

ASEAN and ADB Implementing New Approaches to Building Road Safety Capacity

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Abstract

Following the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) senior transport officials meeting in May 2011, the Secretariat requested the Asian Development Bank (ADB) to provide assistance to improve road safety in ASEAN. In response, ADB, funded by the Japan Fund for Poverty Reduction, has begun an innovative approach to capacity building that has already been adapted and replicated in other sub-regions. This paper will discuss the model central to the project.

The Road Safety Capacity Building for ASEAN Project commenced in May 2013. Each country has appointed a National Focal Point (NFP) to identify and coordinate information. A team of International Experts were appointed to develop materials and present a comprehensive train the trainer program focused on five key areas. Thirty eight senior Government officers from across ASEAN attended a two week program at ADB headquarters in Manila and will arrange and deliver specific training and associated activities to other colleagues within their country. ADB has appointed a National Consultant to work in partnership with the trainees on a range of activities including development of “pipeline project proposals” for funding consideration investors and donors.

As part of the project, a draft ASEAN Regional Road Safety Strategy document has been prepared and consultation will further refine its directions and contents. The project will reach its conclusion in 2015 and a follow up phase three project is being considered.

Introduction

Road trauma has incredible impact on the health and economic growth of all nations. The United Nations has recognised the importance of dealing with this problem by announcing 2011-2020 as the Decade of Action for Road Safety. In 2011, it was estimated that more than 75,000 people died in road crashes in the ten member countries of the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN: Brunei, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Viet Nam, Laos PDR, Myanmar, and Cambodia) and many more sustained long term injuries. Improving road safety outcomes in ASEAN is not only important for the welfare and economic benefit of the populations of these countries, but given the proportion of the world’s population that lives in ASEAN, it will strongly influence whether the aims of the United Nations Decade of Action for Road Safety and the Sustainable Development Goals are reached.

ASEAN is a unique sub-region, with some countries belonging to other organisations such as the Asia Pacific Economic Forum (APEC), and UNESCAP. In terms of the ASEAN structure, road safety is particularly relevant to Transport Ministers, Senior Officers, the Land Transport Working Group and Multi-sector Road Safety Special Working Group (MSRSSWG). The MSRSSWG is charged with the responsibility to mobilise and deliver the Regional Road Safety Strategy through ASEAN.

The ASEAN Secretariat has requested the Asian Development Bank (ADB) to provide assistance to improve road safety in ASEAN in accordance with the directions of the ASEAN senior transport officials meeting in May 2011. ADB consequently prepared a successful submission to the Japan Fund for Poverty Reduction (JFPR), a trust fund funded by the Government of Japan, and managed

by ADB. The submission proposed an innovative approach to capacity building that has already been adapted and replicated in other sub-regions. This paper will discuss the model central to the project.

Project history and outcomes

In May 2013, at the ASEAN Multi - Sector Road Safety Working Group (MSRSSWG) meeting held in Vientiane, Laos, the Road Safety Capacity Building for ASEAN Project commenced. Following the meeting each country appointed a National Focal Point (NFP) whose role is to identify and coordinate information on behalf of the country concerned. Soon after a team of International Experts were appointed to develop materials and present a comprehensive train the trainer program focused on five key areas: road safety management, data systems management, police enforcement, safe routes to school and motorcycle safety. Thirty eight senior Government officers from each ASEAN country attended a two week train-the-trainer program at ADB headquarters in Manila. This program was delivered as part of the Asia Road Safety 2014 event hosted by the ADB, Global Road Safety Partnership, International Road Assessment Programme and Global New Car Assessment Programme in June-July 2014.

Having undertaken the train the trainer program the trainees are expected upon return to their country to arrange and deliver specific training and associated activities to other colleagues within their country. In each country, ADB has appointed a National Consultant to work in partnership with the trainees on a range of activities. These include development of “pipeline project proposals” for funding consideration investors and donors. A case study of this approach in Cambodia is provided in Sann, Haworth & King (2015).

As part of the project, a draft ASEAN Road Safety Strategy document was prepared. The development of the draft strategy posed some unique challenges in terms of identifying the optimal approach for a region characterised by diversity in both road safety issues and levels of economic development. The lack of consistent measures of road safety activity and performance led to the need to create new semi-qualitative measures that would not require extensive resources to collect and monitor. Consultation on the draft ASEAN regional road safety strategy is now underway. The section on road safety context and issues in each country will be enhanced by input from national road safety advisors. The revised document will then be considered by ASEAN officials in late 2015 and further development will follow. More details of the draft Regional Road Safety Strategy are provided in Haworth & Klein (2015).

The Road Safety Capacity Building for ASEAN Project has progressed well through various stages and will reach its conclusion in 2015. A follow up phase three project is being considered.

References

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