

theRoadAhead

THE WHO NEWSLETTER ON ROAD SAFETY

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Defining a framework for the UN road safety collaboration

On 16th and 17th March 2005 WHO organized the second meeting of the United Nations road safety collaboration. The meeting, which was hosted by UNECE, took place at the UN Offices in Geneva and was attended by representatives from 38 agencies. New to the Collaboration were representatives from donor agencies and from the private sector. The group reported back on progress of road safety products that were discussed at the last meeting, and proposed new products that would be jointly worked on by participating organizations. First steps were also taken to define a common framework for the Collaboration, whereby the skills of all the agencies involved could be harnessed and collectively applied towards addressing a few specific risk factors highlighted in the *World report on road traffic injury prevention*, in particular, helmet wearing, inappropriate or excessive speed, drinking and driving, occupant restraints

and cost-effective infrastructural changes. The full proceedings of the meeting, as well as a list of organizations participating in the Collaboration can be found on our website at: www.who.int/violence_injury_prevention/road_traffic/un_roadsafety_collab/en/

The United Nations road safety collaboration: a handbook of partner profiles was launched at the meeting. This Handbook, developed as a follow-up to the first meeting of the Collaboration, reflects the road safety profiles of partner organizations who attended the October 2004 meeting. It contains an overview of each organization's activities and provides contacts for focal points to facilitate communication. The Handbook will be updated on a regular basis according to the involvement of partner organizations and their activities. It can be downloaded from <http://whqlibdoc.who.int/publications/2005/9241592796.pdf>

To order hard copies of the Handbook please contact traffic@who.int

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Welcome to the fourth issue of WHO's newsletter reporting progress on global road safety initiatives. This newsletter serves to update readers on the progress of the United Nations road safety collaboration in implementing United Nations General Assembly resolution 58/289 on *Improving global road safety*.

This issue contains news on some road safety events from the past six months, including a report on the progress made at the 2nd United Nations road safety collaboration meeting; country work in Ethiopia and Cambodia; events held for World Day of Remembrance; and government and nongovernmental road safety efforts in Oman. Beginning with this issue we will also be taking a closer look at the road safety programmes of the United Nations regional commissions.

The road ahead can be downloaded from our website: www.who.int/violence_injury_prevention/en/ and is available in six languages. To request hard copies of the newsletter, please contact us at traffic@who.int



The Handbook is launched by His Excellency Fuad Mubarak Al-Hinai, Permanent Representative of the Sultanate of Oman to the United Nations



World Health Organization



UNESCAP: road safety in Asia and the Pacific

More than half of the world's traffic fatalities occur in the Asian-Pacific region although only one in five motorized vehicles are registered here. In 2003, at least 430,000 persons were killed and more than two million were injured in road crashes in this area (although WHO data suggest these figures might be considerably higher)¹. It is estimated that by 2020 about two-thirds of the world's road traffic fatalities might be in the Asian-Pacific region².

The rate of road traffic fatalities has been particularly high in emerging economies and newly industrialized economies. Higher fatality rates per population are also linked to higher vehicle densities (i.e., vehicles per kilometre of road), regardless of how motorized countries are, which shows the important link between road safety and infrastructure development in general.

The economic costs of road crashes, which range from 1% – 3% of GDP in Asia, have a disproportionate impact on lower income groups, thus contributing to the persistence of poverty. Most of those injured are vulnerable road users such as motorcyclists and pedestrians.

The United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP) works with its 62 member states and associate members to make roads safer for the 3.5 billion people in the region stretching from the Bosphorus to the Pacific islands. As its latest effort, UNESCAP has initiated a project to assist its member governments in sharing media content and other resources for raising road safety awareness among policymakers, the media and the general public.

Decision makers need reliable facts and data to develop policies, and to monitor and evaluate action plans and programmes. Despite the prominence that road safety has attracted recently, reliable data are not available in many cases and numbers quoted are not more than estimates. UNESCAP has helped governments set up nation-wide road crash reporting systems which feed into the Asia Pacific Road Accident Database (APRAD) that was created in the 1990s. For more information on the database please see: www.unescap.org/publications/detail.asp?id=457

Since the 1990s, in recognition that investing in road safety can produce high social returns for the region, UNESCAP has taken measures to address road safety as a cross-

cutting interdisciplinary issue that complements its on-going work on road transport and road infrastructure. Over the last few decades large-scale road development has been considered crucial for sustained growth of many economies of the region and for closer regional integration in general.

