



transaid

CASE STUDY:

John Tembo

HGV Driver & Communicable Diseases training recipient - Zambia

John

In September 2020, Transaid secured seed funding to help protect health supply chains and mobile workers in Zambia from the increased risk of exposure to COVID-19. This programme was a recipient of funding from the Grand Challenge for Last Mile Health Supply Chain COVID-19 Support, an initiative of People that Deliver and funded by the FIA Foundation to support projects in sub-Saharan Africa that seek solutions to critical health commodity transportation, and logistics challenges brought on by COVID-19.

The project focused on increasing COVID-19 awareness and preparedness among the health supply chain workforce, in order to increase capacity and build lasting resilience against the shock of future pandemics.

Transaid partnered with the Industrial Training Centre (ITC) in Zambia and worked in collaboration with the Ministry of Health to develop targeted fact sheets and deliver training to essential key workers involved in the warehousing, handling and onwards distribution of medicines and medical equipment across Zambia.

Meet John, an HGV Driver at Medical Stores Limited (MSL) and a Communicable Diseases training recipient in Zambia (focused on COVID-19).

Medical Stores Limited (MSL), is an autonomous government agency responsible for ensuring the continuous distribution of pharmaceutical products throughout Zambia.

The country recorded its first confirmed case of COVID-19 in March 2020. Since then, the transport and logistics sector has been under increasing pressure to maintain supply chains, and ensure the continued distribution of essential goods and medicines across the nation.

Supply chain professionals, including drivers, continue to endure challenging working conditions whilst making deliveries as well as possible increased road safety risks, whilst increased demand at central medical stores for emergency orders means protecting key workers from the virus at all levels is more important than ever.

John is one of MSL's longest-serving employees, joining in 1988. Originally employed as a stores manager, he later moved into the company's transportation department. John received HGV driver training at the ITC in 2004 which was sponsored by MSL, and he possesses a licence to drive an articulated truck.

John's work as an HGV driver has seen him travel to every province in Zambia. His cargo mainly includes essential medicines and hospital equipment.

"It's exciting work. You don't know where you will be travelling to next. I will arrive on Monday, and be told where I will be going. It can be anywhere in Zambia."

Upon arrival, the provincial team will cross check the delivery against the delivery note. He then helps to unload the truck.

"Everything is precise. The hub team will check what I am carrying before unloading it into their store. It is important that the delivery is accurate."

"We are now including supplies to fight COVID-19, such as sanitiser and PPE, like face masks. These items are very important, because if we use them correctly, they will protect our important health workers from COVID-19."

John is one of more than 100 supply chain professionals that have received training from the ITC. In addition to the training, all participants received a package of essential PPE, including a face mask, a bottle of hand sanitiser and a COVID-19 fact sheet.

"The training I received from the ITC is very important. It was so informative and it will help me protect myself. We are encouraged all the time to wear masks and wash hands, but this training went much deeper. We were told why we should wear those masks, and why we should wash our hands. For us to understand, it is important that we hear the reason behind the matter."

"This knowledge will not stop with me. I will take it home to my family. I will educate my children and encourage them to tell others. Even my daughter who is still in school. I will tell her to teach her friends at school."

John is very proud to be an essential worker.

"I am a driver, but people see me as a health worker. We feel for the citizens of Zambia. Our work is saving lives."

John Tembo

