

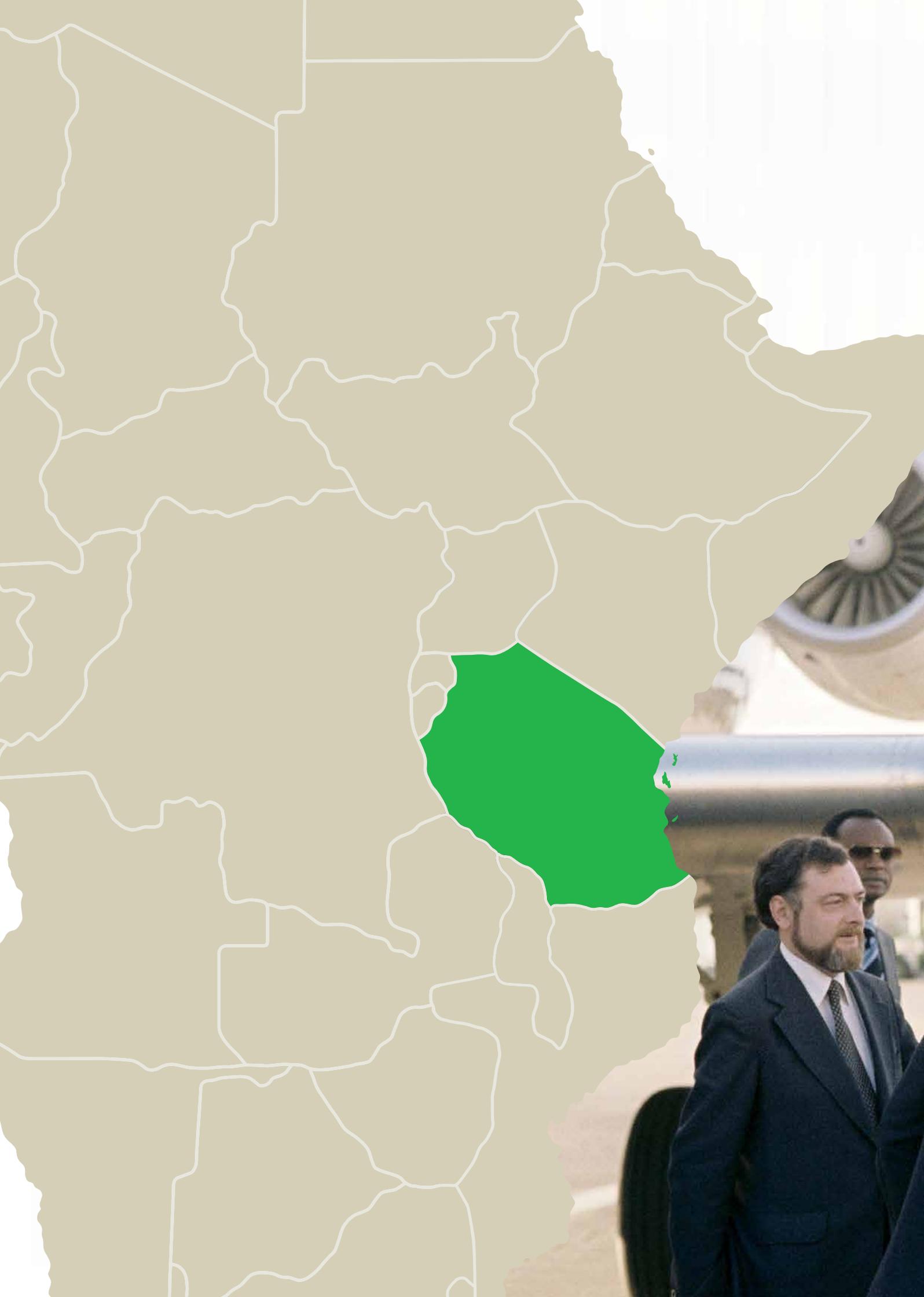


An Roinn Gnóthaí
Eachtracha agus Trádála
Department of
Foreign Affairs and Trade

In my own words

40 years of Irish Tanzanian relations





Foreword



When, on his first visit to Ireland 40 years ago, Mwalimu Julius Nyerere spoke at a State dinner, he said that he was not surprised that he felt so at home. He recalled the many Irish people that had worked with Tanzanians and spoke of their strong human relationships across the barriers of race and culture.

This shared history was evoked at a State dinner in Dar es Salaam in June 2006, when President of Ireland Mary McAleese noted that 'Ireland and Tanzania are old friends and good friends...we have both moved on from the dire legacy of our colonial past, metamorphosing into mature States with a good news story to tell at home and a strong voice on the regional and international stage'.

People from our two countries, Ireland and Tanzania, began building strong personal relationships long before either of our countries gained independence. Relationships founded in a shared love of education, of the land, family, humour – and our respective journeys from colonial pasts to our sovereign presents. Our countries are bound closely together.

Through the work of missionaries and young people with a sense of adventure, connections were made and friendships formed. These enduring relationships have been built on the easy informal ways in which we connect. From the early days of sitting together in rural villages to today's interactions between students in Ireland and Tanzania via social media; new relationships continue to evolve, flourish and deepen.

Tanzania has also played an important part in my own journey. My first overseas job was in a refugee camp in Ngara, on the border of Rwanda, in 1996 and I have had the pleasure to work twice in the Embassy in Dar es Salaam. I have experienced up-close how Ireland's relations with Tanzania have grown.

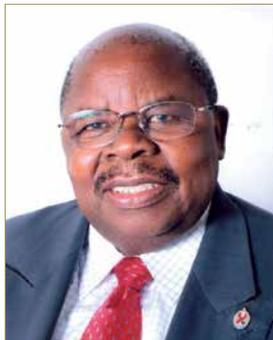
This publication captures stories, told by Irish and Tanzanian people who have seen the mutual benefits that flow when we work together. The stories speak to relationships that have been forged and maintained; friendships which are authentic and honest. And as we look towards the future, I am confident that our people-to-people links will continue to thrive.

Paul Sherlock
Ambassador of Ireland to the United Republic of Tanzania



Taoiseach Jack Lynch welcomes President Julius Nyerere to Dublin, November 1979.
©RTÉ

His Excellency Benjamin Mkapa



Benjamin Mkapa
was President of Tanzania between
1995 and 2005.

I met my first Irishman in the late 1940s, a Salvatorian missionary named Fr Patrick. He was very good indeed; a humble spirit and respectful of local traditions in my parish.

It was the start of a long association with Ireland, which for me is a sort of kindred country to Tanzania.

In my house is a placard featuring four Irish missionaries who taught me at St Francis College in Pugu: Fr James Lynch as headmaster, Fr Liam O'Connor from Kildare, the English teacher, Fr Michael McTiernan and Liam O'Sullivan.

There were many other Irish priests there, and they had also employed one of their alumni, a certain Julius Nyerere, as my history teacher.

The Irish teachers were very even-handed, and never tried to pitch us against the British administration here. I later found this a very useful lesson in international affairs. What they did was very important for me.

Fr McTiernan noticed I had a certain facility for English, and encouraged me in this direction. He organised debates, and produced two Shakespeare plays: Julius Caesar and MacBeth. I played Marc Antony and Lady MacBeth – both political characters!

The Irish missionaries were also extremely enlightening in religious doctrine - uplifting and rational.