UNESCAP has worked closely with other agencies and partners towards improving road safety. In fact, it has served as a major regional forum for Asia and the Pacific. It has facilitated the creation of regional networks of institutions, such as, most recently, the Network of Asian Transport and Logistics Education and Research Institutes (ANTLER). UNESCAP will take a prominent role in addressing road safety within the UN road safety collaboration, in close collaboration with WHO and the other United Nations regional commissions

For further information, please contact: Director, Transport and Tourism Division, UNESCAP escap-ttd@un.org

UNESCAP is the regional office of the United Nations for Asia and the Pacific, based in Bangkok, Thailand. For more details, see www.unescap.org

1 These estimates are conservative. The *World report on road traffic injury prevention* published by the World Health Organization in 2004 indicates that these numbers might be at least twice as high.

2 Here the same methodology and main assumptions (eg, GDP projections) were used as those contained in *Traffic fatalities and economic growth*, by Kopits and Cropper, World Bank Policy Research Working Paper 3035, April 2003.



Crowded minibus in Bangkok, Thailand.
Source: GTZ CD/Karl Fjellstroem.

Strengthening road traffic injury data management in Ethiopia

WHO is working with the Traffic Police Department of Addis Ababa, Ethiopia to implement a project on strengthening the road traffic injury data management capacity in the city. The project is funded by the FIA Foundation for the Automobile and Society and focuses on: the development of an easy-to-use data collection form; a computer-based data analysis system; training the traffic police officers on data management; developing a small resource centre; and promoting collaboration among key stakeholders in road traffic safety. For more information please contact Dr M. Khayesi on khayesim@who.int

The World report on road traffic injury prevention is launched in Russian, Chinese and Spanish

In February 2005 the Russian edition of the *World report on road traffic injury prevention* was launched in Moscow, at the ITAR-TASS news agency.

The launch was attended by representatives from the Russian Ministries of Interior, Health and Social Development, the National Institute of Transport Research

(NIIAT), as well as other dignitaries and representatives from WHO and the World Bank, who jointly organized the launch.

In 2003, road traffic injuries killed about 100 people every day in the Russian Federation. At almost 36 000, the total number of deaths in the Russian Federation accounts for almost one-third of the 127 000 road traffic deaths documented every year in the European Region by WHO. In addition, of the 2.4 million people injured or disabled each year by road traffic crashes in Europe, 250 000 of them are Russians. Children and vulnerable road users pay a particularly high price for the rapid motorization currently taking place in the Russian Federation: about 1 500 children died in 2003 on the roads, while pedestrians accounted for more than 40% of victims.

The availability of the *World report on road traffic injury prevention* in Russian will be an important tool in disseminating knowledge about the global dimensions of the traffic-related injuries, their main underlying risk factors, as well as effective interventions for their prevention to one of the largest audiences in the world – the nearly 300 million Russian-speaking people.

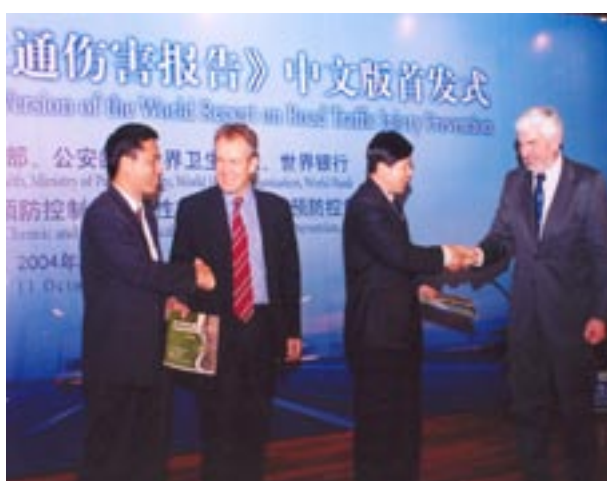
The Russian version of the *World report on road traffic injury prevention* can be downloaded at http://whqlibdoc.who.int/publications/2004/5777701582_rus.pdf

In October 2004 the Chinese version of the *World report on road traffic injury prevention* was launched in Beijing, at an event hosted by the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Public Security, WHO and the World Bank. In a social mobilisation meeting that followed the launch, international and Chinese experts held discussions on how China could work towards implementing the recommendations of the World Report.

