



# Practical guide on road safety

A toolkit for National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies



GLOBAL  
ROAD SAFETY  
PARTNERSHIP



International Federation  
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

# The International Federation's Global Agenda (2006–2010)

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Over the next five years, the collective focus of the Federation will be on achieving the following goals and priorities:

## Our goals

**Goal 1:** Reduce the number of deaths, injuries and impact from disasters.

**Goal 2:** Reduce the number of deaths, illnesses and impact from diseases and public health emergencies.

**Goal 3:** Increase local community, civil society and Red Cross Red Crescent capacity to address the most urgent situations of vulnerability.

**Goal 4:** Promote respect for diversity and human dignity, and reduce intolerance, discrimination and social exclusion.

## Our priorities

Improving our local, regional and international capacity to respond to disasters and public health emergencies.

Scaling up our actions with vulnerable communities in health promotion, disease prevention and disaster risk reduction.

Increasing significantly our HIV/AIDS programming and advocacy.

Renewing our advocacy on priority humanitarian issues, especially fighting intolerance, stigma and discrimination, and promoting disaster risk reduction.

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2007

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## 1.

# Introduction

This practical guide on road safety was produced jointly by the secretariat of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies and the Global Road Safety Partnership (GRSP).

It is intended as a summary of road safety problems and solutions worldwide.

It also describes the activities of National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies in the field of road safety and suggests possible improvements. In addition, the toolkit includes 20 recommendations that can be undertaken by the National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies. The guide concentrates on practical measures. As we shall see, action is urgently needed.

Of the 185 National Societies that were sent questionnaires about their road safety practices, 140 replied. Three-quarters of the National Societies sent in reports, from countries representing 90 per cent of the world's population. Their 2005 activities are illustrated in this toolkit by means of world maps, as this very visual format makes it easy to see who does what and where, and can thus encourage National Societies to establish contact with each other in order to exchange experiences.

National Societies are already active in the field of road safety. They mobilize decision-makers, create awareness among the public at large and young people, and offer courses in first aid. Many also assist with emergency aid work. These activities are compatible with the mandate of the Red Cross Red Crescent, whose main aim is to alleviate human suffering, particularly that of the most vulnerable people. It is this segment of society that is at greatest risk of being injured or killed in a road crash.

The main challenge of road safety is to bring about a change in road user behaviour. Road users should learn to consider the road as a shared public space rather than as an area given over to violence. Common respect for other road users is the basis for and key message of this practical road safety guide. Solutions do exist and we have a moral obligation to make every effort to apply them, especially in view of the fact that investments in road safety improvement benefit society at large.

We hope that this practical guide will help to make people more aware that road crashes are a global scourge and that it will encourage the Red Cross Red Crescent to make an even greater effort to improve the situation in their own country.



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Deputy Secretary-General  
International Federation  
of Red Cross and  
Red Crescent Societies



David Silcock  
Chief Executive  
Global Road Safety  
Partnership

## 2. Summary

This practical guide is divided by theme and covers all the basic issues concerning road safety. It recalls the **basic facts and good practices** in use at present. At the end of each section (starting from section 6), it proposes a series of practical measures that National Societies can consider taking. Recommendations are outlined for each theme in the section entitled **Red Cross Red Crescent action**. These recommendations (20 in total) are also grouped together in section 16.

The guide also contains eight world maps. The first two maps show road mortality by country and by continent. The remaining six maps highlight the outcome of a broad global survey of National Societies and illustrate their activities in the area of road safety by country and by topic. These maps present an excellent **overall picture of the road safety activities conducted by National Societies**.

Sections 3 to 5 are devoted to road safety problems in the world in general, their origins, scope, major causes and possible solutions. The aim of these sections is to provide members of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement with **general material to better understand and analyse this major public health phenomenon**, which is worsening rapidly. Today, road crashes kill 1.2 million people a year and injure 50 million more. In other words, road crashes account for as many casualties as major pandemics such as tuberculosis or malaria.

Sections 6 to 8 deal with the problems of **assessing the situation of the road network, and organizing and financing road safety**, which are the foundations of any sound road safety policy and a precondition for action. We have tried to provide readers and members of the Movement with the basic arguments to help them grasp the organizational issues involved in improving road safety and become active in defending and promoting good road safety practices.

Sections 9 to 15 examine **practical field measures**, such as mobilizing decision-makers, creating public awareness, improving the enforcement of traffic laws, training young people, improving emergency services and first aid for road users, promoting a road safety culture within National Societies and encouraging partnerships. In each of these areas we survey the problems, highlight practices that work and offer suggestions for measures that can be taken by National Societies. These sections also include maps outlining current Movement activities, which are to be welcomed and encouraged.

Finally, section 16 draws a conclusion and summarizes the recommendations made to the Movement's members so that National Societies can contribute even more to the reducing the incidence and social burden of road crashes in the world.

## 3.

# Initial phases of the road safety problem

Everyone is a road user. For most people, since childhood, the road has stood for discovery and freedom. “Taking to the road”, whether figurative or literal, means communicating, seeing other places and other people, and often other cultures. On a more practical level, as well as an economic one, roads represent a means for travelling to work and transporting goods. They provide access to rural areas, which would otherwise be very isolated. There is obviously a very close link between mobility and development. Roads account for 90 per cent of all transport in the world.

### The 1960s and 1970s in the West

The large-scale shift of transport to the road and the onset of rapid motorization began at the end of the 1950s (except in North America, where the phenomenon began earlier) when the use of motorcars became commonplace in Western countries. As the number of road vehicles rose steeply, so too did the number of serious crashes.

In the early 1970s, the slaughter on the roads reached unprecedented heights in high-income countries. Every year, road crashes took the life of one person in 3,000 and the trend continued to worsen. It was at this point that people first began to react against the fatalistic and silent acceptance of the human drama unfolding on the roads.

It took more than ten years for people in high-income countries to realize that this passive attitude needed to change and that road usage should be better organized. It also took ten years for experts to understand that most road crashes and road crash casualties are due to four major factors: failure to use seat belts and crash helmets, speeding and driving under the influence of alcohol.

*Road casualties in France, (1956-2005)*



Under pressure from road crash victims' associations, the media and public personalities, Western governments finally reacted during the mid-1970s and introduced new legislation, which was duly enforced, initially concerning seat belts and speed limits. The effect was amazing, as can be seen in the road casualty graph for France since 1956. This trend is fairly typical for most Western European countries at that time. In the months following the introduction of these two measures, mortality rates due to road crashes stopped climbing.

