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**STATUS REPORT ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECADE OF ACTION FOR
ROAD SAFETY IN THE AFRICAN REGION**

Report of the Secretariat

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BACKGROUND

1. Road traffic-specific death rates in the African Region are persistently higher than global averages, that is, 26.6 and 17.4 deaths per 100 000 population respectively. In the African Region, road traffic-related deaths rose from 188 000 in 2001 to 247 000 in 2013, representing a 32% increase in road traffic deaths, compared to a 38% increase in population during the same period. Five of the 10 countries with the highest road traffic deaths globally are in the Region.¹ Half of all road traffic deaths occur among pedestrians.²
2. In recognition of this burden, the United Nations General Assembly adopted Resolution 64/255, proclaiming 2011–2020 the Decade of Action for Road Safety.³ It was determined that the improvement of road safety would hinge on the following five pillars: road safety management; safer roads and mobility; safer vehicles; safer road users; and post-crash response. WHO focuses primarily on building capacity, enhancing the behaviour of road users and improving post-crash care.
3. The motorized road transport system has expanded significantly in all the regions of the world in the past two decades. In sub-Saharan Africa, its growth and inadequate consideration for road safety measures are contributing to road traffic deaths and injuries. This transport system should be considered a key driver of the expansion and provision of services and national and regional integration, as a means of catalyzing economic growth, and as a vital component for the achievement of national and regional health and socioeconomic goals and targets.⁴
4. In September 2015, the goals of the Decade were augmented by ambitious global targets within the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (SDG 3 Target 6). SDG 11 Target 2 calls for access to safe, affordable, accessible and sustainable transport systems for all by 2030.
5. This document describes the level of implementation of the Global Plan for the Decade of Action for Road Safety 2011-2020 in the WHO African Region, identifies the key issues and challenges in achieving the targets and proposes priority actions that Member States should consider in order to meet these targets.

ISSUES AND CHALLENGES

6. **Weak Legislation on risk factors for road safety in the African Region.** While most countries in the Region have legislation on the risk factors for road traffic crashes, including drink-driving, speeding, lack of motorcycle helmets, seat belts and child restraints, most of it does not meet the best practice legislative criteria as defined by WHO. Moreover, in most countries in the Region, enforcement of the existing key road safety laws is weak, thus limiting the ability of legislation to achieve its full potential. There is also no strong legislation on other risk factors that affect safe driving such as harmful use of alcohol, non-compliance with traffic regulations, medical conditions, fatigue, and the use of narcotic, psychotropic and psychoactive substances, cell phones and other electronic and texting devices.⁵

¹ Global Road Safety Facility, The World Bank; institute for health Metrics and Evaluation. *Transport for Health: The Global Burden of Disease from Motorized Road Transport*. Seattle, WA; IHME; Washington, DC: The World Bank, 2014.

² http://www.who.int/violence_injury_prevention/road_safety_status/2015/en/, (accessed 23//04/2017).

³ http://www.who.int/violence_injury_prevention/publications/road_traffic/UN_GA_resolution-54-255-en.pdf?ua=1 (accessed 20 April 2017).

⁴ The World Bank. *Safe, Clean, and Affordable. Transport for Development: the World Bank Group's Transport Business Strategy for 2008-2012*. Washington, DC: World Bank Group, 2008.

⁵ Road Traffic safety in the African Region, Factsheet 2015.

7. **Inadequate multisectoral coordination of road safety activities.** In most countries in the Region, there is weak coordination and partnership among stakeholders in key sectors involved in road safety such as transport, health, urban planning and law enforcement. Coordination of road safety efforts across multiple sectors and stakeholders is critical for success.

8. **Low level of investment in road safety interventions.** The *Global Status Report on Road Safety 2015*,⁶ showed that 36⁷ Member States had a dedicated national strategy for road traffic safety that was fully or partially funded, compared with 11⁸ in 2011. Twenty-six Member States had set targets for reducing fatalities in 2013-2014.⁹ Although in most Member States there is earmarked funding for road safety activities, this funding is often inadequate to ensure that the necessary infrastructure and capacities to rapidly scale up road safety are available and adequate. In addition, the level of investment in safe, clean, and affordable public transport systems is low.