Having already met the Report's first recommendation, in appointing the Ministry of Public Security as the lead agency for road safety, additional resources are now needed to implement other recommendations aimed at improving surveillance systems and reducing the deadly toll on the roads in China. As a first step, the Government will work towards developing a national report on injuries to further understand the road traffic injury burden in China.

To receive a copy of the Chinese version of the Report, please send an e-mail to traffic@who.int

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Ethiopian policeman uses data collection tools to record a traffic transgression.

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Dr Krug (WHO) and Mr Scurfield (World Bank) present the first Chinese language copies of the World report on road traffic injury prevention to Dr Xiao Dong Lo (Ministry of Health) and Mr Wang Jin Baio (Ministry of Public Security).



World Day of Remembrance – events around the globe

Over the last decade the third Sunday in November has been observed as European Day of Remembrance for road crash victims. However, on 21st November 2004 events took place around the globe to mark what has become a World Day of Remembrance for road victims.

In Evora, **Portugal**, events for the World Day of Remembrance were organized by The Association of Self-Mobilized Citizens, whose membership includes victims and families of victims and academics, who to mark World Remembrance Day, established *Estrada Viva Liga contra o Trauma* (Living Road Coalition against Trauma), a coalition composed of some 30 organisations relevant to the issue of trauma. A memorial dedicated to victims of road traffic crashes was also set up for the event in a public square, and after a week transferred to a permanent site in a garden outside the city that is strategically placed by the road leading to Lisbon. The celebrations were attended by Evora's dignitaries, government representatives and many citizens.

In **Spain** the World Day of Remembrance received much coverage in the national media, while public gatherings took place in a number of cities and towns. A minute's silence was observed in many towns, while individual cities carried out further activities to remember their traffic victims: for example, in Zaragoza,

“ We hope that knowing they are not alone or forgotten, will provide comfort to crash victims and a source of strength. We welcome the growing national and international support for our Remembrance Day – with millions of people across the globe we share sadness and despair, but also hope for an end to this preventable carnage. ”

Press release, RoadPeace, UK

silhouettes representing the deceased were shown, while in Valencia black ribbons represented those affected by traffic crashes.

In **Luxembourg** an interfaith ceremony, with participation from six religions, was held at a church, where a string quartet played. The day received considerable coverage in the local media.

In **London** a concert was held at the renowned Wigmore Hall in memory of an 18-year old boy tragically killed in a traffic crash, and other road crash victims. The concert was organized by RoadPeace and was attended by Jenny Jones, the road safety ambassador for London's mayor, Ken Livingstone.

Other events included: a march in Buenos Aires and a minute's silence in all of Argentina; a tree planting ceremony in a Remembrance Garden in Lenasia, an Indian district of Johannesburg, South Africa; a wreath-laying ceremony at a memorial to road victims in Nievre, France; a conference 'The day after a road crash' and a religious service in Rhodes, Greece.

World Day of Remembrance events have been coordinated by Brigitte Chaudhry, President of the European Federation of Road Traffic Victims (FEVR). For more information please email Ms Chaudhry at: Brigitte.chaudhry@roadpeace.org

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The Spanish version of the *World report on road traffic injury prevention* was launched in Tegucigalpa, Honduras, on 4th March 2005. The launch was chaired by the Minister of Transportation and Housing, Minister of Health, officials from the Ministry of Security and the Police. A PAHO/WHO representative, academics, officials from different ministries, and media journalists also attended. In total there were almost 130 participants. Presentations at the gathering involved a number of different stakeholders in Honduras and covered: a National Plan for Road Safety; care for victims of road crashes; data on road traffic victims registered at the Emergency Room. A National Commission for Road Safety has been appointed, chaired by the Minister of Transportation and Housing.

In addition to this launch of the Spanish version of the Report, the English Report was also launched: on 4th June 2005 in San Juan, Puerto Rico, at a national conference; on 29th June 2004 in Brasilia, Brazil, at a regional meeting chaired by the Minister of Cities, Deputy Minister of Health, Chairman of the Road Safety Commission of the Brazilian Parliament and WHO representatives; on the 18th February 2005 in Lima, Peru, at a national conference at the Cayetano Heredia University; and on the 16th March 2005 in Mexico City. At the Brasilia meeting participants also discussed the recommendations of the Report and how to implement them among Latin American countries.

The Spanish version of the Report can be downloaded from: www.paho.org/Spanish/DD/PUB/PC_599.htm.



