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Road Safety: a step towards achieving the Global Goals

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Summary

Business as usual is not an option if the International Community is to succeed in delivering the Global Goals. Target 3.6 on Road Safety requires a significant uplift in pace of work, a geographical focus that is appropriately balanced between low income and middle income countries, different partners (including climate change and urbanisation networks), different ways of working (particularly with a focus on girls and women) and strong leadership from WHO to ensure a co-ordinated approach that learns from current research and builds on existing evidence.

Introduction

The Global Goals for Sustainable Development give us a framework to work towards eradicating poverty. The Global Goals came into effect to achieve an end to poverty, combat climate change and fight injustice and inequality by 2030. Goals 3, 9 and 11 have transport related targets. Inclusion of target 3.6 (under Goal 3 Health: Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages): “By 2020, halve the number of global deaths and injuries from road traffic accidents” is an acknowledgement of the importance of road safety in delivering the Global Goals.

The UK Government’s Department for International Development (DFID) leads the UK’s work to end extreme poverty. We’re ending the need for aid by creating Jobs; unlocking the potential of girls and women; and helping to save lives when humanitarian emergencies hit. DFID works directly in 28 countries across Africa, Asia and the Middle East.

The UN states that *‘If we are to achieve the Global Goals by 2030 we must start by empowering girls and women. Goals that work for women and girls are goals that will work for the world’*. This is a priority for DFID. To achieve the Global Goals and focus on girls and women the transport community will therefore need to increase focus of delivery of road safety and transport more broadly.

Road safety as a priority

The facts and figures speak for themselves. A few examples to highlight are noted below:

- Road crashes claim 1.25 million lives and injure 78 million people each year - many remain disabled for life. The vast majority of casualties occur in low and middle income countries; many are children.
- Road accidents are the leading cause of death for young people aged 15-29 globally.
- 90% of road crash deaths occur in low and middle income countries (World Health Organisation 2009).
- Road crashes now kill more people each year than HIV, tuberculosis, or malaria (World Bank and University of Washington, 2014).
- The recent WHO report on “Preventing disease through healthy environments” shows unintentional injuries, including road traffic deaths, as one of the top three causes of environment-related deaths (WHO, 2016).

The WHO Status Report 2015 highlights that the situation is worst in low-income countries, where rates are more than double those in high-income countries and where there are a disproportionate number of deaths relative to the (lower) level of motorisation. Specifically on the issue of geographical focus the data in the 2015 WHO Status Report shows that LICs now have worse fatality rates than MICs. This was not the case in the 2010 Status Report and, with this new data, the work of key global road safety players should be balanced appropriately between LICs and MICs.

Officially launched in May 2011, the UN Decade for Action on Road Safety is now at its mid-point in time but not progress. The Global Goal target 3.6 on Road Safety is set to galvanise action and the pace of delivery.

Improved transport sector leadership and co-ordination

Getting to zero poverty by 2030, means doing more and larger economic infrastructure investments in the poorest countries. It means reaching the remote rural poor and working in the most difficult environments. In order to deliver tangible improvements in road safety and on sustainable transport more broadly, the transport sector needs to be co-ordinated and accountable.

There is a strong need for sector wide leadership, coordination and accountability across transport at a global level. Without agreed roles and responsibilities, indicators and monitoring frameworks along with sufficient funding to implement road safety measures, it is unlikely the Global Goals and targets will be achieved.

DFID convened a high level transport meeting in March 2015 where Multi-lateral Development Banks and five bilateral donors discussed the need for a sector wide narrative and improved global sector leadership and co-ordination. DFID suggested the sector could look to other sectoral experience and models for co-ordination, such as the Sustainable Energy for All (SE4ALL) initiative that was set up in 2011 with high level UN and World Bank backing. SE4ALL is currently developing a monitoring framework for the energy Global Goal. A preliminary draft sector narrative from the DFID hosted high level transport meeting was submitted to the UN-High Level Advisory Group on Sustainable Transport (UN-HLAG ST) in June 2015.

The UN-HLAG ST was established in 2014 and is mandated to provide global recommendations on sustainable transport (including relating to the Global Goals). Whilst progress has been slow, in January 2016 it appointed a small group of experts to draft the Global Outlook Report which is due to be launched by November 2016. The UN-HLAG has the potential to make far reaching recommendations for transport on global aid architecture, narrative and monitoring. Although broader

Case study: European Development Fund

The European Development Fund (EDF)¹¹ has an aid budget of €30.5 billion covering both national and regional programmes. Previous EDFs have provided significant resources to support transport. Changes to EDF policy priorities have seen a withdrawal from transport in national programming from 25% to 10% of total EDF 11 funds. The Official Development Assistance (ODA) contribution from the EC has been significant in the transport sector, in reducing the EDF 11 transport portfolio the global ODA contribution for the transport sector is likely to be significantly reduced.

