



Friday 24 March

Celebrities buckle up for the ride of their lives on the Red Nose Convoy

- Journey will see celebrity team pitted against some of the hardest driving conditions in the world as they lead a convoy of vital supplies
- With just six days to deliver crucial supplies, travelling hundreds and hundreds of miles across East Africa – what could possibly go wrong?
- Public can follow Convoy live across social media and on BBC Breakfast and The One Show – and see how Comic Relief cash is changing lives as it happens
- Look out for a BBC documentary in the lead-up to Red Nose Day, back on 24th March

Monday 6th February

The Red Nose Convoy hits the road today, as six famous faces set-out on “the mother of all road trips” across East Africa to deliver essential supplies that will help Comic Relief funded projects to continue to deliver life-saving health work.

Hugh Dennis, David Baddiel, Reggie Yates, Michaela Coel, Russell Kane and Katy Brand are leading a convoy from Kenya to Uganda, taking on hellish roads and challenging terrain as they show Comic Relief’s supporters how the money they have raised is helping to transform lives. Travelling hundreds, and hundreds of miles, and with just six days to complete the task – how will they cope and what could possibly go wrong?

Travelling in pairs, the celebrities will be acting as vital outriders – guiding the convoy as it makes its way along one of the most challenging roads in Africa to ensure the vital supplies reach their destinations. Along the way they will be faced with unbelievably tough driving conditions, including elephant size potholes, sheer escarpments and horrendous traffic, not to mention inquisitive baboons and other local wildlife. Throughout the course of the trip, supporters at home will be able to join the ride via the @RedNoseDay Twitter handle to see if the celebrity team has what it takes to deliver the life changing cargo.

Swapping their home comforts for the tough realities of life on the road, the famous six will be well and truly in the driving seat as they take it in turns behind the wheel. Despite the pressure there will

no doubt laughs along the way as well. David Baddiel and Hugh Dennis go back a long way, but if anything can test a relationship it's an upside down map and punishing driving terrain.

There could be some bumps along the way for comedians Katy Brand and Russell Kane too as they adapt to spending so much time as a twosome. Katy says, "I'm going to create a code for social media so if I need help someone can come and get me out!"

Also travelling together are documentary maker Reggie Yates and comedy writer and actress Michaela Coel who will push their driving skills to the limits as the Red Nose Convoy takes on the serious task in hand.

Every day of the year, Comic Relief cash is hard at work changing lives across Africa and right here in the UK. For the first time ever, the Red Nose Convoy will take the public on a live journey showing how their money is converted into crucial supplies and used to fund projects transforming lives of people living in some of the poorest communities in the world.

During their journey, the team will learn about HIV prevention, treatment and care - as well as the nurturing of children who've lost their parents to AIDS. They'll see how, with the right tools, skills and knowledge, life-threatening malaria can be prevented, diagnosed and treated. They'll also see how important it is for pregnant women to receive the pre and post-natal care they need to give birth to healthy babies without putting their own lives at risk.

You can follow the Red Nose Convoy live at rednoseday.com/convoy and on the Red Nose Day social media channels. Tune into BBC Breakfast and The One Show next week for live interviews with the celebrities on the road. The film of this tough, eye-opening challenge will be shown in the lead up to Red Nose Day which is back on 24th March 2017

Follow the Red Nose Convoy on Twitter @RedNoseDay and @ComicReliefNews, on Facebook at Comic Relief: Red Nose Day and Instagram @rednoseday

- Ends -

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT

Comic Relief Media Centre

02078202500

media@comicrelief.com

www.comicrelief.com/media-centre

Out of hours 07984 510 473

Notes to editors

About Red Nose Day

- Red Nose Day is back on Friday 24th March and it's all about your power to make the world a better place, simply by having a great time.
- By raising (or donating) cash this Red Nose Day, you're helping to change lives. That's because Comic Relief spends the money raised to help the people who really need it most, both here in the UK and across Africa.
- From workplace bake sales and fancy-dress fundraising in schools, to danceathons, quizzes and surreal sponsored challenges, put on a Red Nose and make your laugh matter by doing whatever you enjoy to raise life-changing cash.
- It all culminates in a massive night of comedy and entertainment, live on the BBC.

About Comic Relief

Comic Relief is a UK charity which aims to create a just world, free from poverty - where everyone is safe, healthy, educated and empowered. Since 1985, Comic Relief has raised over £1 billion. That money has helped, and is helping, people living incredibly tough lives, both at home in the UK and across the world.

