

Enhancing heavy goods vehicles driver training provision in Ghana

Project location	Ghana
Project start date	February 2021
Project duration	42 months

Introduction

The World Health Organisation's Global Status Report on Road Safety (2023) estimated that more than 8,000 people lost their lives on Ghana's roads in 2021. When combined with those who suffer serious injury and/or disability from road traffic crashes, this represents a significant burden on an already stretched public health system, and a loss which threatens to detract from Ghana's long-term growth and prosperity.

The Ghana Infrastructure Plan (2017) recognises transport as a key economic driver, and prioritises projects that seek to enhance the built environment in order to improve the movement of people and goods. Most notable among new developments is the Tema port expansion, which when completed in September 2025, is expected to quadruple its original cargo handling capacity.

Amid concerns about the increase of heavy good traffic on Ghana's road, in 2019 Transaid together with Amend, a non-governmental organisation with expertise in road safety issues, were commissioned by APM terminals to undertake a study which examined the current status of HGV driver training in Ghana. The study's key findings identified a misalignment between industry standards and those mandated by the Ghanaian government, with the former being higher. As a result, some larger transporters communicated difficulties recruiting appropriately skilled Ghanaian drivers, which in some cases lead to the recruitment of drivers from outside Ghana.

The study brought to light a desire to develop and introduce an improved HGV driver training standard, build institutional training capacity accordingly, and support the Ghanaian government to adopt the standard at a national level.

In December 2020, Transaid secured multi-year funding from Puma Energy Foundation to deliver a project to enhance HGV driver training standards in Ghana which commenced in February 2021.

Methodology:

The project was delivered through three overlapping main activities:

Development of a new HGV driver training standard (curriculum and instructor's manual)

The project commenced with mapping training schools in Ghana and gathering existing training materials being used for heavy goods vehicles. Training providers and private sector transporters were approached for contributions prior to a review of the materials gathered. The aim was to identify any themes and priorities present in the existing content, and to ensure that any new materials developed were contextually appropriate and aligned with the language and tone of those already in use.

Supported by the Driver Vehicle and Licensing Authority (DVLA) in Ghana, a review of the relevant acts, codes and legislative instruments connected with the provision of HGV driver training was also completed. The project team were then able to develop a first draft of the new standard, which was then presented for input at a technical steering group comprising more than 30 stakeholders from across the public, private and civil society sectors. All 14 theory and five practical training modules proposed were accepted, and the first working version of Ghana's new standard entered circulation in October 2021.

Two further scheduled reviews of the standard were completed in 2022 and 2023. Both occurred midway through the project's training activities, allowing for a continuous appraisal of the standard in a real-world setting. Each time only small revisions were made. The review team included driver trainers who having undergone training in accordance with the standard, were uniquely familiar with its content.

With the project's training activities nearing completion, the standard was once more presented to the technical steering group, after which the DVLA informed the Ministry of Transport that the new standard was ready for national adoption.

Training of Trainers (ToT)

The first version of the standard endorsed by the DVLA in October 2021 was used to commence the project's training activities, starting with the ToT training. Guided by selection criteria agreed with the DVLA, 19 HGV driver trainers from 11 training institutions were invited to participate in the training which sought to build local training capacity in accordance with the new standard.

Theory training develops a trainer's pedagogical skills enabling them to lead trainees through a structured competence-based curriculum. Each trainer is assigned a module from the curriculum and tasked with developing and delivering a lesson to their peers. Trainers rotate between teacher and student, and give feedback from both vantages.

The classroom-based training lasted four weeks and was delivered by trainers from Safe Way Right Way (SWRW), a driver training school based in Uganda and long-time partner of Transaid. On completion of the theory training, 12 trainers holding the highest vehicle category license continued to the practical ToT training.

A further two refresher trainings, each comprising a theory and practical session were delivered over the lifetime of the project. Each time SWRW's trainers were guided by pre- and post-training assessments to identify areas which needed improvement to ensure that training continued to be delivered to the standard expected.

During the launch of the new HGV driver training standard, the DVLA recognised the project's training cohort as the first trainers in Ghana able to deliver training in accordance with the new training standard.

Training of Master Trainers (ToMT)

Of the 12 trainers who completed the ToT training in full, four of the best performing participants were selected and advanced with additional training to the level of master

trainer, thereby allowing them to train other trainers enabling the sector to grow with demand.

Master trainers learn advanced pedagogical skills and instructional techniques. These include the ability to conduct assessments in order to tailor lesson plans and learning outcomes to suit a trainee's need both in the classroom and the truck.