In 1979 as Foreign Minister accompanying President Nyerere I visited Dublin and Cork, and saw how Irish people were developing their country.

As President, I enjoyed an excellent relationship with Ireland. Irish scholarships for Tanzanians were very useful in upgrading our local government. Aid was given with one condition with Tanzanian needs and accountability in mind.

Since, Ireland has been quick to provide assistance to the Mkapa Foundation, helping to improve health in rural areas. For that, and much else, I am grateful.

Dr Trish Scanlan



Paediatric oncologist Dr Trish Scanlan is co-founder of the Tumaini la Maisha/Their Lives Matter charity.

When I arrived at the Ocean Road Cancer Institute in 2006, it was the only centre for paediatric cancer in Tanzania, and cure rates were low.

One of our first patients was Marianne. She was a gorgeous little girl and called me to her bedside five minutes before dying of leukaemia. She had suffered throughout the night – we didn't have enough staff or medication.

After Marianne, we drew a line in the sand. She represented everything that needed to change.

We sourced more medications, began a nutrition programme, and started school and play therapy. Suddenly there was more fun. Children were laughing mischievously.

In 2012, we built the 'Upendo' (Kiswahili for love) ward at Muhimbili National Hospital, which brought with it CT/MRI scans, a laboratory; and lots of specialist doctors.

The results can seem miraculous.

In 2015 we had a two-year-old boy called Felix, with a tumour that had spread from his kidneys to his heart. A year before we wouldn't have been able to treat him.

It was a big operation, and his tumour was sent to a laboratory in Ireland - Crumlin Children's Hospital. They provide this free of charge – and actually deal with more Tanzanian than Irish tumour samples.

He was cured.

In some ways when Felix visits each year, he represents the improvements we've seen.

Survival rates are up fivefold. And we've gone from treating 100 to 700 children each year. But we need to treat 3,500. It's satisfying, but we run things on a shoestring.

That's the task, and this is my life's work, and Irish-Tanzanian co-operation is at the heart of it.

Sherry McLean



Sherry McLean is a Social Development Adviser.

In the early 1980s, I was working as a social worker in Dublin when I met Marius Schoon, a South African political activist in exile. He asked me to join him in Tanzania to work at the Solomon Mahlangu Freedom College in Mazimbu, near Morogoro. It was a life-changing decision to go, and I was welcomed with open arms there, not least by the many black South Africans who had escaped apartheid.

The Irish Chargé d'Affaires John Deady donated a second-hand Land Rover to the college, and hosted us in Dar occasionally. We were also funded by the Irish overseas aid programme, APSO. It was somewhat radical for a western country to actively support the ANC at the time.

The college had a huge community, with around 2,500 primary-school children. My role was in community development and counselling the many exiles suffering post-traumatic stress and guilt from having suddenly left their families in South Africa for security reasons.

There was very little food available. We relied on donations for many things. Yet in other ways SOMAFCO was very self-sufficient, with a farm, furniture and clothing factories for generating income. There was a strong sense of solidarity and great community spirit. Marius and I married there, in a Kiswahili ceremony.

After two years, it was a huge wrench leaving Mazimbu without knowing if we'd see our friends again. They asked us to spread the word about the political situation in South Africa.

Years later, in the mid-90s, I had the honour of meeting Nelson Mandela and Julius Nyerere at the same time. Both gentlemen were very dignified, highly intellectual, calm, kind with twinkly warm eyes.

Looking back, it felt rewarding to play a small role in the changes those two great leaders brought about.

Alais Ole Morindat



Alais Morindat is a Maasai leader and development consultant.

In 2006, I welcomed Mary McAleese, President of Ireland, to my village in Monduli District.

Thousands turned out, including all the Maasai ladies. It was incredibly moving for locals to see a female president among the Maasai in tiny Akari. It was a great big moment for the whole community. The security was asking why a President was coming to visit this tiny area. I told him that her country was very generous to us, and we wanted to show the results.

Ireland educated 1,800 well-trained individuals now central to Tanzanian society. It was a gift, a revolution in development, and we all have reason to celebrate it. Today, Ireland is known all over Maasai-land.

I began my Irish connection studying at a Catholic seminary in Arusha, where I met Paddy Reilly from the Kimmage Development Studies

Centre. He is as a very simple man, a great educator, shaped by Christian values. And I, in turn, was shaped by him. I was also helped greatly by Dr Eamonn Brehony, who motivated Trócaire to offer me a scholarship at Kimmage.

In 1997 I received an Irish Aid scholarship to do first a postgraduate diploma at NUI Maynooth, and then a Master's at University College Dublin.

I met some great people there, including Fr Liam Ryan, Professor Tom Collins and Professor Bill Kinsella, a man of great knowledge on rural development, and a hard worker on the ground.

I myself went on to manage Irish Aid programmes and much more besides. It creates confidence among others that that even a poor Maasai like myself can transform himself—and, in turn, help others.

Josephine Sepeku



Josephine Sepeku is a trustee and board member of the Camden Education Trust.

I first properly got to know about Ireland in 2017 with Africa Code Week, a digital literacy initiative involving 1.3 million young people in 35 African countries.

It was founded by Bernard Kirk from the Galway Education Trust. I met him while working for the Dar Teknohama Business Incubator, and helped to curate the summer 2017 Africa Code Week in Tanzania, organising teachers coming from Ireland. Bernard is great at helping people when they're outside their comfort zone. Now I work with him with the Camden Education Trust.

I've spent the last year in Ireland doing an MA in Gender Rights and Globalisation at NUI Galway. Bernard was very helpful during my time there. Dr Stacey Scriber was also a great help. I got myself an internship at Global Women's Studies there, and we took part in the

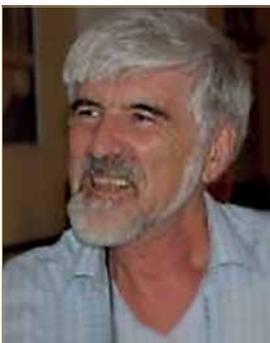
16 Days of Activism to End Gender-Based Violence. I also looked at Irish Travellers' rights.

It was my first time in Ireland, and I was surprised at how friendly, multicultural and diverse it is.

My best memory was celebrating St Patrick's Day in Galway, with classmates and friends. I was living on the west side of Galway with Irene, an Irish Aid fellowship student from Uganda, and Stephanie from Malaysia.

I think the whole experience was an eye-opener in terms of giving back to the community in Dar es Salaam. I feel I'm working with just the right organisation to do that.

Seamus Cashman



Seamus Cashman is a poet, and founder of Wolfhound Press.

It is now over half a century ago, but I am still enchanted by memories of teaching English in rural Likonde, near Lake Malawi.

It only came about because a German priest came into my last lecture in University College Cork seeking an English teacher for a school in Tanzania.

It was 1965, and I had never lived away from Ireland, never been on a plane. I jumped at the chance. It took five plane changes to get to Songea, and we drove to Likonde.

I just loved the people from the beginning. The teachers were great, so integrated with the community. There were a couple of hundred boys, and not one of them could pronounce the name Seamus!

It was a whole other life, and I had strange dreams for weeks as I got used to it all. I stayed for over two years.

Before I left I asked 20 boys to ask a parent or a grandparent to tell them a local tale, to write it down and to translate into English for me to take home.

Fifty years later – in 2017 – I revisited the school, and brought these local tales back with me. The children at the school now are big into their poetry, and it was great to see all of my old students had progressed to higher education, some becoming very distinguished in their own right.

