

PRESS RELEASE



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PRINCESS ROYAL JOINS INDUSTRY LEADERS FOR TRANSAID SHOWCASE

Her Royal Highness The Princess Royal joined key figures from across the transport and logistics industry in Canary Wharf yesterday (29 September) to celebrate the achievements of transport charity Transaid's life-saving work in Northern Nigeria.

At the event, hosted by Barclays Corporate, the charity's royal Patron commended Transaid's work to improve child and maternal health by enhancing transport access across four northern Nigerian states.

Guests heard how Transaid is working to improve healthcare through several transport management projects including ambulance driver training and the Emergency Transport Scheme (ETS) which encourages local taxi drivers to transport pregnant women from their village to the nearest health facility for free so they can access vital health care.

Drivers are also trained in specific techniques to help move women in danger during labour. To date more than 160 drivers have been trained from 20 different communities and 400 more have been made aware of the scheme, significantly improving the potential for timely transfer of maternal and newborn emergency cases to healthcare facilities.

Addressing the 70-strong audience, The Princess Royal praised the commitment of staff, volunteers and the transport and logistics industry.

The Princess Royal, who inspired the formation of the charity 12 years ago, said that Transaid's record of achievements is "not just commendable, it is downright astonishing" and expressed her belief that continued success will require a combination of public and private sector understanding.

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Transaid's work in Nigeria has been largely focused around addressing the country's annual maternal mortality rate of 50,000, with 1,100 women dying in childbirth per 100,000 live births*. The charity is working with a variety of national and local organisations in the country including the Society for Family Health and the National Union of Road and Transport Workers.

"It is tragic how many women die as a consequence of inadequate transport facilities," said Transaid Chief Executive Chris Saunders. "We hear horrific tales of women in labour being forced to walk miles in search of help.

"The project's launch has been very successful and 179 women have already benefited. Success stories include one emergency transport driver donating blood to save his passenger's life. Stories like this which transcend Transaid's own original goals highlight exactly what charity is really about – going that extra mile to save lives."

The occasion also marked a handover from John Harvey CBE to Wincanton Chief Executive Graeme McFaull, who takes over as Chairman of the Transaid Board of Trustees. Harvey, who has been in the role for ten years, will continue to serve as a board member.

Saunders said: "I'd like to extend my heartfelt thanks to John for his tremendous support and commitment to Transaid over the last decade. My team and I extend a warm welcome to Graeme and look forward to working closely together to define the next important steps ahead for the charity."

* Figures from the World Health Organisation and UNICEF

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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.

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