9. **Poor data systems for reporting of road traffic adverse events.** Information on non-fatal injuries is scarce: 24 Member States.¹⁰ still have no classification system for non-fatal injuries, 16 reported¹¹ having a national emergency room-based injury surveillance system and only three have data on disability arising from road traffic injuries.¹² During 2015-2016, sixty-two persons from 21 English-speaking countries and 14 from 14 French-speaking countries were trained in road safety data systems.¹³ Most countries in the Region do not collect regular data on intermediate road safety indicators such as drink-driving, motorcycle helmet, seat belt and child restraint usage. In addition, the vital registration data collection system is weak. This, coupled with the non-standardization of the definition of road traffic death as well as cause of death has resulted in gross underreporting of road traffic deaths and severe injuries.

10. **Significant burden of road traffic injuries and disabilities on health systems.** Managing the high burden of road traffic-related injuries and disabilities poses a challenge for weak and overstretched health systems. The weak post-crash response in some countries results in avoidable deaths.

⁶ All Member States except: Burundi, Comoros, Equatorial Guinea and South Sudan.

⁷ Algeria, Angola, Benin, Botswana, Benin, Cabo Verde, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Gabon, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Kenya, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Niger, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, South Africa and Zambia.

⁸ Burkina Faso, Central African Republic, Côte d'Ivoire, Equatorial Guinea, Ghana, Kenya, Lesotho, Mauritania, Mauritius, Rwanda and Zambia.

⁹ Factsheet on Road Safety in the African Region 2015, Brazzaville, WHO, Regional Office for Africa, 2016; http://www.who.int/violence_injury_prevention/road_safety_status/2015/Road_Safety_AFRO_for_web.pdf?ua=1, accessed, 3 April 2017.

¹⁰ Angola, Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Cote d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Gabon, Gambia, Guinea-Bissau, Lesotho, Mali, Mauritania, Mauritius, Niger, Senegal, Seychelles, South Africa, Togo, Uganda, United Republic of Tanzania and Zimbabwe.

¹¹ Angola, Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, Eritrea, Gambia, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mauritius, Mozambique, Niger, Rwanda, Sierra Leone and Zambia.

¹² Chad, Gambia and Uganda.

¹³ Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Côte d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Gambia, Ghana, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mauritania, Mozambique, Namibia, Niger, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal, Sierra Leone, South Africa, South Sudan, Swaziland, United Republic of Tanzania, Togo, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

ACTIONS PROPOSED

11. Member States should:

- (a) Develop or implement national road safety plans, and strengthen, adopt and enforce comprehensive legislation on key road safety risk factors, in line with the Global Plan for the Decade of Action for Road Safety 2011–2020 and the Sustainable Development Goals.
- (b) Fast-track the implementation of existing commitments such as the Brasilia Declaration on Road Safety; resolution WHA69.7 and UN General Assembly resolutions.¹⁴
- (c) Sign up to the minimum international vehicle standards as requirements for manufacturers and assemblers, and limit the importation and sale of substandard vehicles.
- (d) Improve the quality of road safety data by strengthening efforts to collect appropriate, reliable, and comparable data on road traffic injury prevention and management, including the impact of road traffic crashes on health and development as well as the economic impacts and cost-effectiveness of interventions.
- (e) Optimize care for victims of road traffic crashes by implementing WHO recommended guidelines for pre-hospital and facility-based emergency care.
- (f) Develop and conduct appropriate health promotion and social marketing campaigns to raise awareness on road safety.
- (g) Strengthen surveillance systems in order to collect appropriate, reliable, and comparable data, including the impact of road traffic crashes on health and development.
- (h) Develop a national road safety strategy, paying particular attention to the most vulnerable road users.
- (i) Legislate and enforce laws against risk factors of road traffic accidents, especially harmful use of alcohol.
- (j) Strengthen road users' knowledge of road safety and risk factors of road traffic accidents to reduce incidence of non-compliance. Coordinate preventive actions with the ministry of education and introduce road safety education in schools.

12. WHO and partners should:

- (a) Support research and result-sharing to facilitate evidence-based approaches to preventing road traffic crashes, deaths and injuries and mitigating their consequences.
- (b) Further standardize indicators and reporting practices, including on road traffic fatalities, injuries, and risk factors, with a view to producing comparable information; and building on existing best practices in this area.
- (c) Continue to support Member States to prioritize key actions on road safety such as the implementation of the Global Plan for the Decade of Action for Road Safety 2011-2020.
- (d) Increase coordination among the various stakeholders and promote multisectoral collaboration.
- (e) Mobilize resources to increase awareness on prevention of road traffic accidents in the Region.
- (f) Support collection of data on the burden of disability due to road traffic accidents.

13. The Regional Committee considered and endorsed the actions proposed.

¹⁴ WHA, 2016.