I could say more, but I'll leave you with an unpublished poem I've written: "I still/ Can summon up at will/The red-clay smell/ Of Tanzania."

Semkae Kilonzo



Semkae Kilonzo is executive director of the Policy Forum, a civic society NGO.

I grew up in Dar es Salaam knowing an Irish family friend, a nun who worked with my father, who is a psychiatrist.

Her name is Dr Nora Horgan. We call her Aunt Nora. She is a lovely woman, your typical Irish nun, always looking out for others, passionate about development work, and very intuitive.

In my early 20s I wanted to study in Ireland (my girlfriend was already there) and I travelled with Aunt Nora to visit Griffith College in Dublin, where she helped me secure a part-scholarship for an advanced diploma in journalism and humanities. I used to live opposite. That was 1998 to 1999. I always appreciated her help.

It's a cliché that Ireland is the country of a thousand welcomes, but it's true.

I was surprised at how easily I made friends – including a lot from Northern Ireland. I guess they felt far away from home too. One had never met a black person before. We built a friendship around that. Another Irish friend, Pavel, was in a band called West 70s. I used to travel around with him to cool places like Donegal, and the Jazz Festival in Cork.

I learned a lot at college: how to make my first webpage; HTML coding. My final project was to design a magazine, and lots of my classmates in Tanzania were curious where I learned IT skills.

It was good to give people a more realistic idea of Africa - and to learn more about Irish history and economic development, and their integral part in the EU.

Joan Burton TD



Joan Burton is a member of the Dáil (Irish Parliament), and worked at the University of Dar es Salaam from 1983 to 1986.

I recall a visit to Julius Nyerere's home in 1997. I was Minister for Development then and he was in retirement at his native village. He rather proudly showed me the rows of books about Ireland in his study.

My visit to him was to discuss Rwanda, but he was also anxious to know about the peace process in Ireland. His affection for Ireland was obvious and sincere.

I could understand why Tanzania was so high on Ireland's list when it came to kickstarting our foreign development aid projects.

To have an embassy in Dar es Salaam was important - and not just because of the aid programme. Dar was, and still is, a key African capital with diplomatic missions from many countries. It served as a vital listening post, particularly in relation to the freedom struggles in southern Africa.

Ireland, too, found Tanzania an important ally among non-aligned states in its own UN efforts to promote nuclear non-proliferation.

I put great value on Irish-Tanzanian friendship. I send warm greetings from myself and Pat Carroll to our former students and neighbours. I hope those links continue for many more decades.

Simon Zulu



Simon Zulu is head of transport at the Embassy of Ireland in Dar es Salaam.

Working with Irish people has been central to most of my adult life, but I hadn't heard of Ireland until 1987.

Back then, I was working in a warehouse in Dar es Salaam and my workmate Barnabas Mgweno had another job driving a taxi. He met an Irishman, Allan O'Reagan, who invited him to work for the Irish Embassy.

Two years later I was driving a taxi myself. I met a Scot - Allan Hovey - who was married to an Irishwoman. For almost three days driving around Dar he vividly told the story of Kilosa and the good work done by Irish Development Co-Operation (now Irish Aid).

I drove him to Kilosa, and I liked it so much I decided to live there. Seven months later I got a job with the Irish programme as a driver for an Irish engineer named Ciaran Cleere.

I was impressed by him immediately. He was honest and the hardest worker I've ever seen. He taught me a lot about Ireland.

I've worked with many other Irish people since - too many to name here, but all etched in my memory.

I worked for Irish Aid projects in Kilosa and Muheza and when these were completed in 2003, I was asked by my manager Donal Murray to join him working for the Embassy of Ireland in Dar.

For myself - and all who have shared my vehicles - it's been quite the journey.

Nama Kibacha



Nama Kibacha is chair of community organisation Swahili Point and a community operational analyst for a social media multinational.

I was born in Dar es Salaam and I first came to Dublin in 1997. I had never heard of Ireland before in my life. I was very interested in computers, very much wanted to study IT, and it turned out Ireland was one of the best places to do this - Griffith College to be precise. I still remember my lecturer, Frank Nolan, he was very impressive, and Leo O'Brien, the director, who really facilitated overseas students. There was also lady who really helped me - Angelina Bijura, now a lecturer in mathematics. She is very smart.

I graduated in 2000 and liked Ireland so much I decided to stay. Until three years ago I was working as a software engineer and freelance translator. Since then I've launched Swahili Point, a community organisation promoting Swahili in Ireland.

I feel very accepted into the community, it's lovely. When I arrive back from being away I feel so good - finally I'm home. I miss Tanzanian food and weather of course. I married a Congolese guy here. My kids are the New Irish. Shammah is playing GAA. He was playing soccer but his friends wanted him to play GAA so he switched. In 2016, I met Michael D. Higgins at Africa Day in Dublin. I was the community chair for the Tanzanian association, and he was walking around and came towards our display.

He said he saw our flag and really wanted to come here, as he loves Tanzania and has great memories. That, I think, was the best day of my life.

Brendan Scannell



Brendan Scannell was Ireland's first Chargé d'Affaires in Tanzania, from November 1979 to 1983.

In November 1979 I arrived in Dar es Salaam with my wife and two children, charged with opening Ireland's first planned overseas development programme.

I had travelled over to Dar es Salaam a few months beforehand with a task force, mandated to sit down with the Tanzanian government to decide where our help would be most appropriate. We focused on one district, Kilosa, which already had links with Ireland through the supply of sisal to Irish Ropes/Curragh Carpets.

John Grindle, a development consultant, had drawn up a template of a plan with which we could work. I was tasked with putting it into practice.

First I had to find a premises in Dar we could rent. There was a huge scarcity of offices, and it took over six months to find one. The European Union had kindly allowed me to use their offices in the meantime.

It was exciting being at the coal-face of a brand-new venture. I had a great three and a half years in Tanzania and really enjoyed taking on the challenge there.

I met President Nyerere a few times. He was very pleased we were establishing an aid programme. I also had a good working relationship with Benjamin Mkapa, later to become Foreign Minister and President.

It helped that in January 1980, within two months of my arrival, President Patrick Hillary made a State visit. That put us on the map.

It seems the relationship between Ireland and Tanzania has prospered ever since.

There's a certain satisfaction, looking back over the last 40 years, that we laid the foundations for a bigger effort. We were on the right track.

Evanna Lyons



Evanna Lyons is a psychotherapist and co-founder of Dunia Designs.

When I arrived in Tanzania it was to work as a psychotherapist, but after a couple of years I wanted to do something about the plastic waste problem. Unfortunately, it's something Ireland and Tanzania have in common. My partner, Alexis, and I set up Dunia Designs, a sustainable design company, making functional furniture using shredded plastics, plastic bags and reclaimed and recycled woods.

In 2015, I went around our neighbourhood seeking workers. One of the youngsters who put his hand up was Maasai Lazero Lepajaro. He was great. We sponsored him to go back to school and in his first term he became head boy of a highly-rated secondary school of 1,300 pupils – in his first term!

The students were obviously as impressed as we were. It was really satisfying attending his graduation, seeing this promising young man fulfil his potential.

We are now paying his college fees in Arusha, studying administration and economics. We reckon Laz could be president one day.

