

# Lámha Suas

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After years of volunteering in Uganda, my colleague Deborah Sheeran decided to set up her own charity, Lámha Suas. This charity specifically aims at helping girls to stay in school in rural parts of the country. This year I decided to take the plunge and join her as a volunteer.

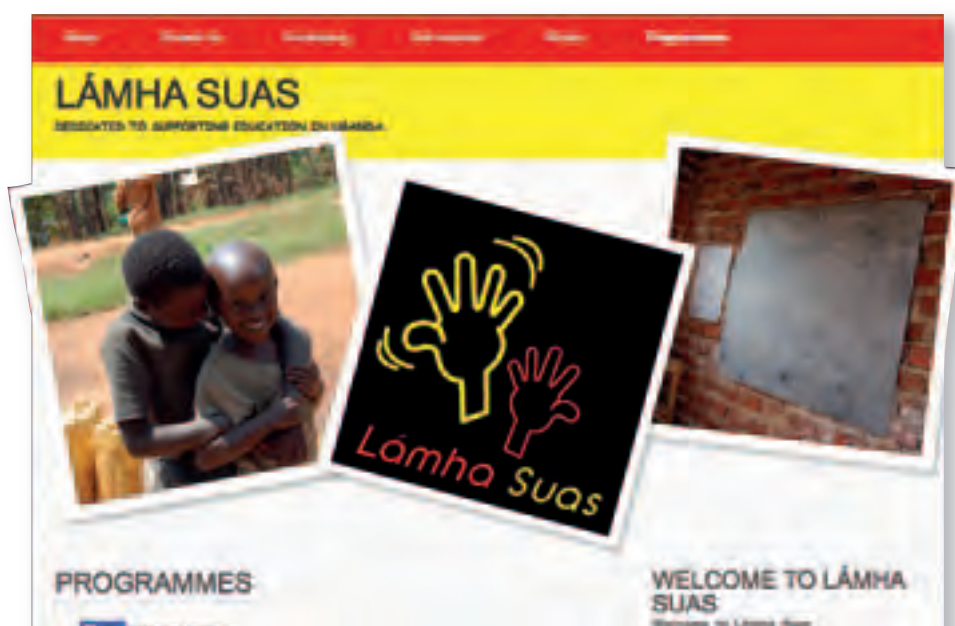
Arriving in Kampala was a bit of a culture shock. The roads and buildings were dusty, traffic was crazy and living conditions were tough. We got around by motorbike, a scary experience in itself! From there we set off to the rural village of Madudu where we would be teaching.

We received an overwhelming welcome. The 600 pupils of Madudu CU primary school sang, danced, cheered and celebrated as we arrived. Everywhere you went, people waved and smiled at you. They were truly grateful for the work that was being done in their community.

I spent my time between Madudu CU and St Andrew's Secondary School. In Madudu CU I taught English, PE and art. The harsh realities of teaching in Uganda became evident on our first day. The infant teacher explained that the class of 60 children had to take turns to write as there were not enough pencils for everyone. In St Andrew's, I worked with the school choir and we staged a short show at the end of the placement. In both schools the children were friendly, enthusiastic and great to work with. Our Ugandan teaching colleagues became our friends.

As well as teaching in the schools, we visited local clinics and charities, and a deaf school. We held workshops with the Ugandan teachers, sharing ideas for teaching different areas of the curriculum.

One of the most touching moments of



*A welcome dance at Madudu CU*

the trip was walking home with the children after school. Some live up to an hour's walk away, and travel on an empty stomach. The houses are made from mud and are very humble, with one or two rooms to house the large families and had little or no furniture.

Some of Lámha Suas' achievements in Madudu CU to date include: a new staffroom, toilets, water tanks, and a kitchen which supplies children with a meal each day. They also employ an extra teacher so that 130 infants can be divided into two classes of 65.

Lámha Suas also offers a scholarship programme to a teacher training college for two girls every year. This was aided by the INTO Solidarity Fund this year.

When we visited the girls at college, they were highly appreciative, and gave us artwork they had made as a gift. This now



*Kathryn outside Madudu CU primary school*

hangs proudly in my classroom. It was rewarding to see exactly where the money raised was going. I would like to thank the INTO for supporting this cause.

Though it did present challenges, my time in Uganda was very enjoyable and I have great memories of my time there. I would highly recommend it to anyone considering volunteering abroad.

Find out more about Lámha Suas at [www.lamhasuas.ie](http://www.lamhasuas.ie)

**KATHRYN GIBBONS** teaches in St Brigid's BNS, Killester, Dublin 5.

**If you wish to apply to the INTO Solidarity Fund please contact Georgina Glackin, INTO, at 01 8047745 or [gglackin@into.ie](mailto:gglackin@into.ie)**