



transaid



## Case study: Ruth Nakalema

### Professional Driver Training Uganda Project Phase Two (PDTU-2)

*The Professional Driver Training Uganda Project Phase Two, which is part of the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) Employment and Skills for Development in Africa (E4D) programme, aims to upskill drivers to take advantage of employment opportunities, while equipping them with the knowledge to be safer on Uganda's roads. It was implemented jointly by Transaid and Safe Way Right Way (SWRW) on behalf of GIZ E4D.*

*With the support of industry partners, Transaid has built the capacity of Master Trainers and Trainers in Uganda, in turn enabling them to train drivers to a level in accordance with the East African Community Standardised Curriculum for drivers of large commercial vehicles.*

Ruth is one of **over 80 female drivers** that trained as part of the PDTU-2 project. Her favourite thing about driving is the freedom that comes with it: "When I am on the road, I get to see new things and meet different people, instead of being confined to an office."

Ruth was first informally taught to drive a manual car by a friend in 2017, she notes that such informal teaching can lead to problems

when you are trained using incorrect techniques, "I used to drive for Uber, but I didn't know how to drive properly." Following advice from a friend, Ruth enquired about training at SWRW in 2020.

**"When I first arrived at SWRW, I did not know how to defend myself on the road. Through the training I learnt when to overtake safely, the meanings of the signs on the road, how to give space to other motorists, the importance of following the correct speed, and how to drive defensively. I was so happy to learn how to drive a heavy goods vehicle (HGV) as this is my true passion, it is nothing like driving a small car."**

Following the completion of her training, Ruth was in search of a career in which she could drive HGVs for a living. However, she landed a job driving minivans for a company called Schlumberger.

**"They noticed my potential quickly. I became the Lead Driver, and on top of that I was made a Coordinator. I am now in training to be a Journey Management Coordinator, so I am really happy about this job."**

In her role, Ruth is responsible for planning journeys and dispatching and tracking cars.

Ruth attributes her new career to SWRW, describing the training as a “ten out of ten.” She explains that the company for which she works actively prioritises drivers that have been trained by SWRW due to its reputation.

**“I am so proud to have trained at SWRW with Transaid, it truly changed my attitude towards driving. I feel like I am a Professor. My friends and family are wowed by my profession. They often say things like ‘you are small, how can you be driving a trailer?’ and I respond, ‘I am a small body, but a big engine.’”**

Ruth explains that motorists in Uganda face many challenges on the road: **“You must be very alert on the road to avoid a crash. The training provided by SWRW equips drivers with the knowledge of essential defensive driving techniques to reduce the risk of crashing.”**

For Ruth, a career in professional driver training has opened up a multitude of opportunities: “More women are entering this industry because of the sensitisation, the advertising, and the subsidised training.”

Ruth believes that female drivers often drive more safely and cautiously, and as a result both companies and passengers have more trust in them.

Ruth said: “We must keep training more young ladies. They have the passion. Many of us here did not go into higher education, but if someone is equipped with a skill, it can help them to evolve and gain employment.

**“This training has changed my life; it changes so many lives.”**