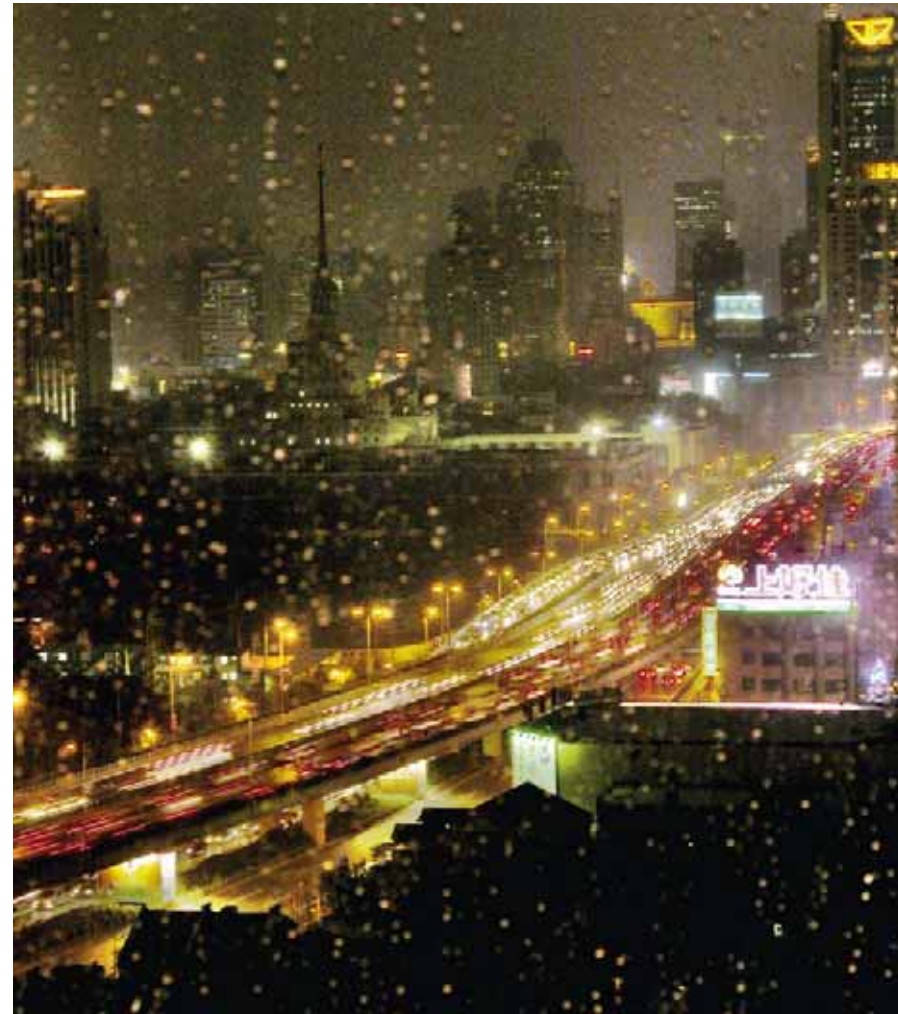
Gradually road safety departments were set up in most high-income countries. These departments were provided with the necessary resources and began to coordinate all public services around the same objective: reducing the frequency and severity of road crashes. The compulsory wearing of crash helmets and laws pertaining to drinking and driving were introduced and proved extremely effective.

The curve also shows that it took France 30 years (until 1990) to get back to the road mortality levels of the 1960s. Road safety is a long-term commitment. With growth in the number of both vehicles and road users in general, the global road safety problem is worsening each year, which is why measures must be launched immediately.

## The present situation in low- to middle-income countries

The pattern of the 1960s in the West has been repeated over the last ten years in low- and middle-income countries. Motorization rates have increased rapidly. The roads are frequented by a great diversity of users, particularly young pedestrians, who constitute the group at highest risk of being involved in a road crash. Although private cars do not yet outnumber other motor vehicles such as motorcycles, they will do so soon. Vehicle fleets including trucks, minibuses and taxis are also growing in number, while motorcycles have become the most popular form of family transport in South-East Asia and West Africa.

The number of motor vehicles in operation is growing rapidly, generating a surprising degree of violence on the road. This situation is likely to worsen unless firm, coordinated measures are taken at the national and international levels.



## 4.

# The scale of road safety problems in the world

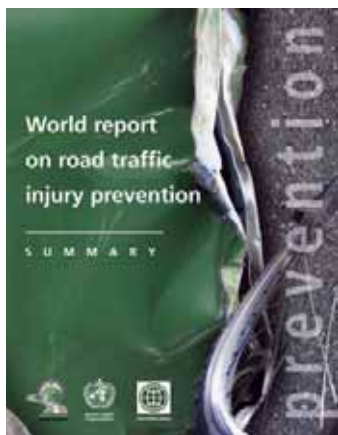
### Recognizing the problem

Public awareness of death and injury on the roads in the world is quite a recent phenomenon and is due partly to the publication in 2004 of the *World report on road traffic injury prevention*, produced jointly by the World Bank and the World Health Organization (WHO). This report, which was translated into six languages, gives an idea of the scale of the crisis and proposes practical recommendations based on current knowledge about what works.

Three thousand people, including 500 children, are killed every day on the world's roads. More than eight out of ten deaths occur in low- and middle-income countries. This amounts to 1.2 million deaths a year. In addition, more than 50 million people are seriously injured; many are disabled for life. It is also worth noting that these figures, as shocking as they are, are an underestimate of the real scale of the problem. Due to underreporting and insufficient data collection, many low- and middle-income countries do not know exactly how many of their citizens die or are injured in road crashes annually.

### Alarming trends

The *World report* indicates that the number of road crash fatalities will increase worldwide by 60 per cent by 2020. Although they will continue to fall by 20 per cent in high-income countries, they are likely to grow by 80 per cent in low- and middle-income countries unless targeted steps are taken immediately.



Road crashes already kill as many people annually as major pandemics such as malaria or tuberculosis. They are the first cause of mortality among men and women aged between ten and 45, except in the countries worst affected by HIV/AIDS. This comparison illustrates the gravity of the problem and the urgency to take decisive action.