With our profits we send as many children to school as we can afford. So far we have sent three to primary, five to secondary and two to tertiary education. We also have local teenagers and a team of women collecting plastic from streets, homes and businesses.

Recently, we made 500 desks out of recycled plastic and supplied them to schools. These desks were purchased from us by donors and then are given to schools. They sit three people each.

Tanzanians are obviously taking the plastic problem seriously, and we want to export what we've started here to other African and European countries.

Peter Kallaghe



Peter Kallaghe was Ambassador of the United Republic of Tanzania to Ireland from 2012 to 2016.

I first visited Ireland in 2011. The government was cutting down on everything. Taxes were going up, domestic programmes were being cut.

The shops in Dublin were not as busy. They called it austerity. You could feel it in the air.

And yet I went to a meeting and they said they were not going to cut development aid to Tanzania. Ireland gave €743 million in Overseas Development Assistance in that year alone.

In 2012, I presented my credentials to President Michael D. Higgins of Ireland. He spoke about his friendship with President Nyerere. He spoke from his heart, and it immediately put me at ease. I felt like he knows me, and he knows my country.

In Ireland, due to the history, all people are more sympathetic towards poorer countries. It's obvious that Ireland has not always been prosperous.

You don't meet lots of Irish people in the corporate world in Dar es Salaam. You meet them in the most remote parts of the country: teaching, volunteering, and working as doctors. That always tells you something about the character of Irish people.

I have a colleague whose father had a close friendship with an Irish priest, Fr Richard Walsh. My colleague asked me to find this priest's grave in Dublin, and I found it. He is buried in Deansgrange Cemetery in Dublin. This friend of mine is now determined to visit Fr Walsh's resting place, even though he died in 1979.

It shows just how enduring Irish-Tanzanian connections are, even from beyond the grave.

Sr Kathleen Costigan



Sr Kathleen Costigan is a medical missionary with the OLA for over 25 years.

I am a nurse and midwife running a busy primary health care facility in the rural village of Bugisi, Shinyanga region.

I'm a black belt in Shotokan karate and run a club here. I also love the Irish sport of hurling.

My other main passions are missionary work; caring for the earth; and caring for people living with HIV.

Everyone here calls me Sister Kate or Nshoma, a Sukuma name given to me by our patients. I work here with mainly Tanzanian colleagues: Dr Dunia, and nurses Asha, Joyce, Laurencia, Elvida and Innocent.

Each day we travel to remote villages to meet, counsel and test people so they know their HIV status, and distribute retroviral drugs to patients.

It is inspiring to meet our patients, some of whom cycle over four hours to meet us. Our work is permeated with the Gospel values of love, compassion and the utmost respect for all. We're aiming to test 300,000, and treat 20,000 people in our project, which is supported by Gilead Sciences, the Vatican, Doctors with Africa and the Institute for Global Health and Development.

These organisations recognise that missionaries are ready to go the extra mile.

Maurice O'Reilly



Maurice O'Reilly was project manager on an Irish Aid-funded mathematics project at the University of Dar es Salaam from August 1991 to July 1994.

At the end of 1991, I was working on a mathematics project at the University of Dar es Salaam and some small funds were unspent in my project budget. My colleague Prof LK Shayo requested support to print an applied mathematics textbook published by the International Village of Science and Technology.

The funding was approved, the textbook printed, and in due course former President Julius Nyerere, was invited to launch the textbook in Arusha in February 1994.

It happened that my first primary school teacher in Ireland, Mrs. Corcoran, was a cousin of Fr Richard Walsh, a friend and advisor to Nyerere since before independence. Of course, as every Tanzanian knows, Nyerere was known as 'Mwalimu', his profession as a teacher. I remember, as a boy,

seeing a photo of Mwalimu Nyerere with Fr Walsh on top of Mrs Corcoran's TV.

After the launch in Arusha, a dozen of us were in discussion with Nyerere. He mentioned he might talk to Japan about funding a project – and he turned to me and asked: "And, Dr O'Reilly, what about the Irish?"

I thought I had already done what was expected of me, so I struggled to reply to this unanticipated question. I just said: "Before leaving Dar es Salaam, I spoke with our Chargé d'Affaires, and she said that we were not in a position to make a firm commitment at this time." His response was swift, with a hint of humour: "Well, you go back to your Chargé, and tell her that Mwalimu asked you a question you couldn't answer!"

Professor Mussa Assad



Professor Mussa Assad was Comptroller and Auditor-General for Tanzania from 2014 to 2019.

Three Irish lecturers taught me as an undergrad in Dar es Salaam: Patricia Baker and Tony O'Dea in accounting, and Jean Horyan in IT. They were very hard-working people and would stop at bus stops and give people lifts to the university.

And I have very fresh memories of my three years in Ireland, at Dublin City University.

I was living in Phibsboro. It was extremely pleasant, I made a lot of friends in the first few weeks - mainly at bus stops, funnily enough. It was very social, everyone was asking how I was doing. On Thursdays we might go to a music venue like Club Sandino, which often had African musicians. I played a lot of football in Dublin in those days, too, in the Phoenix Park or Stephen's Green on a Sunday.

I recall the World Cup in 1990. Africa had Cameroon, and Ireland had Paul McGrath. We were supporting each other - that was a very nice memory.

I'm still in contact with friends like Pauline Kavanagh and her daughter Niamh, who was a baby when I was there but is now grown-up.

I also made a lot of friends from the north of Ireland. One of them took me on a visit to Belfast, showed me around, and looked after me there. There was a lot of warmth.

I'm still friends with my classmates like Kevin and Maurice O'Reilly. Maurice had a 504 Peugeot. His friend crashed it. I rescued the gearbox and other parts and shipped it to Dar es Salaam and fitted it into a car there. Maurice came to work in Dar es Salaam later, and couldn't believe that it was running, a small piece of Dublin in the tropical traffic.

I returned twice, in 2009 and 2015, to ensure co-operation continues to this day between our universities.

Aileen O'Donovan



Aileen O'Donovan works in the Development Co-operation Division of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade in Dublin.

I was nine years old when I arrived in Tanzania. My parents were working in Pemba island and initially I went to school in the tiny city of Chake Chake. The whole island was Muslim apart from my family and a few others. It was interesting to go to school there – the facilities were very basic and the focus of the school was mainly on the Koran.

I was immersed in the situation, learned fluent Kiswahili and saw the challenges experienced by my fellow schoolmates, especially around women's rights.

I became friends with my neighbour Hafsa, who was around 13 or 14 at the time but arranged to be married to a widower. She left the island.

I kept contact with her over the years. And in 2010 when I returned full-time to Tanzania she had set up a retail business in Dar es Salaam.

I worked at the Irish Embassy for four years, engaging with the Tanzanian government on agricultural development. It helped that I understood the culture, and with Sizye Lugeye and Aran Corrigan worked with farmers looking at gender and governance in local communities.

The most satisfying thing was listening to male and female farmers and learning from their experience at the local level, and then bringing those discussions to the national policy level.

Professor Yunus Mgaya



Professor Yunus D. Mgaya is a marine biologist and Director General of Tanzania's National Institute for Medical Research (NIMR) in Dar es Salaam.

In 1991 I began a PhD in Aquaculture at the Shellfish Research Laboratory in Carna, Galway, Ireland, as part of a scholarship there for Tanzanian students. I lived within walking distance from the lab with two Irishmen Dr William Crowe and Paul Leighton - and a Chinese colleague Kangsen Mai.