For information about Comic Relief and the work it carries out, please visit www.comicrelief.com

Comic Relief, registered charity 326568 (England/Wales); SC039730 (Scotland)

 For the latest news, statements and exclusive content direct from the Comic Relief Press Office follow [@ComicReliefNews](https://twitter.com/ComicReliefNews)

About the Red Nose Convoy

The Red Nose Convoy will travel from Nairobi, Kenya, to Tororo District, Uganda and will visit the following Comic Relief funded projects:

AMREF – Nairobi – Kenya

AMREF Health Africa is hard at work in two of Kenya's biggest slums - vast urban areas that are over spilling with people struggling to get by in tiny shacks, without any decent sanitation or suitable healthcare. This puts pregnant women and their babies at serious risk. In fact, babies born in these slums are 10 times more likely to die in their first month of life than a baby born in the UK.

Comic Relief is helping AMREF to provide extensive training for hundreds of community health workers so that they can provide better care for pregnant women, newborn babies and people living with HIV within these two slums. After just one year of funding, 1,454 more pregnant women were attending all four of their antenatal care appointments than before the project began. But there is still work to be done which is why the celebrity team will take essential kit to AMREF, such as delivery kits, theatre operating tables and baby scanning and monitoring machines. These supplies will help

trained health workers do their vital job and means the health facilities used by pregnant women will be better equipped for safer childbirth and giving their babies the best chance of a safe, healthy start in life.

mothers2mothers – Kisumu – Kenya

Every day in sub-Saharan Africa, nearly 600 children contract HIV from their mothers. Effective drugs are available that can prevent mothers with HIV from passing the virus on to their babies, yet many women living with HIV don't get this vital medication due to the stigma surrounding the virus. Many also don't know that they can transmit the virus to their child and they can't afford to travel the long distances to access the health care they need.

That's why Comic Relief supports mothers2mothers - an inspiring project that trains, employs and empowers local mothers who are living with HIV to reach pregnant women who are also diagnosed with the virus. Called 'Mentor Mothers' these women provide essential information and support to mums-to-be so that they can protect their babies from contracting HIV and keep themselves healthy too. The Mentor Mothers form a unique and trusted bond with the women they support as they understand the social and cultural challenges they face. As a result, more mums are staying healthy and fewer babies are contracting HIV.

After two years of support from Comic Relief, more than 11,000 women in a province called Nyanza had benefitted from maternal or HIV related services with support from mothers2mothers and 40 Mentor Mothers had received training to carry out their vital role.

Whilst on the road, the celebrity team will meet an inspiring Mentor Mother and join her as she makes her rounds, providing life-changing support to other mothers and mothers-to-be.

Malaria Consortium Tororo – Uganda

Malaria is the leading cause of death in Uganda and, until recently, the region of Tororo had one of the highest rates of infection in the country. That's why in 2013, Comic Relief awarded a grant to the Malaria Consortium. This grant ensured insecticide treated nets were distributed to pregnant women and children in the area so that they could sleep safely at night without getting bitten by malaria-carrying mosquitos. In addition, local communities were taught how to best prevent, detect and treat malaria infection, parents were taught the importance of seeing a health worker when they or their children had a fever and health workers were trained to accurately diagnose malaria and treat fevers.

This meant that, by the end of the project, 94% of children in the area were sleeping under their mosquito net at night and the percentage of children who had a fever and sought malaria treatment within 24 hours increased from 40% to 87%, saving many lives.

The progress made in the fight against malaria in Tororo is something to be proud of, but there is still work to be done. So, as part of their road trip, the celebrity team will take 8,000 mosquito nets to the Malaria Consortium so that many more people will be protected from contracting this deadly disease.

Kadama Widows Association – Uganda

The number of people living with HIV in Uganda has been rising since 2006. Despite effective methods for preventing people contracting the virus, and better drugs to manage the condition, sadly the stigma surrounding the illness prevents many people from getting the care and information they need.

People living with HIV in remote areas, far from health services, are often doubly disadvantaged. But home visits, from trained community health workers, can bring vital services to these marginalised groups, helping them to access care, treatment and support.

Kadama Widows Association works across four districts in Uganda, helping local health centres reach more people within the community. They carry out training in HIV awareness and prevention and, in just one year, they established 15 HIV groups with a total membership of 487 people who can come together for advice and crucial support.

Additionally, they've helped people who are living with HIV to start small businesses so that they can earn a living and support themselves - meaning they can buy wholesome, nutritious food which in turn helps them to stay well.

Now the road trip team will deliver 100 bikes and spare part kits to help trained community health workers reach vulnerable people in remote areas to give them essential HIV care and support.