

# PRESS RELEASE



Release date: 24/02/2011

## HRH THE PRINCESS ROYAL MARKS CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S RETIREMENT

After seven years as Transaid's Chief Executive, Chris Saunders OBE was this week presented with a gift to mark his retirement by the charity's patron HRH The Princess Royal.

The presentation, of a commemorative truck typical of those seen on the road across Africa, followed the official opening of a new warehouse in Tamworth, Staffordshire, by Norbert Dentressangle - a strong supporter of the international development charity.

Saunders, who will step down at the end of March, said: "It has been a privilege to work with such a fine team of people and I am honoured to be presented with a gift from our patron.

"Transaid is a small organisation with massive potential. It demonstrates how important effective well-managed transport is to improving the health and livelihoods of people living in very poor communities in the developing world. I will be handing it over with absolute confidence that there could not be a better team in place to take on and succeed with this challenge."

Since Saunders joined Transaid in December 2003 the team's list of programmes has expanded from one single scheme to seven projects in five different countries. Further growth is predicted over the next year.

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Saunders will be succeeded by Gary Forster, Transaid's current Head of Programmes, who joined Transaid in 2006 as a volunteer after working as a logistician for Procter & Gamble. He spent two years in Southern Africa helping to establish a network of partners and building the foundation for the Professional Driver Training Project before moving to West Africa where he secured Transaid's input into three large-scale projects focusing on maternal health, immunization and malaria.

Forster returned to the UK in early 2010 to focus on developing Transaid's project portfolio, networking with donors and putting teams in place.

He said: "Chris has provided excellent leadership for the team. His resolve has steered Transaid through tough times while his conviction has kept us focused on success.

"In 2010 Transaid delivered more projects, with greater impact, in more countries than ever before. This was only possible because of the work undertaken by Chris to establish Transaid as a strong and capable organisation."

He added: "As well as being a visionary leader, Chris has been a good friend to everyone here."

**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 road safety awareness and shares its

specialist knowledge with the industry and the active involvement of its Patron, HRH The Princess Royal.

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