## The very high cost of road crashes

In low-income countries, the cost of road crashes is estimated to amount to 1 per cent of gross domestic product (GDP), not including the added burden of human suffering, which is not quantifiable. One per cent of GDP is the equivalent of the public development aid received by low-income countries each year. This situation is particularly unacceptable considering that funding invested in road safety is very quickly recovered, often with added profit.

In fact, road safety is without doubt an area where action by the public authorities can be profitable. Investing in road safety leads to economic savings while protecting both a country's current population and its future generations.

Making road safety a priority should not be equated with creating added burdens for road users, as is sometimes associated with the implementation of new or more stringent traffic laws such as speed limits or seat-belt laws. Making road safety a priority means placing a higher value on life and respecting others in the community we share.



Thierry Prat/www.thierryprat.com

Thierry Prat/Corbis Sygma

## 5.

# Understanding road safety and the measures needed

All countries which have managed to reverse sustainably the rising trend of road casualties in the past 30 years have one thing in common: **political awareness**. Unless policy-makers are won over to the issue of road safety, little can be done. The new thinking about road safety outlined in the World report can be summarized as follows:

- Crashes are not an inevitable consequence of economic growth and they create a considerable economic burden to society (in terms of lives and money lost).
- Road crash injury is largely preventable and predictable; it is a human-made problem amenable to rational analysis and countermeasures.
- Tested, technically simple remedies are available, which can produce considerable returns for a relatively small investment.

### The Haddon Matrix

Phase		Human	Vehicles and equipment	Environment
Pre-crash	Crash prevention	Information Attitudes Impairment Police enforcement	Roadworthiness Lighting Braking Handling Speed management	Road design and road layout Speed limits Pedestrian facilities
Crash	Injury prevention during the crash	Use of restraints Impairment	Seat belts Occupant restraints Other safety devices Crash-protective design	Crash-protective roadside objects
Post-crash	Life sustaining	First-aid skill Access to medics	Ease of access Fire risk	Rescue facilities Congestion

This matrix illustrates the interaction between the three factors (human, vehicle and infrastructure) in the course of the three phases of a crash: before, during and after the impact.

The growing political awareness in high-income countries led rapidly to the establishment of special road safety departments, which could put forward action plans coordinated and funded by multiple relevant sectors.

Road crashes often result from a series of root causes: the vehicle (a factor in 5 to 10 per cent of crashes), road infrastructure (to which 10 to 20 per cent of crashes may be attributed) and road user behaviour (which is responsible at least in part for some 80 to 90 per cent of road crashes).

It is important to consider the vehicle/the road/the user as a system. The interactions between users and the physical elements are critical. Road and vehicle design must allow for human errors.

## The vehicle

Modern vehicles are considerably safer than older models. Manufacturers tend to agree that it will take time for future technological breakthroughs to make more advanced safety improvements. Technical safety standards and annual vehicle testing are compulsory in high-income countries.

In contrast, low- and middle-income countries often have a substandard vehicle fleet, which exacerbate the road safety problem. This is particularly true for commercial vehicles such as taxis, buses and trucks, which account on average for 50 per cent of all vehicles in those countries. Effective and independent technical testing needs to be introduced as soon as possible in particular for commercial fleets. Testing must be strict where the vital safety functions of vehicles are concerned, such as braking, shocks and lighting.

Another matter of concern in low- and middle-income countries is the overloading of commercial vehicles transporting goods or passengers (or both at once, as is often the case). It is essential to have regulations establishing maximum loads and that regular checks take place. Greater improvement of the public and commercial transport sector is one of the best ways of avoiding such overloading.

Although the standard of a vehicle's safety features is a critical part of the road safety system, substandard vehicles are still only the third main cause of road crashes. Road infrastructure is second.

## The road infrastructure

The road infrastructure, considered as a whole (including road surface, road signs and design), is a significant safety factor. Road designs should recognize that humans make mistakes and try to minimize the consequences of human error.

It has been shown that some low-cost infrastructure improvements can substantially reduce the occurrence of road crashes and their severity. Examples of im-

provements include the separation of different types of traffic, better road markings and road signs, safer paths for pedestrians and two-wheelers, the construction of sidewalks or pavements and more visible pedestrian crossings, and slower traffic speeds (with the use of road humps, rumble strips and roundabouts).

On existing roads, these improvements should first be made at high-risk spots, where many crashes occur, especially at the entry and exit of built-up areas and areas of high activity (such as markets and schools).

The same improvements should be incorporated in the design of new roads, which may otherwise become a source of crashes in the future. It is essential that road construction budgets for future roads include a provision for safety, which is by no means the case everywhere in the world. Practical technical guides are already available.

Unsafe road infrastructure is a critical root cause of road crashes but it is by no means the main cause.



## Human behaviour

The behaviour of road users is, in fact, the main cause of road crashes and road crash injury and death. Among the many risk factors involved in causing road crashes or increasing injury severity, the four most common are:

- 1 the failure to wear seat belts
- 2 the failure to wear crash helmets
- 3 driving at excessive or unsuitable speeds; and
- 4 driving under the influence of alcohol.

Each of these primary risk factors is involved in 30 to 50 per cent of fatal or disabling crashes worldwide, irrespective of the country. Countries which have introduced targeted action plans to combat at least one of the above risk factors have succeeded in reducing road crash fatalities by 20 to 40 per cent within a few years, even when the trend was previously rising steeply.

Of course, there are other substantial risk factors, such as driver fatigue (which affects long-distance commercial transport drivers in particular), the use of mobile telephones, driving under the influence of drugs, failure to observe safety distances and a lack of visual aids for drivers. None of these risk factors should be overlooked.

There are also the basic rules of the Highway Code, which users should comply with, such as the rules for giving way, overtaking, traffic lights and no-entry signs.

For brevity and greatest impact, we have deliberately concentrated in this report on the four major risk factors, which are the cause of most road deaths.

## The four major risk factors

**Wearing seat belts** can reduce the risk of death or serious injury by 50 per cent in the event of a crash. This is the most effective priority measure for injury reduction and the easiest to implement to protect vehicle occupants in a road crash.



**ALWAYS USE YOUR SEATBELT**

Seat belt toolkit manual – FIA Foundation

It is a simple, easy gesture that should become a habit.

