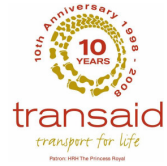


# PRESS RELEASE



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## ROYAL MAIL PROVIDES FIRST CLASS EXPERTISE IN KENYA

Royal Mail Vehicle Services Managers Mick Whelan and Mike Kington have returned after two weeks in Kenya's Coast and North East Provinces working on a Transaid project to develop a Transport Management System for the Ministry of Health.

Mick, from Sharnford in Leicestershire, and Mike, from Bristol, were asked to evaluate the Ministry's vehicle maintenance systems and procedures and make recommendations on improving their quality and performance.

The Danish government's aid agency, DANIDA, is funding new health vehicles and wants to ensure that both the new and existing Ministry vehicles enjoy a long and productive working life.

However, the Ministry currently has no maintenance strategy or policy and repairs are often undertaken by 'Jua Kali' – roadside technicians who have had no formal training. As a result, repairs are made slowly, expensively or not at all, and some of the vehicles on the road are inefficient and dangerous.

One of the options that Mick and Mike explored was forming partnerships with Polytechnics to provide scheduled maintenance.

"We visited one Polytechnic which was a thriving business that employed four mechanics and was used as a training facility for students. It was very capable of providing a quality and cheaper service," says Mick.

"In the long term, we recommend that Polytechnics are used for all Ministry of Health work in both provinces. In the short term, we propose that the lecturers inspect all work undertaken by the Jua Kali. We saw one Ministry 4x4 that had been involved in an accident, killing the driver and injuring all six passengers. It was so badly damaged that it should have been a write-off, but the Jua Kali had persuaded the Chief Health Advisor it could be repaired."

Other problems the pair saw included a vehicle that had spent two years undergoing repair and a tyre worn to the core on an operational ambulance.

Mick and Mike's recommendations also include a centrally managed maintenance plan, purchasing policy and replacement plan, the creation of a Fleet Engineer role and fixed prices for scheduled maintenance.

Chris Saunders, Transaid's CEO comments: "When aid money is spent on vehicles for public services like more/

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## Royal Mail provides first class expertise in Kenya / page 2

healthcare, it is wrong to assume that the systems and skills will already be there to manage them. DANIDA

has recognised that, if these are lacking, the chances are that the vehicles will spend only a fraction of their potential lifespan delivering the services that they are meant to. Mick and Mike's recommendations will help to keep them on the road."

Martin Blake, Head of Social Policy, Royal Mail Group plc adds: "We are delighted to be involved in this project as it has enabled us to share best practice with a developing country. With the largest vehicle fleet in the UK we are regularly called upon for benchmarking purposes but this project in Kenya also provided a unique awareness raising opportunity for two of our vehicle Services Managers which has been invaluable to their personal development.

"As a company, our Corporate Social Responsibility ethos is built around the principle of 'win win' as this helps to ensure long term sustainability for both our business and the communities and projects we are involved in. We are very pleased with the outcome of the project and the recommendations that our managers were able to provide," he concludes.

Transaid's contribution is part of the Kenyan national strategy to improve the health of people in Kenya by making services more effective, accessible and affordable.

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**Note to Editor:** Transaid ([www.transaid.org](http://www.transaid.org)) is an international development agency that aims to improve people's quality of life in the developing world by making transport more available and affordable. It was founded by Save The Children and the Chartered Institute of Logistics and Transport (UK) and works by sharing skills and knowledge with local people to enable them to put in place and manage efficient transport systems.

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 HIV, AIDS and 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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