

Contributed Articles

The Global Road Safety Partnership in Asia

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The Global Road Safety Partnership is continuing its essential work in Asia and is actively supporting the United Nations' Decade of Action for Road Safety 2011-2020 both in the region and globally. The global plan for the Decade of Action describes five pillars of activity [1]; our focus will be on safer road users and road safety management, and on the essential partnership and international coordination that is required for the plan's success. In doing so we seek to expand and develop our work and we are keen to find new partners and support.

What is the Global Road Safety Partnership?

We are a non-profit organisation that is dedicated to the sustainable reduction of death and injury from road crashes in low- and middle-income countries, which suffer 90 per cent of the almost 1.3 million annual deaths globally from road crashes [2]. We are currently working in 25 low- and middle-income countries.

The Global Road Safety Partnership is hosted by the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC). It was formed in 1999 and its members are leading multi- and bi-lateral development agencies, governments, businesses and civil society organisations. One of the keys to our success is creating and supporting multi-sector partnerships that are actively engaged with frontline good practice road safety interventions. We also play a critical role in advocacy and coordination at the global level, and we are recognised as a source of expert road safety knowledge and good practice.

Our work in Asia

The Global Road Safety Partnership has been active in many countries in Asia over recent years. The focus for much of our work to date has been on capacity building for professionals working in road safety; delivery of best practice demonstration projects around specific risk issues, and support for road safety planning and management. Funding for the Global Road Safety Partnership's work in Asia currently comes from two key sources: the Global Road Safety Initiative and the Bloomberg Philanthropies RS10 project.

The Global Road Safety Initiative is the world's largest joint commitment of private sector resources toward road safety in low- and middle-income countries. It was created in 2004 by a group of leading global corporations and over five years delivered significant road safety demonstration projects in China and countries of the

Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), as well as Brazil. The Global Road Safety Initiative Phase 2 has provided a further five years of funding to build on the work undertaken in Phase 1 by continuing support for activities in ASEAN countries, China and Brazil. It also provides for an expansion of activities into India and Africa, which will capitalise on work already undertaken by the Global Road Safety Partnership.

The Bloomberg Philanthropies RS10 project is the world's largest donation to global road safety to date and targets 10 countries worldwide, including China, Cambodia, India and Vietnam in Asia. The Global Road Safety Partnership is a member of a consortium undertaking the project, and other members are the World Health Organization (WHO), Johns Hopkins University, World Resources Institute (EMBARQ), the World Bank Road Safety Facility and the Association for Safe International Road Travel (ASIRT). Our role is to provide capacity building to support key interventions on a range of risk issues, such as drink driving, helmet wearing, speed and seatbelts. In Asia we have already undertaken targeted workshops and other capacity-building exercises, and this work will continue as we move further into the Decade of Action for Road Safety.

Capacity building

Capacity-building activities undertaken by the Global Road Safety Partnership in Asia include police professional development, regional seminars, country-level workshops and study tours within the region.

Workshops conducted by the Global Road Safety Partnership frequently draw on internationally recognised experts in road safety, many of whom are from Australia. A range of topics and issues are addressed; these are designed to complement other projects and initiatives. They have ranged from recent workshops designed to skill police in road safety enforcement techniques to workshops on designing public education campaigns; they have been delivered in many countries across the region. For example, Figure 1 shows Indonesian Ministry of Transportation officers working with the Global Road Safety Partnership.

For several years the Global Road Safety Partnership has successfully held an annual Asian regional seminar. About 150 participants from countries across the region attended our most recent seminar held in Cambodia in November 2010. (See Figure 2.)

The focus was on preparing for the United Nations Decade of Action for Road Safety 2011-2020. It was funded through the

Global Road Safety Initiative and also supported by the International Road Assessment Program (iRAP), FIA Foundation, Asian Development Bank, and the Western Pacific Regional Office of the World Health Organization (WHO).

Study tours, especially to Australia, are occasionally used to demonstrate what can be achieved in road safety. Over the past 18 months we have assisted a group of health professionals from Thailand on a visit to Victoria focused on motorcycle safety; this provided motivation and insights that are resulting in national-level planning with key stakeholders to address issues such as helmet wearing. As part of our role in the RS10 project, we also organised a study tour for Cambodian senior transport and police officials to Queensland and Victoria to learn about drink-driving legislation and enforcement. The skills and knowledge gained from this exercise, together with the welcome donation of 30 breathalysers from the Queensland Police Service, has led to significant improvements in drink-driving enforcement in the Cambodian capital, Phnom Penh.

Best practice demonstration projects

The Global Road Safety Partnership has delivered several road safety best practice demonstration projects in different countries in the region over recent years, including Cambodia, China, Indonesia, Thailand and Vietnam. The following two examples highlight the scope of projects undertaken.