Spanish poster, British concert programme and media coverage in Luxembourg for World Day of Remembrance

WHO Helmet Initiative

More and more people are using motorcycles and bicycles worldwide for mobility and recreational purposes. In particular, Asian countries are expected to experience considerable growth in the number of motorized two-wheeled vehicles and three-wheelers on their roads. However, an increase in the number of two-wheeled transport has been associated with parallel growth in deaths and injuries.

The leading cause of death for these vulnerable road users, is head injuries, due in part to the non-usage of protective helmets. Scientific evidence abounds that motorcycle and bicycle helmets are effective in preventing head injuries, thereby reducing the severity of the injury and/or eliminating what would have been a fatal outcome.

To promote the use of helmets, the World Health Organization's Helmet Initiative (www.whohelmets.org/) is a website-based resource that provides a library of relevant scientific articles on the efficacy and promotion of helmets, links to a variety of other helmet resources on the Internet, features a quarterly publication called *Headlines*, and provides news, features, and other information about helmets and programmes to promote their use. The initiative is currently being scaled up to play a critical role in the implementation of helmet measures. Participation in the WHO Helmet Initiative is open to individuals or organizations interested in the promotion of bicycle and motorcycle helmets. For more information visit www.whohelmets.org/



World Traffic Report wins International Road Safety Award

WHO and the World Bank received the prestigious Premier Award as part of the Prince Michael International Road Safety Awards for the *World report on road traffic injury prevention*. Prince Michael International Road Safety Awards are presented throughout the year to individuals, companies or organizations in recognition of their outstanding contribution to improving road

safety. The Premier Award is presented only once a year. Dr Etienne Krug, WHO Director of the Department of Injuries and Violence Prevention; Dr Margie Peden, WHO Coordinator for Unintentional Injury Prevention and Executive Editor of the Report; and Mr Richard Scurfield, Sector Leader for Transport at the World Bank, attended the Annual Awards Luncheon Ceremony to receive the award on behalf of WHO and the World Bank from His Royal Highness.



Cambodia implements helmet safety project

As part of the WHO 5-year strategy on road traffic injury prevention, WHO and a number of partners have implemented a helmet-wearing project in Cambodia. The project has a three-pronged approach: it includes data collection on rates of helmet use across the city; it supports the implementation of a recently launched national road safety plan of action; and it is giving input into the creation of a law on the mandatory use of helmets. The initiative encourages United Nations agencies, government departments and nongovernmental organizations to adopt, enforce and monitor helmet-wearing policies among their staff. A nation-wide media campaign is on-going in the country which promotes the use of helmets among the public. The project is funded by the FIA Foundation for the Automobile and Society and is

Dr. Mam Bunheng, Secretary of State for Health (driver) and Dr. Jim Tulloch, WHO Representative, Cambodia (passenger)

© WHO Cambodia, 2004



a collaborative project involving a number of agencies, in particular Handicap International, as well as the Cambodian Ministry of Health and the Cambodian Red Cross and Red Crescent. For more information please contact Dr M. Khayesi on khayesi@who.int

Recent road safety developments at UNECE

In 2004, the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) continued to update the international legally binding Agreements and Conventions that contain regulations, based on best national practices, for safe roads, safe vehicles and safe driver behaviour, and which provide the basis for national road safety legislation in many countries throughout the world.

The UNECE Working Party on Road Traffic Safety (WP.1), adopted amendments to the Vienna Conventions on Road Traffic and on Road Signs and Signals, the European Agreements supplementing them and the Protocol on Road Markings. These amendments will introduce stricter rules for the issuance of national and international driving permits. They will also prohibit the use of handheld mobile phones while driving, reduce the maximum admissible level of alcohol in the blood for drivers from 0.8 g/l to 0.5 g/l, and

improve safety in tunnels.

The UNECE WP.1 also launched a revision of the Consolidated Resolutions on Road Traffic (R.E.1) and on Road Signs and Signals (R.E.2), which are of a recommendatory nature, with the objective of presenting them as a compendium of road safety measures and best practices, to be disseminated widely throughout the world.

