

UGAIRISH Project

Newsletter April 2018

Editors Note:

Carlow-based charity UgaIrish Project has been supporting Bbaale Landing site, a remote village on the Ugandan shores of Lake Victoria since 2013. Now, thanks to your continued support and donations over the past 5 years, the community have the benefit of clean drinking water, an eco sanitation block, twice monthly visits from a doctor and a nurse, a woman's co-operative and a primary school for children up to 3rd class. Every cent raised goes to this community – we have no offices, no staff and no salaries! This is our 9th annual UgaIrish Newsletter in which you can find out more about our monthly support and on-going projects in Bbaale Landing site. Also you can read about our volunteer trip in 2017 and the plans for this years trip in June.

Siobhan Kinsella, (Chairperson UgaIrish charity.)



Bbaale Landing Site:

The communities along the shores of Lake Victoria rely on fishing for their food and income. However, due to new Ugandan government rules, the small fishing boats that were being used have been banned and also only nets with large holes are allowed. This makes it very difficult for the local fishermen as the bigger boats are expensive and require more fuel. Also they have to go out further in the lake to catch the required size of fish. Some of the villages in the area have had their homes, nets and boats burnt and as a result have been flocking to Bbaale Landing site for refuge. These extra families have put huge pressure on the community in regards to the bore hole, toilets and housing space. UgaIrish now have new challenges to face in supporting this enlarged community.

Bbaale Kindergarten\Primary School:

This January a fifth classroom was added to the school. The school now has 5 classrooms, a kitchen/lunch room, 2 toilets and a fenced playground with play equipment. The school is only temporary until UgaIrish gets permission from the land registry to build a permanent construction. Up to last year all the walls of the school were made from papyrus mats. However, they were subject to rotting and damage from roaming pigs and had to be replaced twice a year. This was becoming very costly for the charity so a decision to construct



the walls from planks was made last June and the volunteers set about the task. The school was even painted in the Irish colours!

Child sponsorship Program:



To help with the on-going running costs of the Kindergarten\Primary School a child sponsorship program has been introduced whereby sponsors fund a child who attends the school. The cost is €50 a year which covers the uniform, daily porridge, medical care, insurance and school supplies.

30 older children from the area are being sponsored in boarding school and secondary schools.

There are also 3 students with special needs being sponsored in schools in the capital city, Kampala.

Ladies Co-operative:

Last year UIP bought the Ladies Co-operative 2 sewing machines and paid a tailor to teach the ladies sewing skills. The idea was that they would continue to make the reusable sanitary pads for themselves and their daughters. When the volunteers visited last June it was not established whether this was happening but what the ladies had made were uniforms for the kindergarten and primary school children. They were very proud of their achievements and begged the volunteers for more material



so they could make clothes for themselves. This we duly did and the results were astonishing – without patterns, they were designing dresses and skirts and even presented

2 of the volunteers with beautifully made dresses. Some of the ladies were very keen to continue with the knitting programme and were looking for more wool and needles. Again they have been knitting garments for themselves and their children.

The Ladies have also been growing vegetables and maize and Ugairish provide them with seeds and equipment as well as a horticulturist to teach and advise them. This has been a very successful project and more land has been rented so that this enterprise can be extended.



Bbaale Litter Wardens:

The Litter Wardens have been working very hard keeping the area around the school clear of rubbish. They have formed a Men's Co-operative and due to the Government's ban on small fishing boats and the requirement for nets with larger holes they are finding it difficult to earn a living by fishing. To help them out we have bought them 6 piglets to share and the funds to build pig pens and a boar for breeding. Extra land has been rented for the cultivation of beans and maize.

2017 Volunteer Trip:

Last year 9 volunteers travelled to Uganda in the middle of June. They stayed for 2 weeks and as well as working on the projects they visited a safari park.

As usual there were plenty of projects to keep the team busy which included building a second toilet for the school in Bbaale and doing crafts with the children. They also removed all the papyrus mats on the school and replaced them with planks and painted these 'new walls' in the Irish colours.

A signpost at the entrance to the village was erected, the doctor was assisted in the clinic, sponsored children were visited and the annual bush feeding programme accomplished.



Several years ago a team of our volunteers built a new dormitory house in Kamuzinda Children's Village, 40 minutes drive from Bbaale. As many of that team were students in Kilkenny College, and most of the funds for the house came from their fundraising, the locals decided to call it Kilkenny College. Each year since then volunteers have visited the house, doing further work or paying



for more upgrading. The 2017 team visited the house to see the tiling and painting paid for, but not completed, in 2016. As one of the team, Emma, was still in Kilkenny College (best of luck in the Leaving Certificate, Emma) she was allowed into the group photo of the house residents.

During the Year:

Our involvement with the landing site does not stop when we leave Uganda. Three times a year we transfer funds for the school fees of children in other schools, and each month we transfer money for the salaries of the teachers and the running costs of the Bbaale school, including cooking the daily porridge for the schoolchildren. The monthly transfer also includes payment for the cleaning of the toilet block, periodic greasing of the bore-hole pump, food parcels for a few very needy families, visits from the doctor and nurse, medicines, hire of a truck to bring villagers to the monthly government Aids clinic and visits from the horticulture and tailoring instructors.

2018 Volunteer Trip:

This year there will be 8 volunteers going out to Uganda at the end of June. The group will be there for 2 weeks and a visit to the source of the Nile is planned during their stay.

This time we will have a doctor, a nurse and 2 Red Cross volunteers on the team so we are planning medical outreaches into the surrounding communities. Also



we hope to build a staff room for the teachers in the school and give English and hygiene lessons to the Bbaale Ladies co-operative. With the demand for fresh water with the increased population there is need for another bore-hole, so we will be scouting for location and maybe getting work started.

There is something for everyone no matter what skills you may have.

Fundraising:

The volunteers are working hard organising fundraising events which include the annual walk along the Barrow Track on 7th May, bag packing, coffee mornings, cake sales etc.

You can see details of these events on our face book page or support them through pay pal via our website at ugairishproject.org.

Almost every penny raised (bank transfer charges eat a bit) by Ugairish goes directly to the projects mentioned above.

www.ugairishproject.org

Registered Charity:- RCN 20073831 (Revenue CHY 18988)

Chairperson:- Siobhán Kinsella Secretary:-Roísín Buckley, Treasurer:- Austin Kinsella, Fran Stilwell Committee:- Joan Doyle