We worked in the same lab, shared a kitchen, often shared our food, and shared our experiences. We would socialise together. We were well looked after by our landlady, Mary Lydon. It was a home away from home.

In 1994 my wife and young child joined me and we lived in Salthill in Galway City. My wife was surprised at how wet it was, but then that's Galway for you with great people, but often rainy.

My supervisor, Dr John Philip Mercer, knew Tanzania, and he created the PhD position in aquaculture at the request of his friend Professor

Alfeo Nikundiwe from the University of Dar es Salaam (UDSM). It's been an immense help. Each Tanzanian who comes to Ireland comes for a specific programme geared towards a specific skills gap in our systems.

After I returned to Tanzania I became Associate Dean (Administration) of the Faculty of Science, and progressed to become Deputy Vice Chancellor (Administration) at UDSM from 2006-2014, then Executive Secretary of the Tanzania Commission for Universities from 2014-2016 and Director General of the National Institute for Medical Research from 2016 to date.

In the meantime, I returned to visit Ireland, for a North-South conference in 2013 held in Belfast and officiated by Mary Robinson, a former President of Ireland. We spoke about my time in Galway. I find it easy to connect with Irish people; we have much in common.

Neilus O'Doherty



Neilus O'Doherty co-founded Pemba Support Ireland.

Pemba Support Ireland was born from a friendship with Fr Apolinarius Msaky, Parish Priest in Chake Chake in Pemba, whom I met in 2007 when I came to Pemba, with my wife Patricia, as VSO volunteers.

Pemba Support Ireland would not have happened without him. We have worked together for over 12 years now, and he even visited my Irish town of Ennistymon, twice. He is a brilliant man, and a lawyer too, defending poor people in the family law courts.

Nobody back home had ever heard of Pemba. When we went fundraising, through flag days, church-gate collections and golf classics, we had some explaining to do. Between 2007 and 2017 we initiated, managed and funded 165 projects for local communities - providing computer support for education in schools, medical devices for health support in hospitals and many income-generating projects for local communities.

One of our key people there is Asha, who oversees four of our agricultural co-operative programmes. She is a widow, with seven children and despite having the use of only one eye, she completed her Master's Degree on Community Development with our help. She is a great role model for those with special needs.

She works with another of our key contacts, Hamza, who has been dealing with Irish cattle since the 1980s when John Griffin, from University College Dublin, brought 30 Irish cattle to Pemba on behalf of the Irish Government. The 'Irish farm' still exists in Chamanangwe today. There are over 100 Irish cows, 400 goats, lots of turkeys, chickens, ducks and bees, as well as crop tunnels, irrigation systems and various cash crops on the island.

It's a physical reminder of the links between Ireland and Tanzania on the island. I would be very sad if this work wasn't to carry on as solid foundations have been made on the island of Pemba.

Dr Zabron Masatu



Dr Zabron Masatu is District Medical Officer for Misungwi.

I graduated in medicine in 2006 and worked as district medical officer for Missenyi District until 2015 when I moved to Misungwi and was awarded an Irish Aid scholarship to study a Master's in Immunology and Global Health at NUI Maynooth in Ireland.

It was my first time in Europe, and I was afraid of going to a foreign country. Yet from my very first day there I noticed the charity and kindness of the people. It was a very safe place to be.

I got to know the neighbours; it was like being back in Tanzania. I was living with Derek, an Irish student training to be a priest, and an Indian friend, Showik. My other friends there were Keelan Johnson, Nadia Keelan and Karl Doyle.

Professor Paul Moynagh gave our first lecture, and I could feel I could understand everything he was talking about. It helped me settle in.

Sometimes I went to the pub to watch the Premier League matches, and people would ask about Tanzania. Some of the older guys would ask about Julius Nyerere.

When I returned to Misungwi, I had more knowledge about vaccination and management of diseases like chronic TB and HIV.

Two years ago some Irish Embassy people came to my workplace. The director of Irish Aid was there, and Minister of State Ciaran Cannon.

It wasn't a planned meeting, but we started talking. I was looking into building a new maternity ward in Misungwi, and that day they committed to support the construction. When they saw what was needed and the commitment from the community they decided to help immediately. They are great people.

Rita Bowen



Rita Bowen worked with the Irish Embassy in Dar es Salaam from 1998 to 2015. She was also the President of the Irish Society.

I still remember when the then Tanzanian President, Benjamin Mkapa attended the Irish Society's co-production of *Romeo and Juliet* at the Little Theatre of Dar es Salaam.

It was 2002. We had already staged a few plays (*Sive*, *Lovers*, *the Beauty Queen of Lennane*) appealing to both Irish and Tanzanians alike, but this one went further.

Elisabeth Ann Smiddy adapted it, and co-directed it with Toni Khuri. They set it as a tribal feud in modern times.

I played Lady Capulet, Juliet's stepmother, and in the play I was married to a Tanzanian man. A young Kenyan actress played Juliet; Romeo was played by an Irishman.

We also included a traditional Tanzanian dance and some KiSwahili as part of the play. It was the first bilingual production staged in the Little Theatre.

We had a guard of honour for President Mkapa, replete with Maasai guards and flaming torches. It was a great night, and the President was delighted with the play.

He and his entourage came backstage after the show and spoke to all the cast. It wasn't the only time we meshed Tanzanian and Irish/European cultures, but it may have been the best.

Dr Eamonn Brehony



Dr Eamonn Brehony is a lay associate of the Medical Missionaries of Mary and an author of studies on development, pastoralism and agriculture.

In 2005 I was asked to mediate over a land issue near Loliona between a section of the Maasai and the Batemi tribes.

The locals trusted me because I am interested in their culture and know key elders on both sides. The Batemi were seeking parliamentary representation for villages surrounded by Maasai land.

I knew a small bit about the Irish peace process and knew that we had to provide each side reassurances or solutions that maybe were unpalatable for some on the other side.

Mohammed Babu was Kagera Regional Commissioner, and he gave me the full support of his office, which made a huge difference to calming the conflict.

We got on extraordinarily well – he spoke honestly but also listened a lot. He was open to new perspectives.

I became interested in tribal culture back in 1985 working in Iringa for Concern.

It was around then I met Alais Morindat in Arusha, now one of the intellectual leaders of the Maasai.

In 1988 he joined us at the Kimmage Development Centre in Dublin to study, and we continue that relationship to the present day.

In 1996 I met Maanda Ngoitika, a very impressive lady. I taught her at the MSTCD in Arusha through KiSwahili. Once she learned English she also studied with us at Kimmage, before returning to found the Pastoralist Women's Council, an NGO fighting for the rights of Maasai women. They also teach agricultural best practice to other Maasai women to improve food security. She is a very determined woman, she had to fight to get herself a secondary education and knows how to mobilise people. I learned a lot from her.

Abel Moyo



Abel Moyo is a senior operations manager of the Tanzania Ports Authority.

I was born in the region of Shinyanga, in a small mining town called Mwadui. I went to school there and in Songea near Lake Nyasa, and then studied economics in Tanga, graduating in 1986.

After compulsory national service for a year, I started what has become my life since: working with the Tanzania Ports Authority. We have three ports: Dar es Salaam, Mwanza and Tanga.

Ireland has been a big part of my professional development. I have visited there six times in total since 2008 alone, as part of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) Port training programme.

