

### THE CLINIC

Réalta has established a number of community-led initiatives bringing primary healthcare to Ugandans in both urban and rural areas. Mpigi, located 40km south-west of Kampala, was identified as a high priority area by the Ugandan AIDS Commission.

Thanks to your support over the last two years, the clinic officially opened its doors on Saturday, 25<sup>th</sup> November. In addition to your donations, the clinic also receives free ARV (antiretroviral) drugs from President Bush's emergency fund for AIDS relief (PEPFAR).



It's the first time people in this area have access locally to the basic health requirements otherwise enjoyed by their fellow countrymen and women in Kampala, Uganda's capital.



The clinic provides standard medical treatments and will also treat TB, malaria and AIDS. It comprises:

- doctors' consultation rooms;
- paediatric rooms;
- laboratory;
- observation rooms;
- administration rooms; and
- labour rooms.

### MPIGI PARADE

The opening of the Mpigi clinic was a sight to behold – a true spectacle. Over 3,000 people turned out in an array of colours, dresses, uniforms and outfits. The local kids were out in force to welcome “Team Ireland” to their town.



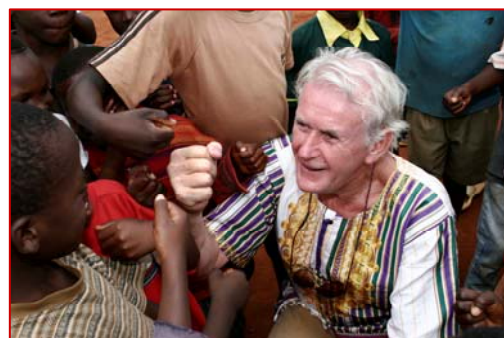
The festivities kicked-off with a parade through Mpigi to celebrate the opening of the clinic followed by a collection of over 15 speeches at the local football ground. We heard from Réalta’s very own Dr. Ceppie Merry, Paddy Kelly and the Irish Ambassador to Uganda, Her Excellency Áine Hearn along with speeches from Uganda’s Minister for Health, USAID, the Joint Clinical Research Centre (JCRC) and many, many more.

Hundreds of seats were set out in rows under colourful canopies around the pitch while the local children and adults laid on some fantastic shows. Their songs and performances all comprised key messages about the prevention of HIV/AIDS - some uplifting and positive, others quite sad. One poem spoke of a father who died while his wife was still pregnant. Subsequently, the mother gave birth, but was unable to breast feed due to her lack of milk.



Incredible to watch children as young as 6 or 7 singing about their parents abstaining and using protection! Something many of us don’t expect to chat about with our own children and grandchildren of that age! But education and knowledge are keys to future prevention.

Dotted all around the pitch were food stations serving some delicious local delicacies from Makote (mashed plantain) with peanut sauce; stewed chicken, chapatti, delicious pork and beef – many of the dishes had a slight Indian influence. Delicious! Worth going back for more!





### KIREKA SCHOOL

We also visited the Kireka School and Orphanage that caters to the needs of Ugandan children with special needs.

Where before these children would eat their meals sitting on the ground outside their rooms or played in the pouring rain during rainy season. Now, through the help of Réalta, Kireka has a fantastic new dining room cum “mess hall” for the kids (pictured right) - a place where they can eat and play when the rains come down.



With the extra funding and support received, the people working in Kireka can focus on the healthcare and nutrition of the children in their care. Their infirmary has had a major make-over (but still in need of screens and mosquito nets and much, much more!).

### MAKERERE UNIVERSITY KAMPALA

When we think universities, we think centres of studies with students and lecturers milling around on their way to classes – a general hustle and bustle about the place. That’s not much different in Uganda, except with fewer facilities available - let alone the lack of significant grants to help them through their studies.

We visited the Makerere University Hospital in Kampala. Our main reason for being there was the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between Trinity College and Makerere University. The MOU allows for the collaboration of both research and education between the two universities.



Pictured: (back row l-r) Dr. Ceppie Merry, Réalta and Dermot Kelleher, Professor of Medicine, Trinity College; (front row l-r) Dr. Nelson Sewankambo, Dean of Faculty of Medicine, Makerere University and Dr. John Hegarty, Provost, Trinity College Dublin.



Makerere University is also the location of the AIDS Treatment Information Centre (ATIC – a Réalta project) and the IDI, a fantastic clinic set-up for the treatment of HIV/AIDS patients, where their patients are not known as patients, nor clients, but friends.

**AIDS Treatment Information Centre**

ATIC supports Réalta’s training programs. We met the staff at the centre, both pharmacists and physicians, who had been trained at the National Medicines Information Centre, St James’s Hospital, Dublin.



(Interestingly, two of the staff have plans in place to complete their PhDs with Trinity College – the MOU already at work!)

It’s quite impressive to see the work ATIC achieves on a daily basis. They provide information, free of charge, to healthcare providers from 13 countries in Africa and distribute a quarterly newsletter with updates on the medical management of infectious diseases, which is distributed to over 10,000 healthcare providers.



ATIC receives calls from practitioners and even the traditional healers with queries about how to treat people from their villages with HIV/AIDS. Since inception, ATIC has received over 2,000 calls with that number increasing as every day passes and word spreads.

**GOING FORWARD**

It was a very positive and uplifting experience to see the hard work and effort put into the creation of the clinic in Mpigi. Also to meet the people on the ground who are so committed and dedicated to what they do, it would put many of us to shame.