All modern vehicles are equipped with a standardized belt system so that users do not need to pay separately for seat-belt installation. Checking the use of seat belts is easy and requires no special equipment or training for traffic police officers. It is advisable to proceed in stages, beginning with the compulsory use of seat belts in the front of the vehicle, then in the rear seats, including the use of special restraints for children.

It should be noted that air bags are not a substitute for seat restraints and the two measures must be used together.

**Wearing a crash helmet** by motorcyclists reduces the risk of brain damage – which leads in many cases either to death or to mental disabilities – by 70 per cent. This is a priority, especially in some countries in South-East Asia and West Africa, where motorcycles account for up to 75 per cent of all registered vehicles.

The use of crash helmets is more difficult to enforce than the use of seat belts. Indeed, users need first to buy a helmet, which costs about US\$ 10 and whose qual-



ity should be certified according to an agreed national standard. Government incentives, such as tax relief on the sale of helmets, should be considered in low-income countries. Another worthwhile initiative would be to encourage motorcycle shops to sell helmets together with the motorcycles.

Although heat is a major factor in many countries, the supply of useful “tropical” crash helmets is still inadequate. Also, users tend to give many excuses for not wearing a helmet, such as “it prevents me from seeing/hearing”; “it is ugly”, or “it messes up my hair”.

As in the case of other risk factors, it is beneficial to explain to the public why wearing a crash helmet is important and providing them with the scientific arguments before making helmets compulsory.

Wearing seat belts in the front seat and helmets is already compulsory in most countries, but the rules are poorly enforced in about 70 per cent of them.

**Speed limits** are also essential to reduce road crash deaths, especially among young pedestrians, who account for 50 per cent of road crash casualties in low- and middle-income countries.

As noted above, a number of alterations need be made to the road infrastructure in order to force drivers to slow down in certain places. Provided that it is well

signed, the speed hump is one of the most effective and cost-effective road safety improvements.

An effort must be made at the same time to change the behaviour of users and to convince them that speed is a risk. Here, too, there are scientific arguments for speed reduction that can be put forward to the public. They must be constantly repeated in public campaigns and drivers must be encouraged to behave respectfully and non-aggressively.

Speed limits exist in most countries. The limits taught to learners by driving schools are quickly forgotten if they are not clearly indicated on road signs and if law enforcement is weak.

Enforcing speed limits, unlike seat-belt checks, does require some investment. Training and equipping police officials to use mobile and/or fixed radar appliances require some expense, but this will pay for itself very quickly through the collection of fines when such a system is in place and functioning properly.

**Driving under the influence of alcohol**, finally, is responsible, for 30 to 50 per cent of road deaths and serious casualties depending on the country. The maximum legal limit beyond which drivers are liable to penalties in most Western countries



is 0.5 grams per litre. Scientific studies have shown, however, that even at this authorized maximum rate, the risk of a crash is double the risk taken by a person who has not drunk any alcohol.



Mike Winnett

While humans vary widely in their reaction to alcohol, in broad terms this is equivalent to about two 25cc glasses of beer or two 3cc glasses of whisky (or other 40° alcoholic beverage). For women, young people, the elderly and lightweight people, the limit of 0.5g/l may be reached by drinking even less. Consuming coffee, water or food does not lower alcohol content. There is no magic recipe. Eliminating alcohol from the system is a question of time. For example, for some individuals it can take two hours to eliminate the alcoholic effects of one 25cc glass of beer.

It is worth remembering this, as most people do not know what 0.5 grams of alcohol per litre of blood means, how this limit is reached and how long the effects of alcohol on the body are likely to persist.

Every additional glass of alcohol increases a driver's likelihood of taking risks and further impairs the judgement and physical skills needed to operate a motor vehicle safely. More than half of the world's countries lack legislation that sets a clear maximum limit on blood alcohol content for drivers and penalties for offenders. Establishing legislation is the first step to take. However the best advice for drivers is not to drink at all before driving.

Even where legislation does exist in low- and middle-income countries, it is very rarely applied. The general public is often unfamiliar with the drinking and driving laws, which are often insufficiently enforced by traffic police. In many cases, the police are not equipped with alcohol tests for drivers and, in general, laws without enforcement are useless.

## Changing the behaviour of road users

Road user behaviour may be changed in various ways. There are short-term measures, which can be introduced immediately, and long-term measures, which are no less important but take more time both to implement and to bring about the desired results.

One of the short-term measures that can be taken is to launch large-scale information campaigns highlighting the facts, enforcement and penalties related to the major risk factors noted above. It is generally the case that the greatest impact is made by a combination of information campaigns and enforcement.

In the longer term, road safety education should be included as a part of the school curriculum and the quality of teaching at driving schools should be evaluated and improved where necessary.

## Post-crash management

An issue of additional critical importance in reducing road crash fatalities and injuries concerns post-crash management. This is not preventive but remedial action that involves improving pre-hospital emergency and rescue medical

services, as well as the rehabilitation of disabled victims.

*All these topics will be looked at again in this practical guide.*

# Measures needed to improve road safety

## Five emergency measures

- Increasing national awareness of the problem of road safety, first among decision-makers.
- Establishing a system for the collection and analysis of crash data (causes of risk and black spots).
- Establishing a lead agency for road safety responsible for preparing and implementing a coordinated plan of action.
- Combating the four major risk factors through mass awareness campaigns backed up by a dedicated system of enforcement and penalties.
- Encouraging the involvement of the private sector and national associations.

## Five long-term measures

- Improving the general condition of vehicles.
- Introducing safety features in all existing and planned road systems.
- Improving or introducing road safety education in schools and evaluating and improving the quality of driver training and testing.
- Improving emergency services and the care of road crash victims and those disabled in road crashes.
- Encouraging international cooperation.

## 6.

# Assessing the situation on the road network

It is not always easy to be fully aware of the road safety situation in one's own country. It can be even more difficult to compare it with the situation in other countries.

## Collecting crash data

Details are ideally required on where and when a crash occurred, the people and vehicles involved, the circumstances and causes of the crashes, and the material and human damage.

This information is essential to understand the factors involved in individual road crashes. Detailed crash data is also necessary to show the political authorities the scope of the road safety problem, identify the kinds of targeted initiatives needed to prevent crashes and injury in a country and assess the impact of any measures taken.

