

KIA Motors backs creation of community auto mechanic training centres in Ethiopia and Kenya

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KIA Motors Corporation recently held two ceremonies to mark the start of construction on a pair of new community-run auto mechanic training centres in Ethiopia and Kenya.

The establishment of the new centres is part of KIA's ongoing global corporate social responsibility (CSR) program, the 'Green Light Project'. KIA's Green Light Project – a global social mobility program started by the carmaker in 2012 – strives to improve access to healthcare, education and employment for disadvantaged communities in Africa. The program seeks to empower local communities to improve mobility and self-sufficiency, and enable them to challenge and overcome their obstacles.

Following the ceremonies, the construction of the two new auto mechanic training centres is due to be completed in the first half of 2017. The centres, situated in the Lideta district of the Ethiopian capital, Addis Ababa, and in the Dandora suburb of Nairobi, the capital of Kenya, will be jointly operated by world renowned NGOs – World Vision for the centre in Ethiopia and Good Neighbors for the centre in Kenya. Established during the Korean War (1950), World Vision is a relief, development and advocacy organization dedicated to working with 100 million people in 1000 countries around the world. Good Neighbors is an international, non-profit humanitarian organisation committed to child education, community development, and emergency relief projects in 30 countries around the world.

Both projects are supported by a US\$4m investment by KIA Motors and the Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA).

When the centres open in 2017, each site will employ residents from the local community and take on around 100 young trainees each year. The centres will enable trainee mechanics to work towards national qualifications in their respective countries, and feed into a new internship program at KIA's Kenyan distributor operation.

Once established, the Green Light Project-backed facilities will help increase the number of vehicle mechanics and raise employment levels, and KIA estimates that each centre will have a positive impact on the lives of over 2000 local citizens. In the future, KIA plans to support the establishment of local repair shops adjacent to each site, creating further jobs and opportunities in Lideta and Dandora. Ultimately, KIA and KOICA intend for both sites to become self-sufficient businesses.

Chang-Muk Choi, head of the CSR Management Team at KIA Motors Corporation, commented, "The Green Light Project was conceived to improve the lives of those with little access to medicine and medical care, education, and employment. Our program aims to provide local communities with the means and infrastructure to help achieve independence and build better lives for themselves.

"In supporting the establishment of these new training centres in Ethiopia and Kenya, we hope to encourage the development of successful, community-operated businesses that can have a genuinely positive local impact. These new centres will help alleviate local unemployment issues, particularly among the young, and provide a valuable service to people who rely on absolute vehicle reliability for their day-to-day livelihood."



KIA breaks ground in Kenya and Ethiopia

Since 2012, KIA has supported a series of communities and initiatives in Africa through its Green Light Project to provide easier access to health, education and employment. Green Light Projects in Tanzania, Malawi and Mozambique, as well as Kenya and Ethiopia, have so far resulted in the successful establishment of five schools and a health centre with a mobile clinic. The latest projects will bring the number of Green Light Project locations to eight.

As well as setting up education, health and training facilities, KIA has provided a total of 20 support vehicles that best serve local needs, such as school buses, mobile mechanics, mobile libraries and mobile health clinics, and aided local citizens' with school uniform production, micro loan facilities, fertiliser lending programs and vehicle workshop facilities.

KIA plans to expand the Green Light Project to other countries and regions in the near future through the cooperation of its global network.

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