



## **PRESS RELEASE**

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### **TRANSAID AND E4D LAUNCH EMERGENCY PROJECT TO PROTECT HGV DRIVERS FROM COVID-19 IN UGANDA**

Transaid, with support from the Employment and Skills for Development in Africa (E4D) Programme, have launched an urgent response to support heavy goods vehicle (HGV) drivers in Uganda, as the continent reacts to the growing COVID-19 pandemic.

The international development organisation is working with local partners to roll-out driver-specific COVID-19 safety advice and provide hand-washing facilities, cab sanitisation materials and personal protective equipment (PPE) to keep drivers safe, reduce transmission rates and build community confidence in the safety of the logistics sector.

Caroline Barber, CEO of Transaid, says: “Road transport is vital for delivering food, medicines and essential goods; but the race to control the outbreak in Africa means truck drivers are facing increased scrutiny whilst enduring evermore challenging and unpredictable hazards to keep supply chains running.

“Truck drivers entering the country are perceived by some to be facilitating the spread of the virus, and have faced hostility from communities and long delays at borders, often with no access to sanitation facilities. Securing this funding means we can start work immediately to improve the preparedness of drivers to meet national guidelines on the use of PPE, cab sanitisation and social distancing.”

To support its efforts, Transaid is developing driver-specific factsheets as well as short information videos to be sent to drivers’ phones to raise awareness and reduce the risk of exposure. Road safety messaging has been integrated into these materials to warn how changing conditions – such as how fewer vehicles on the roads and reduced access to facilities en route could lead to increased speeds and fewer rest stops – may affect driving

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behaviours and the risk of road crashes, at a time when health systems are already overburdened.

To counter the closure of businesses along transport corridors making it difficult for drivers to access running water to wash their hands, Transaid is procuring soap and disinfectants for regular hand-washing and cab sanitisation, as well as locally made, washable and reusable face masks.

Transaid's in-country partner Safe Way Right Way is also supporting transport associations at driver rest stops and border posts, to help keep drivers informed on the latest national guidelines. With official advice being updated regularly, it has been difficult for employers to communicate with drivers who may be on the road for days or weeks at a time without returning to base.

E4D is a regional employment initiative funded by the German, Norwegian, and until recently the British government, and implemented by GIZ. Julia Mager, E4D Team Leader in Uganda at GIZ says: "We've been working with Transaid and Safe Way Right Way for the last three years to build HGV driver training capacity in Uganda. Both organisations are well placed to deliver this critical work."

Barber adds: "We put forward a proposal which could be implemented at speed, and GIZ has worked very quickly to make the funding available. This is a fast-moving situation and we want to ensure that drivers have access to these materials without delay.

"Road transport is a sector Transaid has huge experience in, and we're aiming to reach a minimum of 10,000 drivers in Uganda as part of our initial work. Everything we are doing is replicable in other sub-Saharan countries too, and we're actively looking for additional funding to ensure we can extend our support and increase the number of truck drivers we can reach."

For more information and to find out how you can support the organisation visit [www.transaid.org](http://www.transaid.org).

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**Note to Editor:**

Transaid transforms lives through safe, available, and sustainable transport. Founded by Save the Children, The Chartered Institute of Logistics and Transport (CILT), and its Patron, HRH The Princess Royal, the international development organisation shares 25 years' worth of expertise in 23 countries with partners and governments – empowering people to build the skills they need to transform their own lives.

Transaid's core work includes creating transport management systems for the public sector and assisting with the provision of professional driving qualification development and the training of driver trainers. It also assists with teaching preventive vehicle maintenance management and introducing local, low cost transport solutions including its innovative bicycle ambulance. Transaid also helps promote road safety awareness and shares its specialist knowledge with the humanitarian aid sector.

Transaid enjoys strong backing from the transport and logistics industry and the active involvement of its patron, HRH The Princess Royal.



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