In most countries, the traffic police are responsible for collecting and maintaining information on road crashes, including noting the details of each road crash at the scene and reporting on all findings. The police should be given access to information concerning the injuries of road crash victims, who have been treated in the hospital, in order to be able to report on the nature of their injuries. Post-crash data collection that includes hospital data makes comprehensive reporting on the consequences of each crash possible, including injuries, fatalities and long-term disabilities. The duration of the post-crash follow-up period varies from country to country from zero to 30 days. Monitoring of road crash injuries is critical in developing a picture of the actual scale of the road crash and road crash injury problem in a country.

Experience shows that the simplest solution is to give the police the responsibility for gathering all data related to crash victims. It may also be noted that there are standard data collection forms in use in practically all regions of the world, which could be exchanged among countries. User-friendly software programmes are also available to computerize data processing and analysis.

## Lack of data and underestimation of the road crash injury problem

In countries that have no system in place for tracking crash victims in hospitals, road deaths can be underestimated by up to 200 per cent in some cases. Mortality data must take account of deaths both at the crash scene and subsequently in the hospital, which is not the case in the majority of low- and middle-income countries, i.e., in 80 per cent of the world.

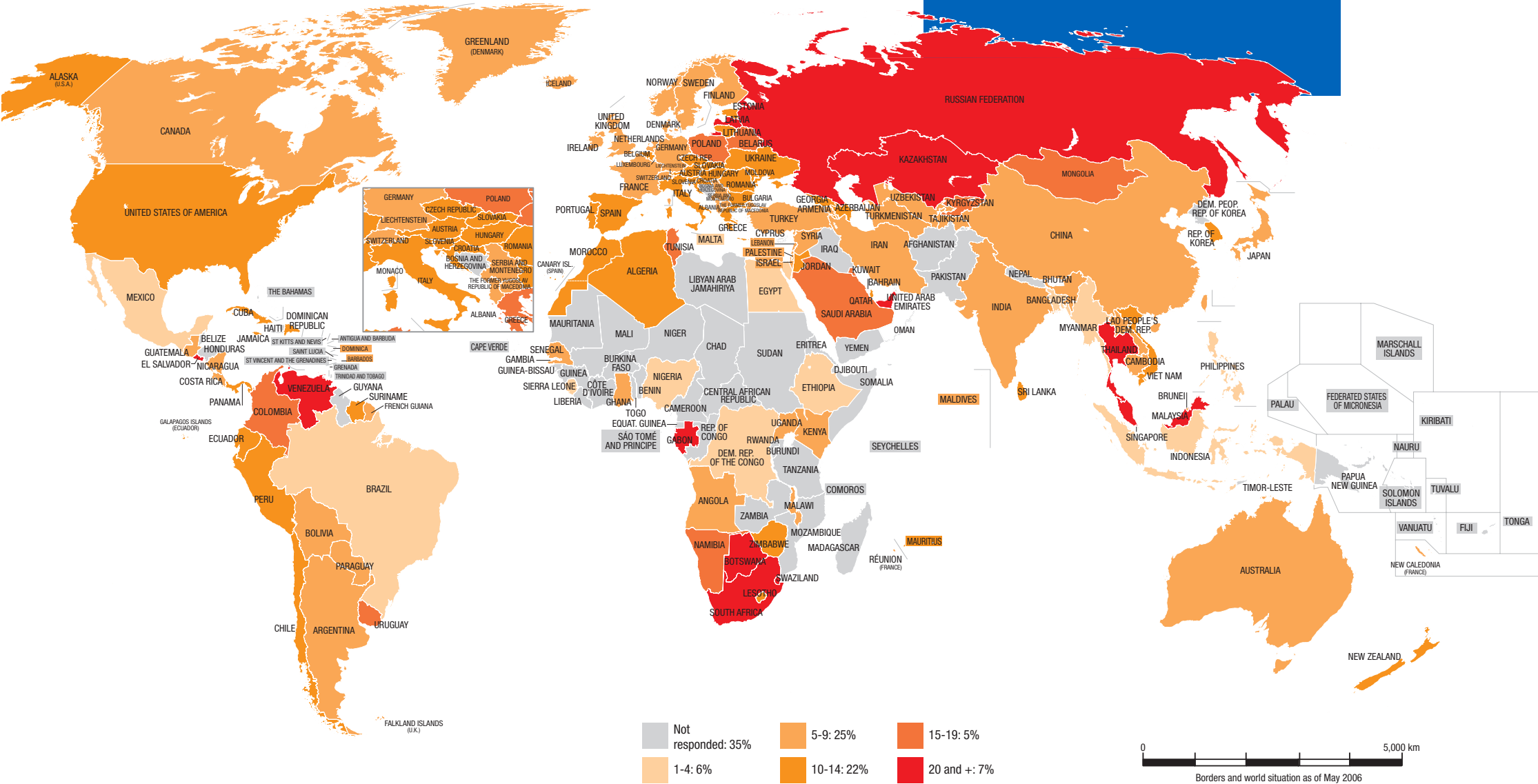
Some countries maintain a reliable road crash data collection system, while others take account only of damage occurring at the crash scene, and still others maintain no centralized data management system at all. This diversity makes it difficult if not impossible to make exact comparisons of the road safety situation among countries worldwide. While not perfect, existing figures do provide insight into the scale of the global road crash and road crash injury problem.

## Road crash mortality in individual countries

Several indicators must be considered simultaneously (and over time) in order to assess the road safety situation in a country. The factors to be considered include the size and type of road network, the type and number of vehicles, the number

### Map 1. Road mortality in 2004 per 100,000 inhabitants in each country

In some countries the available mortality statistics refer to years before 2004. Rather than colour these countries in grey (which already covers a very broad area), we prefer in such cases to take the year closest to 2004 (starting from 2000).