My first visit was to Dublin in September 2008. I found the port operations in Dublin fascinating. The port yards were clean and tidy, just like the cities themselves, and the public transport was excellent. There was also a very co-operative

culture among Irish people towards foreigners. People want to help each other. And Irish Aid is a part of that.

That first visit inspired me to kick-start the UNCTAD Port Management Programme in Tanzania in 2009. And I went back to Dublin that year – four years in a row actually, including three two-week training of trainers' courses and one three-day coaching workshop.

In May 2012, I broadened my experience of Ireland by visited the Port of Cork, on the southern coast, for another training of trainers course, and in 2014 I attended a co-ordination meeting in Belfast, in Northern Ireland.

Dr Zanifa Omary



Dr Zanifa Omary is a lecturer at the Institute of Finance Management.

It is easy to make friends in Ireland. I'm still close to the friends I have from my time there between 2008 and 2015, studying for a Master's in Computing and then a PhD at Dublin Institute of Technology.

I was anxious but excited at the opportunity. Among the lecturers to offer massive support were Dr Fredrick Japhet Mtenzi, Dr Brian Duggan, Deirdre Lawless, and Damian Gordon.

All these lecturers, among others, were very friendly and helpful when any of us were struggling to adjust to life in Ireland.

Dr Brian MacNamee was my Master's thesis supervisor. He knew my capabilities and pushed me to achieve what I didn't believe I could achieve. With a first-class honours Master's degree, I like to think I have repaid his faith in me.

It was difficult at a certain point in my PhD because my father passed away. I struggled to come to terms with his passing. My Tanzanian friends at DIT (Bossi Masamila, Dennis Lupiana, Jafari Said, Rose Tinabo) and others were with me during this difficult time.

Later, I found a friend in Eilis Delahunt, with whom I shared an office. She has a golden heart and was always there for me as we were going through the same challenges as PhD students.

Whenever I would come back from the meeting with my supervisors (Dr Mtenzi and Prof Bing Wu), Eilis was the first person to ask me how the meeting went, and made sure we took time out for a cup of coffee. I am always thankful for her.

Bill Nolan



Bill Nolan was Ireland's Head of Mission in Tanzania from 1989 to 1991.

I came to Dar es Salaam in 1989 shortly before the Berlin Wall fell, and before Nelson Mandela walked free from prison.

Shortly after his release, Mandela visited Tanzania, hosted by that other great African leader Julius Nyerere, then still head of Tanzania's CCM party. Their joint appearance at the National Stadium in Dar es Salaam was a highly emotional occasion. It was a privilege to be there.

A few months later, I represented the Irish Government at another highly symbolic event as Nyerere resigned as CCM leader, 35 years on from leading Tanzania's fight for independence. His entrance into the public arena was greatly assisted by working as a teacher for Irish missionaries, the Holy Ghost Fathers, at their secondary school on Pugu Road near Dar es Salaam.

I still remember it vividly. At the end of a long retirement ceremony, at which his life's achievements were recorded before a hushed, enthralled gathering, Nyerere calmly rose to his feet, handed a copy of the party constitution to his successor before leaving the platform, taking his place as an ordinary citizen and a party member from the Mara region.

He wanted to set an example to other African and Tanzanian leaders. He did so to great effect.

Pauline Conway



Pauline Conway was Ireland's Chargé d'Affaires in Tanzania from 1991 to 1996.

Of all the individuals I had the opportunity to meet during my time in Tanzania, Julius Nyerere obviously stands out.

I met Mwalimu regularly to discuss the situation in Burundi, and in November 1996 had the honour of accompanying him to Ireland.

When Dick Spring, Minister for Foreign Affairs, hosted a reception for Mwalimu in Dublin, I even had the opportunity to act as his bodyguard! He was naturally very popular among Ireland's Tanzanian community, particularly students, and I had to literally fend his fans off in order to protect him. It was a very happy occasion.

Another memory was the 1994 State visit by President Mary Robinson. It wasn't easy to organise something like that in those days due to

communications constraints, but she got a very warm welcome from everybody in Tanzania. She was also very moved by the camps set up to host Rwandan refugees in the west of the country. One of my great memories was seeing young people on the streets on Dar es Salaam waving Irish flags to welcome her.

It was a great privilege to show her, first-hand, the connections between Ireland and Tanzania. I was particularly impressed by how hard-working Tanzanian women are. We worked with quite a few: female farmers in Kilosa; female mechanics at our vocational training centre in Mikumi; and teachers at Korogwe teachers training college. It was very satisfying to work with such inspiring people, and my abiding memory is the warmth and the hospitality I encountered everywhere throughout this great country.

Said Jafari



Said Jafari is the registrar at Tanzania's Institute of Finance Management.

On February 21, 2013, I became the first-ever Dublin Institute of Technology PhD student to graduate in East Africa. I spent three and a half happy years at DIT in Dublin's Kevin Street, researching security issues in e-healthcare systems under the supervision of Dr Fred Mtenzi, Dr Ronan Fitzpatrick and Professor Brendan O'Shea.

I could reach any of them at any time, in particular Dr Fitzpatrick, he was highly welcoming to me to reach him at any time I needed.

Professor Brendan O'Shea has a very brilliant mind. You just have to say one or two things you're doing, and out of that he could give you an idea of what you should do next, in two or three statements. It was a very supportive atmosphere. Irish people are very warm and there is a culture of helping to make a better life for others.

It's similar to Irish people in Tanzania. When I returned to the Institute of Finance Management, I developed a very good relationship with Deirdre Lillis, Head of Computer Science at DIT and we hosted three conferences. She is marvellous, very smart and a great leader. She was inspiring to work with.

Dublin was a very cool place, very diverse. I used to love walking around Howth Head, and visited Kilkenny, Limerick and Waterford. The scenery was spectacular, even from the bus. It was a far cry from central Tanzania where I was born.

Oliva Kinabo



Oliva Kinabo is Gender Programme Manager with the Embassy of Ireland, Dar es Salaam.

In 2005 I received an Irish Aid scholarship to study at Kimmage Development Studies Centre – first a postgraduate diploma, and then a Master's Degree in Development Studies. Those two years, 2005 to 2007, were really remarkable.

For a start, I had no winter clothes, but people rallied around. I remember my Christmas in Kimmage – the first time without my family – as a happy occasion, with lots of gifts and carol-singing. Our Irish classmates were friendly and charming, especially Grainne, Claire and Eve. They were learning from me and I was learning from them. I like that kind of friendship – challenging and supporting each other.

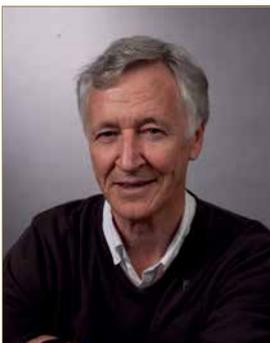
I also got an opportunity, at UCD, to share Tanzanian perspectives on helping to protect women and girls from gender-based violence,

particularly female genital mutilation. It was a powerful experience.

We had great lecturers. I remember Paddy Reilly and Tom Campbell who were very friendly and keen to help us to get the best education which we could use back home. Another one was Dr Eilish Dillon. She was very humble, and very articulate and also a very good listener. Patrick Marren, another brilliant lecturer, led us on a walk up Croagh Patrick one summer. I value the contributions of Eilish and Patrick highly. The course transformed my life.