But the project doesn’t simply stop now! This is only the tip of the iceberg! There is so much more to do. Mpigi isn’t the only village where people had to travel miles to receive proper healthcare let alone HIV/AIDS care. There are many, many more in need of these facilities. And seeing as this has been such a success, sure it would be mad to stop now!

So keep your diaries free - we’ll be in touch soon for next year’s Tulfarris-Uganda Golf Classic. However in the meantime, should you wish to contact Réalta directly to find out more about their work in Uganda or even donate further funds in advance of next year’s golf, please contact them at the details listed to the left. They’d be delighted to hear from you!

**CONTACT DETAILS**  
 For more information, please visit [www.realtafoundation.ie](http://www.realtafoundation.ie) or contact:  
**Dr Ceppie Merry**  
[cmerry@tcd.ie](mailto:cmerry@tcd.ie)  
 +353 87 653 9409  
 +256 78 289 3129  
**Dr Máirín Ryan**  
[mairin.ryan@ireland.com](mailto:mairin.ryan@ireland.com)  
 +353 87 222 4136  
 +353 1 416 2523



### SOME BACKGROUND INFORMATION

There are over 30 million Sub-Saharan Africans with HIV/AIDS. If the roll-out of Anti-Retroviral Drugs (ARVs) is not successful, these will mostly die and the disease will continue to spread with the expected personal, social and economic cost.

The Réalta Global AIDS Foundation (“Réalta”) was established in 2004 to support the prevention, treatment and care of poverty-related communicable diseases in sub-Saharan Africa.

Its mission is to address the key challenges to improving the pace, efficiency and quality of the roll-out of sustainable, comprehensive HIV healthcare for vulnerable men, women and children living with HIV/AIDS in Africa.



## WHO IS RÉALTA?

From the aforementioned update, you are no doubt aware of what Réalta is about. However, below you will find information on the people behind Réalta on the ground fighting the plight against HIV/AIDS in Africa.

### RÉALTA VISION

A world where:

- every newborn baby can live a life free of HIV disease;
- every child infected with HIV can feel accepted and loved and have children and grandchildren of their own;
- every HIV teenager sees fulfilling his/her dreams as a real possibility;
- every HIV man and woman can live happy and healthy lives.

**Dr Ceppie Merry** is a consultant in infectious disease at St James's Hospital and a senior lecturer in global health and pharmacology at Trinity College, Dublin. After graduating from Trinity College in 1991, Dr Merry undertook a PhD in the pharmacology of antiretroviral agents at the same institution, obtaining her doctorate in 1999. She holds an MSc in HIV and Sexually Transmitted Diseases from the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, London, UK. More recently, Dr Merry was awarded a Clinical Infectious Diseases fellowship at the Northwestern Memorial Hospital, Chicago where she worked until 2001. She has published numerous articles and has been invited to speak internationally, on the pharmacology of antiretroviral therapy, including such topics as drug-drug interactions, pharmacokinetics and therapeutic drug monitoring.

She is currently on leave of absence from her consultant post and is based at the University of Makerere in Kampala, Uganda; where she directs a large program of HIV pharmacology research, training and primary healthcare projects. She is the director of the AIDS Treatment Information Centre and the lead investigator for a portfolio of HIV pharmacokinetic trials at the University of Makerere.

Dr Merry also holds an honorary post at the University of Cape Town where she directs a large pharmacokinetic project funded by the European Commission's EDCTP. She has been involved in a large number of training initiatives in Africa and Ireland and is a founder of the Réalta Global AIDS Foundation.





**Dr Máirín Ryan** is a HIV clinical pharmacist and a health economist who has worked in HIV care since 1995. She holds postgraduate qualifications in health economics from the University of York and in clinical pharmacy from the University of Derby. In 2001, she was awarded a PhD from Trinity College Dublin, which examined the pharmacoconomics of HIV drug therapy in Ireland. She is currently the Chief Pharmacist at the National Centre for Pharmacoconomics in Ireland and Lecturer in the Department of Pharmacology & Therapeutics, Trinity College Dublin. Dr Ryan is the vice-chairperson of the Ethic Committee of St James's and Tallaght Hospitals. She has authored several publications and research reports and has been invited to speak at numerous national and international conferences.

Dr Ryan has worked on training programs in low-income countries since 1993 and has five years' experience of training and research initiatives to improve access to HIV drug therapy in sub-Saharan Africa. She was the lead analyst on a WHO-sponsored health economic evaluation of a public-private partnership to involve private doctors in the Botswana government's public HIV healthcare program. She is the principal investigator on a number of health economic research projects in five African countries examining the cost-effectiveness of HIV treatment & prevention strategies.

Dr Ryan is one of the founders and international advisors to the AIDS Treatment Information Centre at Makerere University, Kampala where she is also a member of the scientific advisory board of the Academic Alliance. She is a co-investigator on a large program of HIV pharmacokinetic research studies in Uganda and South Africa. She represents Ireland on the networking committee of the EC's European and Developing Countries Clinical Trials Partnership (EDCTP). She is a founder and director of the Réalta Global AIDS Foundation.

**Directors of the Réalta Global AIDS Foundation:**

Mr Dick Spring (Chairman),  
Mr Jerry O'Dwyer,  
Dr Máirín Ryan