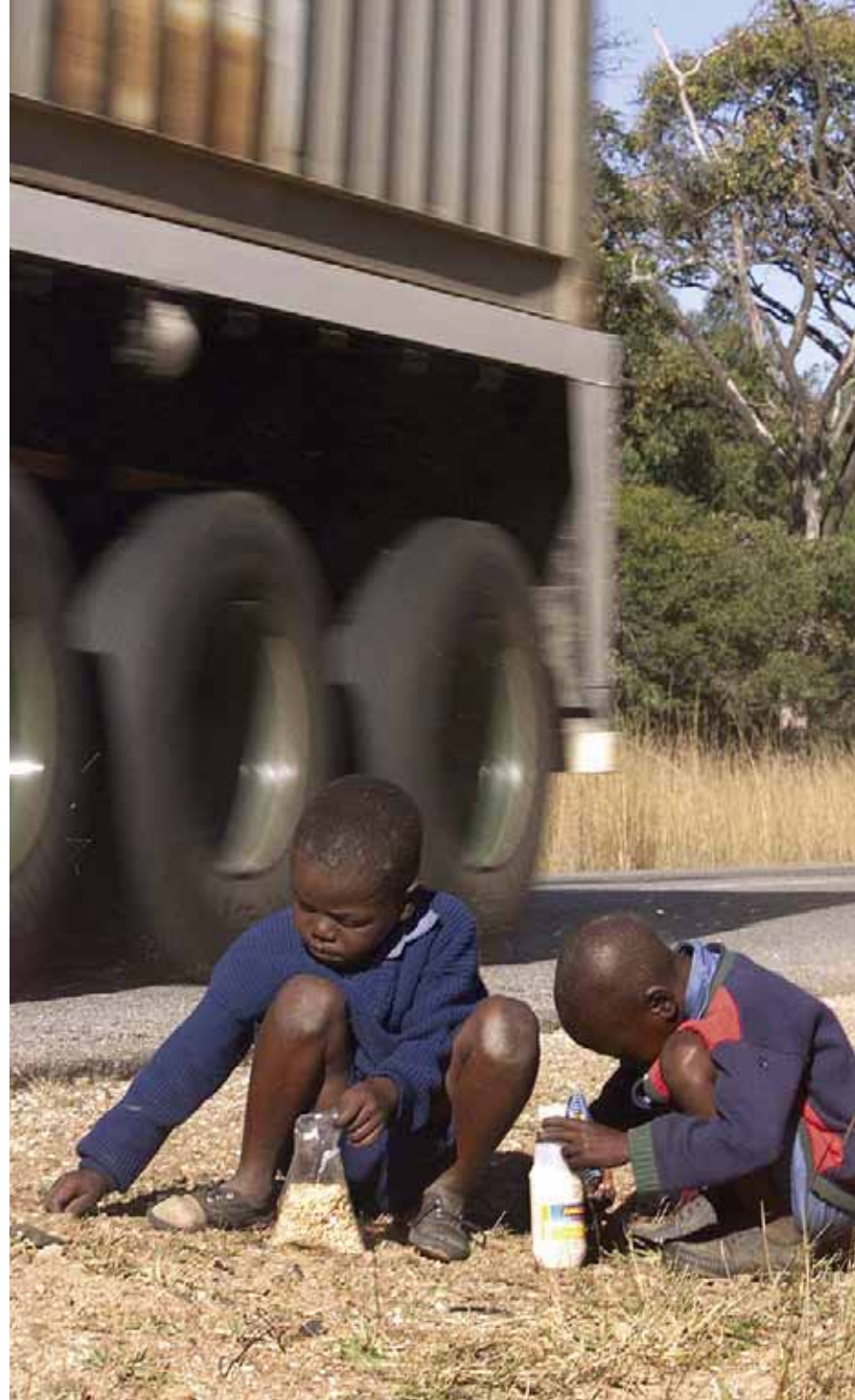
of inhabitants, the number of crashes, the number of (light and serious) injuries and the number of deaths.

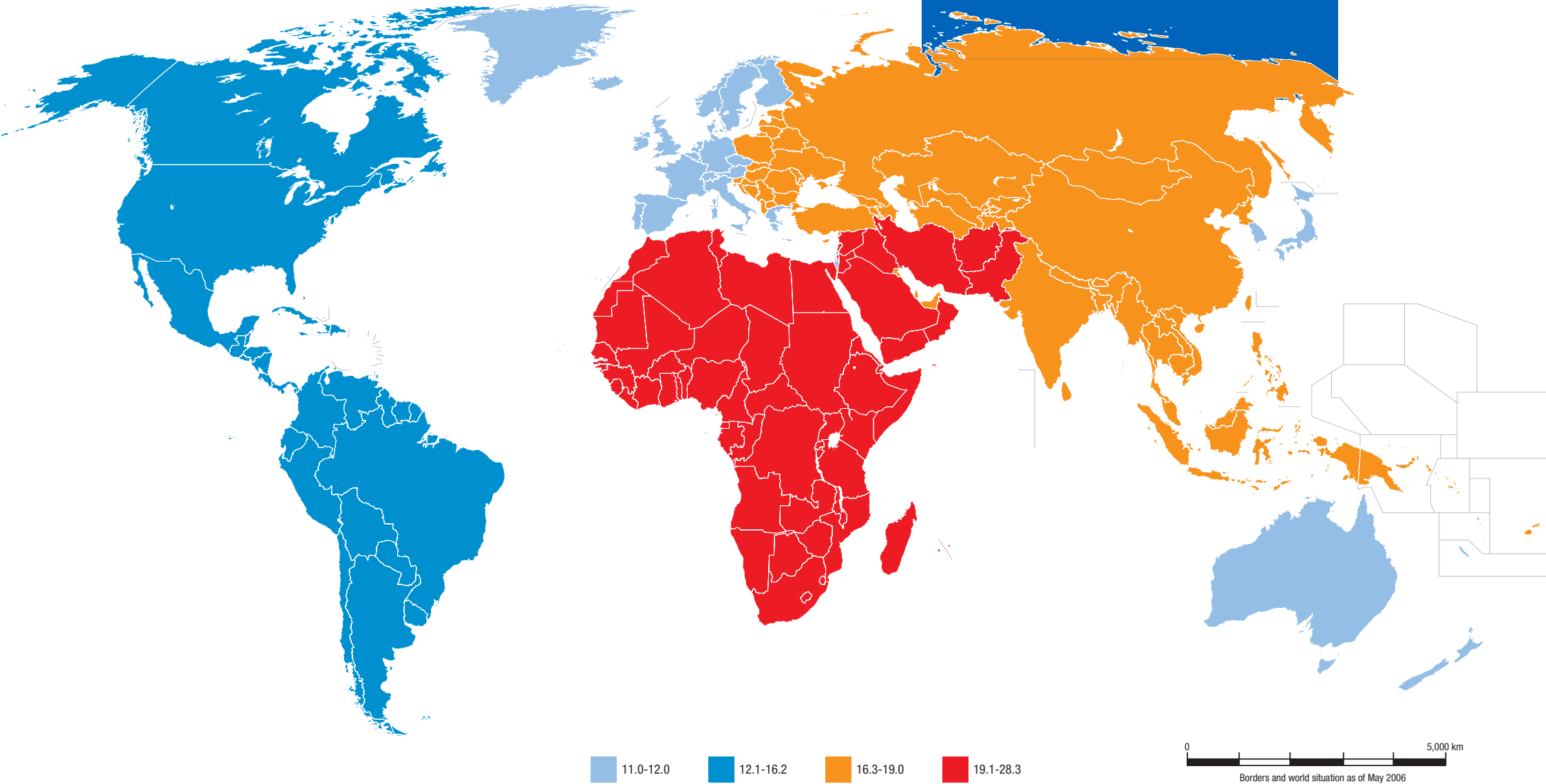
In this guide we shall merely attempt to quantify road crash mortality, which is only one of several indicators.