The initial ToMT training and the subsequent refresher training were delivered by industry experts based in the UK who had previously delivered advanced training in Zambia, Tanzania and Uganda.

Outcomes:

The project concluded with the government of Ghana adopting and launching the country's first comprehensive training standard for any size of vehicle. Although the standard went through a scheduled process of the appraisal and review, the final version was adopted with all 19 of the original modules proposed at the first technical meeting.

The standard was formally launched at an event June 2024, at which both the DVLA and the project's advocacy partner, the Chartered Institute of Logistics and Transport (CILT) Ghana, encouraged transporters operating in Ghana to embrace the new standard at an operational level.

Of the 19 trainers who underwent theory ToT training, 11 (58%) achieved the target 70% pass mark on the pre-assessment, with four of those 11 (36%) scoring above 80%. Eighteen participants (95%) passed the post-training assessment, and of those 18, seven (39%) scored higher than 80%, including one participant who achieved 90%.

All 12 trainers who continued into the practical ToT training completed the training in full and went onto achieve 75% or higher in their final assessment. Six of those also met or exceeded the minimum requirement to be considered for ToMT training.

In the refresher ToT theory training, all 11 participants improved by an average 11% by the end of the training. Whereas five participants had scored below 75% (minimum pass score) in the pre-training assessment, none fell below this threshold in the post-training assessment. Notably, seven participants scored above 80%, demonstrating an advanced capability.

Ten trainers continued in to the practical refresher, and all showed similar improvements between their pre- and post-training assessments. The lowest marks were recorded in signalling and planning. In the second refresher ToT training held one year later, special attention was given to these areas to allow the trainers to improve, along with coupling and uncoupling practice and reversing manoeuvres which were requested by the trainers.

Four trainers from the ToT cohort were selected to progress to ToMT training. Pre- and post-theory training assessments showed all four master trainers improved from a 58-80% score to 70-92%, with 70% being the minimum pass rate. The trainers showed similar improvements in the practical training, with all completing the training with a passing score across 19 measured indicators.

The master trainers improved their scores in the refresher theory training a year later with all achieving more than 90% in their post-training assessments. The final qualitative assessments given to each master trainer in the practical refresher training showed three out of four had demonstrated the requisite skills to score a pass mark.

Following the first ToT training and over a two-year period in the project, 2,501 HGV drivers in Ghana received training from trainers trained by Transaid, and in accordance with the new standard. This data showed that by building

capacity at the institutional level, the new training standard was able to quickly cascade down to the driver community. In addition, master trainers reported being tasked with upskilling new driver trainers joining their institutions.

As part of supporting the adoption process, Transaid developed a new driver assessment form and user guide to be used in conjunction with the new standard. A sensitisation of these tools and the new standard was delivered in a pilot training to 13 driver examiners from DVLA assessment offices across Ghana.

Conclusion:

This project's objectives were defined by the abovementioned study which identified the lack of an HGV standard and high-quality standardised driver training as detrimental to road safety in Ghana, a constraint to the government achieving its ambitions for Ghana to be a key transportation hub in the West African region, and a limiting factor in the uptake of an anticipated increase in the number of jobs for professional drivers in the coming years.

In addressing these key factors, the project has exceeded its targets and made significant progress towards achieving safer roads for all road users in the country. The new standard places Ghana ahead of other West African countries and in a position to lead the way for other ECOWAS states.

Transaid fully intends to support the continued rollout of the new standard to professional drivers nationwide, building capacity in other urban centres and to place Ghana at the centre of the drive to expand the reach of this initiative to other countries in West Africa, maintaining the momentum gained since 2021.

Tools Utilised:

Standardised Training Curriculum for Drivers of Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGV), Standardised Instructor's Manual and Training Materials for Drivers of Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGV), pre- and post-assessment forms.

Partners: Driver and Vehicle Licensing Authority (DVLA), Chartered Institute of Logistics and Transport (CILT) Ghana, Safe Way Right Way.

About Transaid:

Transaid is an international development charity that seeks to transform lives through safe, available, and sustainable transport. Founded by Save the Children, The Chartered Institute of Logistics and Transport (CILT), and its Patron, HRH The Princess Royal, the international development organisation shares 25 years' worth of expertise in over 30 countries with partners and governments.

Contact:

Transaid, 137 Euston Road, London NW1 2AA, United Kingdom

t: +44 (0)20 7387 8136

f: +44 (0)20 7387 2669

e: info@transaid.org

www.transaid.org

Transaid Worldwide Services Ltd is registered in England as a company limited by guarantee. Registered no 3511363. Registered charity no 1072105. Patron HRH The Princess Royal.