- In China a project was carried out in partnership with the Beijing municipal government, traffic police and local research organisations to improve safety for vulnerable road users at several major intersections. Crash data analysis and techniques to measure traffic conflicts between road users were used to design a program of low-cost engineering treatments that reduced traffic conflicts and improved the behaviour of road users.
- In Thailand with funds from the Japanese Social Development Fund (JSDF) we led a community-based project designed to reduce motorcycle crash-related head injuries by increasing helmet wearing among youth. The project was conducted in two of the poorest provinces in



Figure 1. Indonesian Ministry of Transportation officers carrying out helmet-wearing observation surveys in Palembang in Sumatra



Figure 2. About 150 participants from countries across the Asian region attended the Global Road Safety Partnership's annual regional seminar, held most recently in November 2010 in Cambodia



Figure 3. Key stakeholders in Thailand meet with the Global Road Safety Partnership to plan a national approach to increasing helmet wearing among youth

north-eastern Thailand, and 98 villages and 13 schools were engaged in designing community-based interventions that resulted in a significant increase in helmet wearing. Planning is underway in Thailand to develop the model for further use in all provinces in the country. (See Figure 3).

Support for road safety planning and management

The Global Road Safety Partnership has actively supported regional- and country-level road safety planning and management for many years. We supported the recent establishment of the ASEAN Multi-Sector Road Safety Special Working Group designed to provide a forum for information sharing and planning in the region. At the country level we have provided support for the development of national road safety strategies, including specific activities such as providing experts in road safety management to facilitate planning workshops.

The next steps in Asia for the Global Road Safety Partnership

The Global Road Safety Initiative Phase 2 and the Bloomberg Philanthropies RS10 project are currently central to our activities in Asia for 2011-14. We are, however, actively seeking new opportunities for working in partnership with other organisations and governments in the region, as we are keen to expand our work to ensure the success of the UN Decade of Action for Road Safety.

Issues such as drink driving, helmet wearing, speed, seatbelts, and pedestrian and children's safety will continue to be a key focus for our activities. We intend to work more closely with Red Cross and Red Crescent national societies and encourage them to take a more active role in road safety in the region. Capacity-building activities under the RS10 project in support of the interventions in China, Cambodia, India and Vietnam will continue. We will continue to work closely with our consortium partners to ensure the success of this significant initiative.

The Global Road Safety Initiative Phase 2 will provide funding for a range of activities in the region, with several specific focuses as described below.

City-based road safety management

The Global Road Safety Partnership has developed a city-based road safety management model with proven results through successful trialling in Brazil. The Proactive Partnership Strategy (PPS) involves the development of sustainable partnerships between government, business and civil society in the community to reduce death and injury from road crashes. The model involves working on effective local road crash data collection and analysis, and the development of management structures to plan, implement and monitor interventions. The PPS will be piloted in Asia, starting with selected cities in Cambodia, China and India.

Children's road safety

Children are at severe risk of death or injury on roads in Asia. Road traffic injuries are the second-ranked cause of death

globally for 5- to 14-year-olds, and the leading cause for 15- to 29-year-olds [2]. The Global Road Safety Partnership is taking a strong focus on child road safety projects and, in particular, plans to develop the Safe Routes to School model as an approach in selected countries in Asia. This will include pilot projects in Vietnam and China, with the Chinese pilot building on baseline research work already undertaken. The Sesame Street Foundation has also recently joined the Global Road Safety Partnership, and they are already making positive contributions to our work in children and family road safety.

Continuing to support country- or regional-level road safety management

This important work needs to continue to ensure that effective road safety management exists in low- and middle-income countries in the region. This is essential to ensure that the Decade of Action for Road Safety will bring about sustainable reductions to road trauma in Asia.

Continuing to design and deliver capacity-building programs

We will capitalise on our expertise and capability in designing and implementing capacity-building programs, especially in areas such as enforcement and public education, where we have already established a reputation for expertise and quality in training development and delivery.

Developing and supporting sustainable partnerships

In several countries in the region, locally based Global Road Safety Partnerships have been established. These partnerships provide important support and encouragement to governments to tackle road safety issues and also to conduct their own funded projects and campaigns. Existing partnerships will continue to be supported and opportunities for new country-level partnerships will be developed.

Call to action

We and our partners will need serious help to achieve a significant and sustainable reduction to the high level of road trauma in Asia during the Decade of Action for Road Safety. Road safety agencies and professionals in Australia and New Zealand have the necessary expertise to assist the work in this region. The Global Road Safety Partnership extends an invitation to you to explore ways we may be able to work together to make a real difference to road safety in Asia.

For more information about the Global Road Safety Partnership visit www.GRSProadsafety.org. Ian Hughes can be contacted by email at ianh@dynamicoutcomes.com.au

References

1. http://www.decadeofaction.org/documents/global_plan_en.pdf
2. World Health Organization. Global status report on road safety: Time for action. 2009.