

## MEDIA RELEASE

### **Bamburi Cement boosts recruitment of women into trucking industry**

- *At least 100 women are set to be trained and employed annually at the beginning*

**Nairobi, December 16, 2021** – Bamburi Cement in partnership with Isuzu East Africa, Kenya Transporters Association and four other organizations today launched **Women on Wheels**, a female-centered training and recruitment program seeking to encourage more women to take up truck driving as a career.

The Women on Wheels program brings together key players in the transport industry who are keen on eliminating the entrenched male culture, improving working conditions and ensuring safe workplaces. Other partners include Pioneer Road Safety Consultants Ltd, Diamond Defensive Driving Academy and North Star Alliance.

Through the program, the women undergo rigorous technical truck operation and defensive driving training where they are equipped with skills on how to operate heavy trucks, including simulator exercises that expose them to different truck driving techniques; road safety, and soft skills training and coaching.

Kenyan women currently make up only 10% of the public transport workforce; 85% of them work as matatu operators in the Nairobi Metropolitan area – according to a 2020 survey by Flone Initiative. Another 2020 study by World Bank and the Ministry of Transport and Infrastructure shows that barriers such as dominant culture of masculinity and gender stereotypes, discrimination, unequal treatment at work, sexual harassment, exposure to violence while on the road and lack of work-life balance, and ‘the care trap’ create a working environment that fails to attract and retain women in the transport professions.

Speaking during the launch of the program, Bamburi Cement’s Country Head of Health, Safety and Environment Jane Wangari said “Beyond the training initiatives, Women on Wheels program will also ensure job placement for the women with Bamburi and its logistics partners. We are set to recruit at least 100 women annually into the program, and grow going forward.”

Bamburi Cement Managing Director Seddiq Hassani said: “This programs fits quite well within our Diversity, Equity and Inclusion agenda as a company. You remember in December last year we signed the Women’s Empowerment Principles (WEP) as part of our commitment to promoting gender equality and inclusion in our workplace and the community. The gender gap is far from closed, however we are determined to increase the proportion of women in every aspect of our

operations. We continue to find more opportunities and partnerships to further entrench and influence equity among our customers, suppliers and communities across markets that we serve.”

Isuzu East Africa Managing Director Rita Kavashe said “The program we are launching today will include experienced women drivers ready for employment, license holders with no truck driving experience, as well as freshers who have not yet acquired a driving license. As Isuzu EA, we strongly believe in building relationships and partnerships for the long term because that has enabled us to grow and build Isuzu to become the market leader.”

Kenya Transporters Association Chief Operating Officer Mercy Ileri said “The trucking industry is rife with hurdles which make the transport sector unattractive for women to work in. Fleet managers, owners, as well as players in the logistics value chain as a whole, have a responsibility to shift stereotypes, embrace diversity and adapt their recruiting, hiring and training to reflect the growing presence of women in industries that have traditionally been male-dominated.”

Diamond Defensive Driving Academy’s Lydia Mwaniki said “Women have so much to offer to this industry. From our experience, not only are women less likely than men to be involved in a crash, women tend to be easier to train, and have superior customer service and paperwork skills.”

Challenges experienced by most female truck drivers go deeper than bias. Safety is a key concern that encompasses everything from poor vehicle maintenance to dangerous or poorly lit loading docks to pushing workers to drive for long hours. Lengthy hours away from family for days or weeks at a time discourages many women from joining the field as long-haul drivers. “We plan to address these concerns by ensuring that the drivers move in convoys and encouraging the transporters to allocate them shorter and safer routes. So our priorities are to ensure their wellbeing and to find ways of minimizing these obstacles,” said Ms Wangari.

Partnerships with organisations like Pioneer Road Safety who have checkpoints for drivers and North Star Alliance who provide safe and secure rest areas for drivers ensures that when in danger, the drivers can be easily located and assisted.

The Women on Wheels program is part of Bamburi Cement’s Sustainability programs – under Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI), and Health, Safety and Environment pillars.

**--ENDS--**

#### **Notes to editors**

##### **About Bamburi Cement PLC**

Bamburi Cement PLC is a Lafarge company, which is a member of Holcim Group, and is the leading cement manufacturing and marketing company in the Eastern Africa region, having been operational for 67 years. Its subsidiaries include Hima Cement Ltd (Uganda), Bamburi Special Products Ltd, Lafarge Eco Systems Ltd, and Diani Estates Ltd. More information is available on Bamburi Cement PLC website [www.lafarge.co.ke](http://www.lafarge.co.ke)

##### **About Holcim**

Holcim builds progress for people and the planet. As a global leader in innovative and sustainable building solutions, Holcim is enabling greener cities, smarter infrastructure and improving living standards around the

world. With sustainability at the core of its strategy Holcim is becoming a net zero company, with its people and communities at the heart of its success. The company is driving the circular economy as a world leader in recycling to build more with less. Holcim is the company behind some of the world's most trusted brands in the building sector including ACC, Aggregate Industries, Ambuja Cement, Disensa, Firestone Building Products, Geocycle, Holcim and Lafarge. Holcim is 70,000 people around the world who are passionate about building progress for people and the planet through four business segments: Cement, Ready-Mix Concrete, Aggregates and Solutions & Products.

More information is available on [www.holcim.com](http://www.holcim.com)

**Isuzu East Africa Ltd (Isuzu EA)**

Isuzu East Africa is the leading motor vehicle assembler in East Africa, selling a wide range of Isuzu vehicles. The company is starting out from a solid foundation established by the Isuzu brand's automotive excellence over the last 40 years. The brand has attained strong leadership in this market, selling over 100,000 units since the first Isuzu vehicle rolled out of its Nairobi assembly plant in 1977. With over 15 models in its line-up, the Isuzu brand has dominated the new vehicle segment for nine years in a row since 2012, achieving a market share of 45.4% by end of 2020.

**Important disclaimer – forward-looking statements:**

This document contains forward-looking statements. Such forward-looking statements do not constitute forecasts regarding results or any other performance indicator, but rather trends or targets, as the case may be, including with respect to plans, initiatives, events, products, solutions and services, their development and potential. Although Bamburi Cement believes that the expectations reflected in such forward-looking statements are based on reasonable assumptions as at the time of publishing this document, investors are cautioned that these statements are not guarantees of future performance. Actual results may differ materially from the forward-looking statements as a result of a number of risks and uncertainties, many of which are difficult to predict and generally beyond the control of Bamburi Cement, including but not limited to the risks described in the Bamburi Cement's annual report available on its website ([www.lafarge.co.ke](http://www.lafarge.co.ke)) and uncertainties related to the market conditions and the implementation of our plans. Accordingly, we caution you against relying on forward-looking statements. Bamburi Cement does not undertake to provide updates of these forward-looking statements.

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