When I returned, I taught at the MSTCDC for more than five years, and then became director of gender equality and women at Care International. When a job came up at the Irish Embassy I thought it would reconnect me with Irish people. And here I am.

Dr William Howlett



Dr William Howlett is a neurologist, an associate professor at KCMC Tumaini University and the author of Neurology in Africa. He was awarded the Presidential Distinguished Service Award in 2019.

In December 1983 I arrived at Kilimanjaro Christian Medical Centre (KCMC) in Moshi as a physician with the Ministry of Health. I had trained in tropical medicine in London and worked amid famine in Uganda, yet was still ill-prepared for what was about to happen.

In September 1984 I had my first experience of a new and devastating medical disease, carried by a 30-year-old Tanzanian male patient who later died in hospital. My working life has been affected by the AIDS epidemic ever since.

Working with my colleagues, I devoted the next eight years to patient care, teaching and research around this illness. We also used public education seminars and media campaigns to focus on prevention. My late wife Juliet co-founded women's HIV-prevention group Kiwakkuki to this end. Between 1992 and 2006 I studied and

worked in Europe, returning each year to help Tanzanian medical institutions train personnel. When I returned to KCMC full-time in 2006 I witnessed enormous improvements in healthcare training and local expertise, particularly in relation to communicable diseases. In 1983, the life expectancy was 51. Now it is 65.

Today, my fellow neurologist and hospital director at the KCMC is Dr Sarah Urasa, a graduate from our Tumaini University. It has been a pleasure to work alongside her and many others, helping them to help their Tanzanian compatriots in turn.

Joachim Wangabo



Joachim L. Wangabo
is Regional Commissioner for the
Rukwa Region.

From 2003 to 2005 I pursued a Graduate Diploma and Masters of Arts Degree in Development Studies at Kimmage Development Studies Centre in Dublin. I was motivated to undertake Development Studies to gain confidence and knowledge of development and leadership. It has helped me hugely ever since.

When I returned to Tanzania, I worked with organisations including the Catholic Archdiocese of Arusha, Bugando Medical Centre, Caritas Tanzania and the Arusha Archdiocesan Integrated Development and Relief Organisation (AIDRO). Drawing on my experience in Kimmage, I was able to build cooperation within and outside the Diocese, for the socio-economic development of the society and country as a whole.

In 2017, I was appointed as the 15th Regional Commissioner for Rukwa, the principal representative of the Government in the region, where I am responsible for securing law and order, and ensuring support to local authorities and organisations.

Solomon Lamba



Solomon Lamba is a cinematographer with Empty Soulz Production.

I first got to know Ireland when I went with my father to visit my sister Adelia, who was studying English there. It was my first time outside of Tanzania, I didn't speak English. Everything was different – the weather, the people, the food, the culture. It was interesting. Back home I applied for a visa to study there myself.

In 1997 I sat my Leaving Cert examination in Ireland at Griffith College. We had classmates from around the world and one of our teachers was from India. I remember we had a good English teacher, Shane. I've been more confident speaking English ever since.

When you live so far away from your home country, sometimes it's difficult. But most people there were nice, and I learned a lot.

I don't drink much so I didn't really go to the

pub. I studied hard. There was no social media back then, of course.

I then studied Fine Arts at Inchicore in 1998 at the National Council for Vocational Awards, before studying Hospitality Management in 1999 at Griffith College.

During my Fine Art course, we used to do some different type of photography, and I use that in my job today, filming local movies and documentaries for NGOs and small Tanzanian companies. I always loved animation.

I've been doing that for eight years now – before that I was managing a hotel in Dar es Salaam. But music and cinematography are my passions.

My time in Ireland had a big effect on my life, I'm grateful to do what I love.

Aideen Christianakis



Aideen Christianakis is co-owner of Manyatta Coffee.

I'm the daughter of a Wexford farmer. I met my husband Leon when we were studying at Trinity College Dublin. He is a mixture of Irish and third-generation Greek-Tanzanian.

In 1996 we moved to our home place at Usa River, and 11 years ago bought a second farm next to Ngorongoro, where we grow our coffee. We also manage a farm next door which would bring us up to 300-400 employees. We grow avocados now at Usa River, and are opening it up to careful development.

We are trying to change things in the world of coffee by showcasing Tanzanian coffee on the world market, concentrating on a variety of Arabica coffee called Geisha, which is a high scoring, very specialized coffee.

We're hoping to start selling coffee in Ireland again soon.

We still have very strong links to Ireland. We recently had some Irish medical students visiting. Our main finance guy is a brilliant Tanzanian, Gabinus Gabriel. We met him newly-qualified 10 years ago working in a little office in Arusha. We paid for his Master's, and he is a full CPA (Certified Public Accountant) now. He is just amazing, and now we take him on as an advisor in so many different ways. He has such brilliant ideas. There are lots of people like that whom we've brought along.

I learned KiSwahili here, but my children spoke it before they spoke English. There's such a great mix of nationalities here. I suppose Tanzania is a place where opportunities open up.

Jonathan Sutton



Jonathan Sutton is Chief Executive of Radar Recruitment.

I grew up in Africa; my father worked in Tanzania for years with the Guinness/Kibo Brewery here. I visited when I was young, and after I graduated from university in Ireland I was determined to return. Tanzania has been interwoven with my life ever since.

I have been a very active board member of the CCBRT Hospital, which has received support from Ireland for over a decade, working alongside Dr Wilbert Slaa, the Chairman. He is a very inspiring, very interesting guy. I've also worked closely with former Ambassador Mwainadi Maajar, whom I first met in 2007 when she was ambassador to the UK and Ireland.

She was organising a conference for the Tanzanian diaspora in London, and asked me to become a trustee of the Hassan Maajar Trust - set up in memory of her late son, sadly killed in an accident.

We raised money for a very successful project supplying schools with desks and chairs, later adopted by the Government, before turning our attention to latrines. It feels like it's made a big difference.

David Nyaluke



David Nyaluke is the UCD Proudly Made in Africa Fellow in business and development.

I love living in Ireland. In 2013 I graduated with a PhD in politics and development from Dublin City University, focusing on African nations post-independence. Finishing my PhD was a very happy day indeed.

My supervisor, Professor Eileen Connolly, was supportive, and very curious about Tanzania and Africa. Studying here felt like learning among the family of nations with so many international people here. On St Patrick's Day, I met up with friends to watch the GAA All-Ireland Club finals in Croke Park.

Since 2017, I have been teaching at University College Dublin and other business schools around Ireland on African business and trade.

This year I took a group of 25 students and four lecturers from Dublin Business School to Amani Management and Technology College in Njombe,

in southern highlands of Tanzania. We want to increase the amount of products that have their value added in Africa. When that happens, a country like Tanzania gets almost 50% of the value, compared to 10%. It's always a eureka moment for Irish business students to learn about massive business opportunities in Africa.

When I arrived in Ireland for my interview at DCU in 2005, it was a beautiful sunny day, and I presumed the whole spring and summer would be like that. It hasn't quite turned out that way! But I am contributing to a brighter future here.

The guys I'm working with – CEO Vikki Brennan and Feena Kirrkamm – are passionate about trade justice in Africa. We're a small team but we work with tremendous enthusiasm.

Hadija Jabiri



Hadija Jabiri is Managing Director of GBRI Farms (www.eatfresh.co.tz).