How this will impact on transport more broadly and road safety specifically is yet to be defined. A forward leaning and informed transport sector could work together to understand and better manage significant sectoral changes.

than Road Safety a more co-ordinated and informed global transport sector would have significant efficiencies for Road Safety.

An example of why it is important to have a co-ordinated and informed overview of the transport sector is that significant changes in key players' priorities and the corresponding financing decisions could be planned for and mitigated.

Poverty eradication and economic growth

Worldwide over 1 billion people lack access to roads and transport services, 98% of them in developing countries. This is a major barrier to eradicating poverty and building shared prosperity. Where populations are dense the problems are different. A reliance on cars leads to congestion and pollution which in turn reduces investment opportunity, service efficiency and increases demands on asset management.

Women and girls are especially disadvantaged. Their domestic roles and responsibilities require frequent trips; they also have less access to private vehicles and reliable public transport or intermediate means of transport. By providing affordable, safe transport services in rural and urban areas countries can empower members of the population to engage in economic and social activities. Based on the large majority of drivers killed being male (though risk exposure is no doubt a factor), road safety itself may also be improved by encouraging more female drivers.

Sustainable, safe transport is about creating new opportunities. It enables businesses to grow, generates jobs, and creates new markets. Countries can grow in an inclusive, resilient, low carbon way, and improve their economic competitiveness without potential profits being eroded by excessive transport costs, including the cost of road crashes.

Systematically integrating safety into transport programmes is key. More efficient transport and sustainable infrastructure and services can have a positive impact on economic development. However, increased road accidents and fatalities can be an unintended outcome of transport interventions unless safety is effectively integrated into the design, planning and implementation. Road Safety should therefore be an essential safeguard component in transport programmes. We already know this and, in many circumstances, we know the solutions. Safe design is as important for roads, as it is for buildings, dams, and other infrastructure however road safety is frequently an afterthought and increased fatalities or injuries an unintended outcome.

Enabling green, liveable, inclusive, safe and competitive cities

A total of 70% of the global population is forecast to live in a city by 2050 (WHO, 2014). Between 2000 and 2030, the urban populations of emerging economies will double

from 2 to 4 billion people. The built-up area of cities worldwide will triple from 200,000 to 600,000 square kilometres. Such rapid population growth accompanied by an even faster spatial expansion of cities may lead to low-density development dominated by individual-vehicle transportation which is a largely irreversible pattern (World Bank, 2013).

If cities are well planned they can be “compact, connected and coordinated” and can function as “engines of growth” contributing to economic development, job creation, poverty reduction and potentially a reduction in road accidents (Global Commission on the Economy and Climate, 2014). An integrated and sustainable approach towards urban mobility can help cities realise their economic potential (Kumar and Agarwal, 2013), taking into account different transportation modes; promoting urban transport policies and efficient mass transit; appropriate facilities for walking and cycling; and smart logistic concepts. This integrated and planned approach will also have significant benefits for improved road safety.

DFID’s work on road safety

As part of DFID’s contribution to supporting the Global Goal target on road safety we work at a number of different levels. DFID country offices work on road safety with partner Governments where we support transport programmes. These are specific to the bilateral engagement in country. An example is in Nepal where we have complemented a World Bank programme of transport infrastructure with road safety interventions. Internationally DFID funds the World Bank housed Global Road Safety Facility (GRSF), along with Bloomberg Philanthropies and FIA Foundation. GRSF is assisting LICs and MICs across a wide range of interventions: from seed-funding and technical assistance to advisory services, capacity building, training and knowledge development. In Nigeria, GRSF technical assistance in management capacity, infrastructure safety and road safety enforcement to the Federal Road Safety Corps has yielded an 11% reduction in deaths along project corridors which have seen an increase in traffic flows. DFID chairs the GRSF Board.

DFID funds a number of applied research programmes on transport and each has a theme or cross cutting area that supports research on Road Safety. These include the applied research programme (ReCAP) on low volume rural roads which currently works in nine African and three Asian countries (for further detail see <http://research4cap.org/SitePages/Home.aspx>).

Looking forwards

Transport faces huge challenges more broadly and in the sub-sector of Road Safety in particular. The context is rapidly evolving. Working with new partners and the utilisation of new technologies for recording, collecting, analysing and communicating road safety information is essential.

The Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) is likely to be a large player in Asia on economic infrastructure, and has to date received US\$98bn in financing commitments. The New Development Bank (formerly known as the BRICS bank) also has a clear infrastructure mandate, and is likely to have a similar capitalisation as AIIB. The road safety community must work more closely with these new and important players.

In developed and emerging economies digital technologies are opening new fields of opportunities and revolutionising the transport sector by modifying historic business models, creating new uses and new practices (car sharing, car-pooling, etc.), generalising real-time user information and data collection, and offering efficient tools to improve the effectiveness of traditional transport networks. The road safety community needs to capitalise on technological advances and look for innovative ways to combat road accidents.

Developing countries can opt for a very different development paradigm compared to many industrialised countries that are often locked into costly, high-carbon transport systems largely based on private motorised transport. Greenhouse gas emissions can be decoupled from urban transport development by providing efficient, equitable mass transit and incorporating non-motorised transport in land use planning and urban governance. The road safety community could continue to build strong partnerships with the climate change movement and look for mutually beneficial decoupling of both greenhouse gas emissions and road accidents from increased transport infrastructure.

The failure to integrate road safety into urban and broader transport planning and programmes results in huge human and economic costs. To reduce these costs those working in the transport and related sectors must work differently. This includes:

- **Enhance portfolio flexibility and agility:** Be agile in the approach to new challenges (including climate-smart design, resilience, urbanisation, emerging technologies and financing); be responsive to, and facilitate, political appetite for reform; and help countries take a strategic approach to road safety investments.
- **Maximise opportunities for women, girls and the poorest.** Support female economic empowerment through consultations in transport programme design; ensure equitable access to safe transport services; and address risks of vulnerability (e.g. road safety).
- **Strengthen leadership, coordination, accountability.** Embed incentives for working together on road safety at global and country levels based on a common vision for the transport sector; ensure the geographical focus of road safety reflects the worsening situation in LICs; adopt sector-wide and project specific indicators which track value for money, inclusive growth and jobs; share data and information to reduce costs; and improve mapping of sector financing changes.

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Global enhancement of vehicle safety - the urgency of now

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Introduction

The United Nations (UN) Global Goals for Sustainable Development have set the ambitious goal of reducing road fatalities and serious injuries by 50% by the end of the current UN Decade of Action for Road Safety (2011-2020). The Global Goals represents the UN's strongest ever mandate for action to promote road safety and provides new urgency in the implementation of the Global Plan for the Decade of Action, which recommends actions across the five policy areas of:

- Pillar 1: Road safety management
- Pillar 2: Safer roads and mobility
- Pillar 3: Safer vehicles
- Pillar 4: Safer road users
- Pillar 5: Post-crash response

Under Pillar 3, UN member states are encouraged to apply requirements to ensure new vehicles have seatbelts and anchorages installed that meet regulatory requirements, pass applicable crash test standards and support the adoption of crash avoidance technologies such as Electronic Stability Control (ESC). In April 2016, the UN General Assembly adopted a resolution which included a strong section on vehicle safety, inviting member states that have not already done so to adopt minimum safety standards and safety technologies, providing further endorsement for the importance of safe vehicles.

Safe vehicles is an important pillar under the Safe System approach to road safety and its safety potential in reducing serious trauma by preventing crashes and

protecting occupants is well supported (Newstead et al, 2004). Safe vehicles is amongst the most sustainable road safety intervention available as once a vehicle is designed and manufactured to a safe safety standard and has the appropriate technologies, the safety benefits should continue to accrue throughout the life of the vehicle. It is therefore concerning that there is still a large number of countries that do not apply at least minimum safety standards for vehicles produced and sold; allowing sub-standard cars to be made available to the public.

While significant gains have been made in vehicle safety in high income countries, the same cannot be said in the low and middle income countries who are experiencing rapid increases in motorisation but also account for 90% of global road deaths (WHO, 2015). There is an urgent need to democratise safety globally through the universal application of minimum vehicle safety standards and empowering consumers to purchase the safest car they can afford. Every vehicle sold that does not meet at least minimum safety standards is an opportunity lost. Therefore, with the 2020 goal in mind and with the long lead time for the penetration of technologies and replacement of the vehicle fleet, the time to act is now.

The need for universal application of minimum vehicle safety standards

Not all cars are created equal and some are safer than others. This can be a function of the vehicle safety regulations of the producing country. While the UN World Forum for Harmonisation of Vehicle Regulations provides a legal framework for a range of vehicle safety standards for UN member states to adopt voluntarily, many countries