



Meet Melody Kalimina

'I know what I'm doing': Melody Kalimina on being a female motorcycle rider in Zambia

Across Zambia and more widely, motorcycles have surged as a vital mode of transport in recent years. They are significantly cheaper to buy and maintain than cars, making them a practical option for many Zambians seeking reliable mobility and income opportunities.

However, this rapid growth has also brought challenges. Many riders operate without proper licensing, registration or insurance. Without formal training or regulation, unlicensed and uninsured riders are more likely to neglect traffic rules and safety practices, contributing to higher rates of collisions and road injuries.

To address this growing problem, Transaid's driver training partner in Zambia, the Industrial Training Centre (ITC), provides professional motorcycle training that promotes safer, more responsible riding. Melody Kalimina, a Production Research Field Technician for Bayer in Zambia, first completed motorcycle training at the ITC in 2020. We met Melody again in September 2025 when she returned for refresher training.

"I had motorcycle training because my company requested someone with a riding license," Melody explains. "This new situation with motorcycles is really alarming because you need to make sure that you are safe, and that other road users are safe."

"I did my training at the ITC because it's one of the best training institutions that we have in Zambia. The lecturers here are very helpful and patient."

Professional driver training courses at the ITC focus on defensive driving; anticipating potential hazards, staying alert to the mistakes of other road users, and adapting behaviour to prevent crashes before they happen.

"The good habits they wanted me to learn are: to be patient on the road, to know the

road well, to know my bike well, to always wear riding gear, and to always be safe and make sure that other road users are not harmed because of me," says Melody. "My favourite part of the training was learning how to balance the bike!"

In addition to improving her own safety as well as that of others on the road, Melody highlights the employment opportunities offered by practical training: "Rather than just having a professional qualification, you'll also have a skill. There are a lot of other courses and skills that they offer here at the ITC too. Next, I want to do forklift training."

Melody also believes that learning how to drive and ride defensively is especially important for women, who often face discrimination on the road.

"It's very hard because most of the time, men on the road tend to take advantage of you. They'll be shouting, 'As a lady, you're riding, why? Don't you have other things to do?' But I'm like, 'no, I know what I'm doing'."

"In Zambia generally, there are few female riders. I was given an opportunity to work for Bayer because they needed a female rider. So for me, it's an advantage."

She has a clear message for other women:

"I would like to encourage my fellow ladies out there that no matter who you are, you need to choose a skill for yourself. You can ride, you can do forklifting, you can do truck driving, you can do a lot of things."

Melody's story highlights what happens when women's rights to training, safety, and decent work are recognised and supported in practice, reflecting the spirit of International Women's Day 2026 and its theme, 'Rights. Justice. Action. For ALL Women and Girls.'

Transaid and the ITC are helping create fairer access to skills, safer working environments, and greater economic opportunity. This directly contributes to SDG 5 (Gender Equality) and SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth) by promoting skilled employment and safer conditions on the road.

Transaid's partnership with the ITC began in 2008, and together we have trained more than 25,000 drivers. As Zambia's principal provider of training for the transport and logistics sector, including HGV, PSV, and forklift truck driver training, the ITC demonstrates how giving women access to skills and opportunities promotes greater well-being and economic growth for all.



Melody undertaking refresher motorcycle training