The **map number 1** (page 15), established on the basis of data provided by the International Road Federation (IRF) and the World Health Organization, shows the number of road deaths in 2004 for every 100,000 inhabitants in each country. As the map shows, 66 countries do not provide road crash statistics to the two main international organizations responsible for collecting data through local networks. It may happen that the request for data does not reach the relevant department, but in most cases if countries do not report back it is because such data are neither gathered nor processed. Obviously for them the first task is to set up a data collection and management system.

The countries with the lowest number of road casualties have a mortality rate per 100,000 inhabitants of between five and nine. These are chiefly highly motorized countries which have been conducting dedicated road safety programmes for the last ten to 30 years and where the road crash mortality rates have been falling annually. The main goal for these countries is to maintain the downward trend, which requires a sustained effort over time. This group is not homogeneous, however, since it includes countries where the statistics are considerably underestimated.

Countries reporting between one and four deaths per 100,000 inhabitants clearly have a problem with data collection, since none of the leading road safety countries has achieved such low figures. Countries with between ten and 14 deaths per 100,000 inhabitants belong to the group of countries where roads are extremely dangerous. As underreporting of actual road crashes and road crash injuries is common in many countries, there may even be more deaths and injuries on the roads of countries in this group that are not reflected in the statistics. As motor-





ization increases, the number and severity of road crashes in these countries are likely to increase as well.

In countries with more than 15 deaths per 100,000 inhabitants, whether the data is underestimated or not, road mortality has reached alarming levels. In most cases the situation will become worse as motorization increases, unless action is taken.

## Road mortality according to regions

Another map, **map number 2** (page 17) also published by WHO in 2002, illustrates annual mortality per 100,000 inhabitants. This time the figures are broken down by sub-region, which gives a less accurate but undoubtedly more eloquent picture than the previous map. It is also worth noting that research and estimates have been carried out regarding road crash mortality rates for countries with little or no data. This has reduced the number of grey areas as much as possible so as to show the main regional trends.

The mortality rates are highest in Africa and the Middle East. These regions are followed by Asia, nearly the whole of the Pacific Ocean basin and Eastern Europe where the situation is also very bad. Then come the Americas where the situation is still poor overall. Lastly we have Australia, Japan, New Zealand, the Republic of Korea and Western Europe, where for the time being the conditions are the least bad.

The road crash and road crash injury situation is improving in only 20 per cent of countries, mainly in the high-income bracket. In the rest of the world it is deteriorating rapidly. Does this mean to say that road safety is a question of money? Experience has shown that funding is critical, but money alone will not remedy the situation.

Some low- and middle-income countries have succeeded in reversing the number of fatalities on their roads, which shows that political will is critical. Resources

are needed, certainly, but on a relatively moderate scale. Expenditure on road safety can be considered a sound investment in view of the income generated (e.g., via fines collected from people who break traffic laws) and the lives saved.

## Taking action immediately

It is important to note that, while it is of course important to gather data before initiating action, choosing the best measures and gauging their effectiveness, it is not worth waiting until a complete and accurate picture of the problem emerges before starting to deal with it.

In order to obtain an idea of whether the road safety situation is critical in a particular country, it is usually enough to consult doctors and surgeons in the trauma departments of the country's major hospitals or the road traffic police, whose reports are generally both instructive and revealing. Roadside observation will quickly show whether helmets and seat belts are being worn, giving a good idea of road safety behaviour.

Rapid action should be taken to deal with the major risk factors, regardless of the shortcomings and inadequacies of the crash data collection system, the quality of the road network and the condition of the country's vehicles.



### Red Cross Red Crescent action

Encourage the government to improve the road crash injury data collection system and insist on statistical coverage of hospital victims.

Act to accelerate the identification and rectification of the more dangerous sections of roadways.

## 7.

# Organizing road safety

Combating road safety problems must be a combined effort by different government sectors, chiefly transport, public security, health, education and justice.

### *The key organizations influencing policy development*



Experience from countries that have succeeded in improving the safety of their roads shows that multi-sector cooperation on road safety is critical to bringing about long-term improvement. Cooperation among government, the private sector and civil society organizations on road safety improvement has proven effective in many countries.

The government is ultimately responsible for the safety of a country's roads and should take on the leading role in road safety improvement. Only government can develop and implement policy and legislation on road safety, make the kinds of budgets available that are necessary for long term improvements, ensure that traffic laws are consistently enforced, organize national information campaigns, introduce road safety into the school curriculum, establish standards for driver training and testing as well as for vehicles and ensure that the road network is properly planned and maintained.

### **A tested road safety system**

Countries where the number of annual road crash deaths is falling generally have a well-developed road safety system. This consists in setting up a lead agency as a **road safety department**, that has access to adequate long-term resources and funding, headed by a competent individual who is well respected within the various relevant government ministries. The head of the department must have a well-qualified staff of individuals to work with.

This government department is usually attached to the Ministry of Transport or traffic police. It is responsible for implementing national road safety policy, which is often agreed on and monitored by an **inter-ministerial road safety committee**,

made up of the ministers of relevant departments and chaired by a senior politician. The head of the road safety department will often act as secretary-general of the inter-ministerial committee, which meets several times a year.