I'm a farming entrepreneur focusing on growing and exporting fruit and vegetables from Tanzania to Europe.

Before we started, people in Iringa were farming traditional crops like tomatoes and onions. We started growing sugar snaps, snow peas, French beans and baby corn. We now have two packing plants, in Iringa and Njombe.

In 2018 I was invited by the Irish Embassy in Dar es Salaam to the Irish-Africa Economic Forum in Dublin. It was an eye-opener to see how others co-ordinate their businesses.

I also visited Dawn Farms in Kildare, learning about their methods and networks. My customers are Exotic fruits, Planet Produce, and Fresh for U. We now export to Ireland, the UK, Netherlands and Germany.

I'm committed to making agricultural production as sustainable as possible. We have 35 permanent employees and over 200 temporary workers every week – 80% of them women – not to mention small-scale holder farmers, in rural Mufindi and Kilolo in Iringa.

Tanzania has such good natural resources, and now we're building our knowledge. I want to be a role model for other entrepreneurs, especially women.

William Tate Olenasha



William Tate Olenasha is Deputy Minister for Education, Science and Technology.

I have a very long connection with Ireland. I used to work on pastoralist programmes for civil society organisations, supported by Oxfam Ireland. The Irish were already known for conflict resolution in my constituency, Ngorongoro. I got to know Dr Eamonn Brehony, who helped to resolve a deadly conflict there. He negotiated between the tribes, and with NGOs.

On a visit to Dublin around 10 years ago, I also got to know Irish hospitality. The Celtic Tiger boom had ended but it didn't affect Irish generosity. I remember visiting the Oxfam shops, where so many ordinary Irish people support work in Tanzania.

It is a small country, but they are warm, very kind people, even in the streets.

I particularly remember Kate O'Donnell, then working on Oxfam Ireland's Africa programme,

as very warm and welcoming. A few months back, I got a call from her. She was coming to Tanzania for the Irish Government, she was on a tight schedule, but wanted to catch up. The idea of finding my number, 10 years after meeting, really impressed me.

Of course, I've had interactions with other Irish people in Tanzania, too. Years ago I got to know Paul Sherlock when he was at the Embassy. Now, 12 or 13 years down the line, he is Irish Ambassador, but the very same humble, friendly Paul I would discuss things with. He even tells me to pop into the embassy if I am passing. You just don't get that elsewhere.

Irish people develop bonds and have long memories. This very booklet is evidence of that.

Dr Sizya Lugeye



Dr Sizya Lugeye was Chief Agriculture Advisor to the Irish Embassy from 1996 to 2015.

In 1987 I was working at Sokoine University of Agriculture in Morogoro when an Irish development team came to visit. They wanted to identify institutions for partnership to help Tanzania improve agriculture the same way improvements had been made in Ireland. We discussed developing a university linkage, and things progressed very quickly. The upshot was that I was chosen for a scholarship to study a PhD at UCD in Dublin, one of 10 beneficiaries, beginning the following September.

I found Ireland a very easy, friendly country. I lived in Dundrum and Clonskeagh for three years and was able to walk into UCD. Later I lived at the university campus.

I later joined Irish Aid and helped plan the Tanzania Agriculture Sector Programme with the Permanent Secretaries at the Ministry for Agriculture. We set up programmes improving people's access to agricultural technologies for

increasing food production and together with other donors provided funding.

In 2009, I brought Mizengo Kayanza Pinda, Prime Minister of Tanzania, to Mallow and Carlow to see Teagasc projects. He was impressed by Irish agricultural technologies and methods, especially livestock and how research and extension services were integrated into one institution.

To this day he still remembers Irish dairy cows producing 60 litres of milk, compared to 20 litres in Tanzania. Tanzania was importing milk at the time and the situation has not changed much to date.

Tanzania has since established two sister organisations to Teagasc namely Tanzania Agricultural Research Institute (TARI) for agriculture and Tanzania Livestock Research Institute (TALIRI) for livestock, which has helped increase our food production. We are even beginning to export food.

Annie McEnery



Annie and Mike McEnery run Simbawenni Lodge in Morogoro.

I came to Tanzania in 1981 and met my husband-to-be, Mike, in Shinyanga – I was working in a school as a VSO and he was working with Concern on rural integrated development projects. He had a landrover, and I had a bicycle, but access to a swimming pool in the diamond mine of Mwadui. A match made in heaven! We got married in the UK in 1985, but we both had the Africa bug by then, and we went back there (to Zambia) as soon as we could. We spent 2 years (and had 2 babies) in Zambia, but our hearts were in Tanzania, so we went back there as soon as we could. From 1987 to 1999, we lived in Tanzania, and had three more children born here, two of whom were born while Mike was working with Irish Aid in Kilosa.

We hosted Mary Robinson in Kilosa during her visit in 1994 – we were planning it for months, and had a timetable organised down to the last minute. There was a crew from RTÉ with her making a kind of ‘feel good’ documentary about Tanzania – so much of the media coverage about

Africa at that time was focused on famine and poverty, and Tanzania was doing really well. But after the genocide in Rwanda, Mary Robinson went across the border – she was one of the first foreign leaders to visit in the aftermath – and the documentary ended up focusing on that instead.

What stood out for me at that time was that many of the top Irish diplomats and administrators – up to the President – who visited us while we were in Kilosa were women, causing some consternation, but impeccable manners, among the District administration. It was great for Ireland to have so many women in leadership roles.

Our kids were home schooled for a number of years, but also spent time in Morogoro International School, where they had a fantastic education, but it finished at the end of primary level, so we went back to Ireland in 1999. After 10 years in Ireland for secondary and tertiary education for the kids, Mike and I have come back again to Tanzania, now as investors in this wonderful country.

Sean Cleary



Sean Cleary is a consulting engineer with Noel O'Dwyer and has been working in Tanzania since 2011.

For the past eight years I've been managing our office in Dar es Salaam. I work with one other Irish man and eight others, coordinating water projects in the East Africa region from here. The Tanzanian government selects our projects in terms of priority, obtains funding from multi- and bi-lateral agencies and appoints consultants through international competitive bidding.

At the end of this year, I am making way for a young Tanzanian engineer by the name of Octavian Kululetera. He started as a technician on a large EU-funded road project at Laela-Sumbawanga.

Ciaran Cleere, an Irish colleague down there, spotted his potential and offered him a job with us as office administrator. We paid for him to do an additional degree in business administration.

He's a great guy, very conscientious, which is what I find with most of my Tanzanian colleagues. We also have a large water project for Dar es Salaam about to start, which will absorb

all my time, so Octavian will take-over as the manager of the office.

Clean running water has a fantastic effect on communities. Two years ago, we finished a big water project in Morogoro, servicing 400,000 people. Seeing the effect on people's lives is the most satisfying part of my job. I was project co-ordinator for that water project, and one of our assistant engineers was Selemani Waziri. He took a job on a mining project since then, but he's coming back now as senior site engineer on the DAWASA water project.

The Irish engineers we employ come with 20 years' international experience, including 10 years in Africa, Caribbean or Pacific. It's satisfying to pass on what we know.



President Mary McAleese and President Jakaya Kikwete, Dar es Salaam, June 2006.
Photo courtesy of Áras an Uachtaráin (Maxwell Photography).

With thanks to everyone who took the time to share their stories and photos with us and to our writer, Darragh Murphy.



An Roinn Gnóthaí
Eachtracha agus Trádála
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