The UNECE's Working Party 29 also moved forward in the development of regulation aimed at harmonizing aspects of vehicle safety. More information on recent regulations can be found at www.unece.org/trans/main/welcwp29.htm

Finally, responding to the United Nations General Assembly resolution 58/289 which called for improved international coordination on road safety efforts, UNECE WP.1 will open up participation in its meetings to any country around the world that would like to participate. More information on UNECE's road safety work can be found at www.unece.org/trans/main/welcwp1.html

Government and nongovernmental organizations in Oman move ahead with road safety initiatives

Following several high-profile World Health Day 2004 events, and the instrumental role that Oman has played in placing road safety on the agenda of the United Nations General Assembly, a forum on road safety was held in Oman in October 2004. The two-day gathering was attended by numerous dignitaries of the two Majlises, the councils responsible for advising His Majesty Sultan Qaboos. There was also representation from the Royal Oman

Police, who are presently fully engaged in the work of preventing road traffic injuries in the country. Following the forum the councils recommended to the Sultan that a lead agency be appointed to oversee the country's road safety efforts, and that this agency be given adequate financial resources to fulfill its remit.

But governments are only one player in road safety. Nongovernmental organizations have much to offer in the area of victim support, as well as in conducting road safety awareness raising campaigns, as illustrated in the following article.



© Mark Rosenberg, 2004

Salim and Salimah,™ Child Passenger Safety Campaign in the Sultanate of Oman

An innovative public awareness campaign that aims to change driver behaviour and increase the use of restraints for child passengers is due to be launched in Oman in May 2005. The bi-lingual Arabic and English campaign developed by Omani non-profit research company, *Al Mustadaama* (Sustainability) LLC under the logo *Salim and Salimah,™ Safe and Sound*, targets Omani parents and children alike and is the first of its

kind in Oman. It takes place against an inexorable rise in the toll of death and injury on Oman's roads and negligible use of child restraints. In 2004, 637 people, including 101 children under 15 years died in crashes, and 6636 including 973 under 15s, were injured. These casualties, in a total population of approximately 2.4 million, were 50% higher than in 2003.

The focus of the *Salim and Salimah*™ campaign is a high-impact educational film produced in Arabic and English by *Al Mustadaama* on video and VCD with funding from the Middle East Partnership Initiative small grant program. The film includes typical Omani family scenarios, highway and hospital scenes, crash dummy clips and interviews with victims of road crashes and aims to demonstrate graphically crash dynamics and the protection afforded by an age-appropriate restraint.

A coalition created by *Al Mustadaama* of public and private sector parties including the Ministry of Education, Al-Khoula Hospital, Oman's leading trauma facility,

Petroleum Development Oman, Mothercare and the Occupational Training Institute (which provides road safety and defensive driving courses), will participate in the launch, presentation and free distribution of the video and accompanying literature in Arabic and English to schools, universities, colleges, NGOs, hospitals, youth organisations, ministries and other large employers throughout Oman. Valuable support and resources have been provided to the campaign from the outset by WHO's Muscat Office.

The campaign kicked off in January 2005 with an unprecedented country-wide survey of driving habits and attitudes and a seat-belt wearing survey. The results of these surveys which were funded by key coalition member, Petroleum Development Oman, provide crucial baseline data and insights into prevailing behaviour and beliefs of drivers in Oman. The most common misconceptions revealed by the survey were discussed and countered through the video scenarios.

For further details of the campaign and film contact Bernadette Bhacker, Project Director, on almustadaama@ecologyfund.net

Private sector joins forces to fund road safety initiatives

Seven international auto and oil companies have announced a collaborative five-year, \$10 million project to reduce road traffic fatalities in developing countries.

The initiative, to be implemented by the Global Road Safety Partnership (GRSP), will focus on such key road safety themes as pedestrian safety and safety belt use, the training of road safety professionals in developing countries, and provision of seed money to support pilot programs to improve road safety in these countries.

This Global Road Safety Initiative builds on the World Business Council on Sustainable Development Sustainable Mobility Project, which released its final report in July. The report identified increasing road traffic fatality rates in developing countries as an impediment to mobility becoming sustainable by 2030.

For more information about the Global Road Safety Initiative, visit the GRSP website at www.grsproadsafety.org/



Publications and upcoming events

- To document an historic year in road safety, in May 2004 WHO launched *Milestones in international road safety: World Health Day 2004 and beyond*. To order a copy of this document please email traffic@who.int
- The Secretary General will be reporting back to the United Nations general assembly on progress towards implementing resolution 58/289 at the sixtieth session in September/October 2005.
- The 8th World Conference on Injury Prevention and Safety Promotion will be held in Durban, South Africa, from the 2nd to 5th April 2006. For more information see www.safety2006.info/
- The next meeting of the UN road safety collaboration has been scheduled to take place on 14th and 15th November 2005.