

PRESS RELEASE



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CYCLE TANZANIA: THE RACE IS ON

This November, the great and good of the transport industry will abandon the swish interior of their company cars for a hard saddle and a set of pedals, as they set off to cycle 420 km of Indian Ocean coastline.

And it's not just the appeal of a personal challenge that has drawn these high-flyers together either.

They will be supporting international development charity Transaid in its sponsored event, Cycle Tanzania, which will raise funds to save and improve lives in Africa and the developing world.

This nine-day expedition – across the dusty terrain of game and nature reserves under the unforgiving African sun – will help Transaid facilitate access to healthcare, education and work for thousands, by providing them with safer, cheaper and more efficient transport.

The initiative, which runs from November 6th-14th, has attracted teams and individuals from all areas of the transport industry – and more than half of the available places have already been snapped up.

Chris Saunders, CEO of Transaid, says he has high hopes of raising even more with November's expedition than last year's Cycle Zambia, which generated over £100,000.

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137 Euston Road London NW1 2AA
United Kingdom

T: +44 (0) 20 7387 8136
F: +44 (0) 20 7387 2669
E: info@transaid.org
W: www.transaid.org

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“Our list of participants includes names from Michelin, DHL, CILT and FTA,” he said. “This truly is the UK transport industry coming together to do something for people whose lives need improving.”

Many registered participants have already started training in preparation for the five days’ solid cycling that will take them on their journey from Dar es Salaam to Morogoro.

Michelin’s team of four, headed by Truck Sales Account Manager Stefanie Machnik, has lined up a series of UK-based events to raise extra funds – and fitness levels – in advance of the final slog.

“I’m sure we’ve got our work cut out for us,” said Ms Machnik. “Cycle Tanzania is not going to be any old Sunday afternoon bike ride.

“We’ve brainstormed for ideas to get us in shape prior to the event, and add as much as possible to the amount we raise.”

Funds raised will help Transaid establish a Professional Driver Training project in Tanzania, following the success of the charity’s first project to reduce road deaths in Zambia. Road deaths are currently the third highest cause of premature death in Africa after HIV Aids and Malaria, a problem Transaid is addressing by raising driver training standards and safety on the roads.

“Coming face-to-face with the issues we’ll be helping Transaid tackle is bound to be a real eye-opener,” she said, “but I’m looking forward to the experience itself, as well as engaging in Transaid’s work.

“We’ll be passing wild beasts, mountains and waterfalls,” she added, “and seeing it all from our bikes too – not from inside some air-conditioned 4x4. We’ll come back having seen the real Africa – and achieved something good for the world through our efforts.”

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CEO Chris Saunders added: "With less than half of the available places left, we'd urge anyone keen on participating to get in touch soon, to avoid disappointment."

Participants are asked to pay a registration fee of £299, and make a commitment to raising a minimum sponsorship of £3,000. Registration packs are available to download at www.transaid.org. Alternatively, call 020 7387 8136 to request an information pack, or email april@transaid.org.

Transaid will run a sister expedition, Trek Ethiopia, in February 2011. See Transaid's website for details.

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Note to Editor:

Transaid (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.

For further press information:

Chantelle Cummings at Transaid	+44 (0)20 7387 8136
James Keeler at Garnett Keeler	+44 (0)20 8647 4467

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