Countries possessing a **national road safety platform**, which includes the public and private sectors and civil society, have made quicker progress than others in the fight against road violence. Regardless of the name given to this national body or its mode of operation, it is extremely useful. Its membership is representative of a broader sector of society and it can thus provide a wider vision of road safety. In addition, it may propose policy guidelines to the government, while advising on and at times criticizing national policy in order to make improvements and fill in possible gaps.

**Provincial** (local) road safety structures can be equally critical to ensuring that national policy on road safety is applied appropriately at the local level.



### Red Cross Red Crescent action

Encourage the government to set up a dedicated road safety lead agency.

Become involved as much as possible in the development of national road safety policy.

## National road safety policy

A **national road safety policy** must be set out in a paper, preferably a five-year plan of action, which can serve as a road map for all the parties involved in road safety improvement, at both the national and the provincial level. This paper should contain clear, realistic and quantifiable objectives, a budget and a precise definition of the roles and responsibilities of each of the players in all the following areas:

- 1 Road safety management.
- 2 Road crash data collection and analysis.
- 3 Road safety financing.
- 4 Road safety in road construction and maintenance.
- 5 Black-spot identification and treatment.
- 6 Technical vehicle testing.
- 7 Road safety training in schools.
- 8 Driving lessons and the issue of driving licences.
- 9 Special training for professional drivers.
- 10 Legislation and regulation.
- 11 Information and awareness campaigns.
- 12 Security forces and law enforcement.
- 13 Aid for victims.
- 14 Road crash cost assessment.
- 15 Road safety research.
- 16 Private sector and association partnerships.

## 8.

# Financing road safety

### Insufficient and unstable financing

Funding for road safety measures is often inadequate, especially in low- and middle-income countries. Inadequate financing is a considerable obstacle to taking dedicated action. It is also often a sign of a lack of political will to tackle the problem.

While it is obviously important that sufficient funding should be allocated to road safety, steps should be taken to ensure that this funding remains constant over the longer term. In the case of road safety and indeed for any other policy area that benefits society at large, appropriate planning, forecasting and action must take place on a long-term scale.

Stable financing is essential in order to maintain a responsible agency, as described in the previous chapter, and fund the necessary measures (such as data collection, campaigns, enforcement, infrastructures or education).

### Available solutions

A number of financing mechanisms may be used. The most common include:

- A percentage levied on fuel tax.
- A percentage levied on vehicle insurance premiums.
- A percentage levied on fines.
- A percentage of the national road maintenance fund.
- A percentage of the construction budget for new roads.

The amount of each percentage is obviously a political choice and should depend not only on the national economic situation but also on the degree of ur-

gency of the action required. There is no set rule in this respect and the percentage could vary between 1 and 10 per cent depending on the country and the type of tax chosen.

A levy of 1 per cent on the price of fuel or on insurance premiums does not generally have a large negative impact on the population, especially if government policy in this respect is transparent regarding the total amount of funding collected and how this funding is used to improve road safety. In terms of the type of tax, some countries are very innovative, for instance by levying a tax on alcohol, which is directly allocated to road safety.

**Partnerships** can provide a way of alleviating the state budget by contributing additional resources for special projects such as information campaigns, special events or training in schools. Oil companies, automobile and motorcycle manufacturers and insurers tend to be the most likely partners for these activities and their cooperation should be sought.

As we have already pointed out, experience from countries with well-developed road safety programmes shows that investing in road safety can lead to economic savings.



### Red Cross Red Crescent action

Encourage the government to establish adequate and stable financing for road safety.

## 9.

## Mobilizing decision-makers

Speeding up the process of political decision-making and disseminating good practice are the two main objectives of road safety mobilization and forums.

### At global level

World Health Day in April 2004 was devoted to road safety and marked a major turning point in global awareness of the problem. It gave publicity to the *World report on road traffic injury prevention*, which serves as a benchmark publication on current road safety and which we would encourage those interested in road safety to consult. The report gives a clear description of the most relevant road safety issues and proposes practical solutions, most of which are summarized in this practical guide for the special use of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement.

Following World Health Day 2004, the United Nations (UN) adopted several resolutions on road safety for the first time in its history. These resolutions urged member states to follow the recommendations of the report and to combat road violence with greater determination. WHO was given responsibility for coordinating the efforts of the UN agencies working on road safety, especially through its regional commissions.

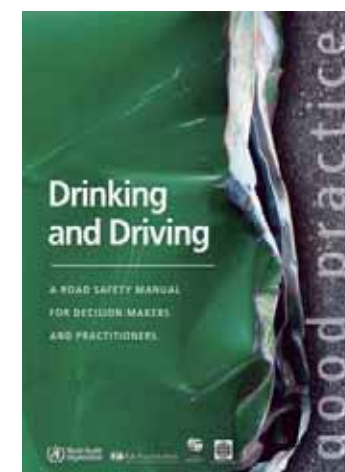
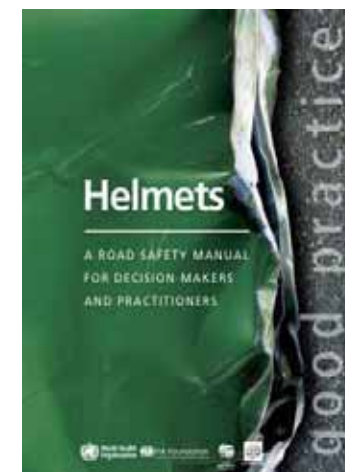
A global platform was established, including the UN agencies and some 30 active organizations, including the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies and the Global Road Safety Partnership (GRSP). This forum, known as the **United Nations Road Safety Collaboration**, meets twice a year to compare initiatives and pool activities.

### Global guides to good practices

One of the initiatives of the UN collaboration has been to produce a series of **good practice manuals** on key road safety topics that can be used internationally. WHO, the World Bank, the Global Road Safety Partnership and the FIA (*Fédération internationale de l'automobile*) Foundation have cooperated to produce and publish a first series of practical manuals on the following topics: the four major risk factors noted in this toolkit, road crash data collection and analysis, and road safety management.

The first two in the series are already available, focusing on increasing the use of crash helmets and on drinking and driving. The GRSP is currently helping some ten South-East Asian countries draft national action plans or review existing ones in order to make helmet wearing become common practice as this toolkit advocates.

This action is being carried out by the Global Road Safety Initiative, which is financed by a

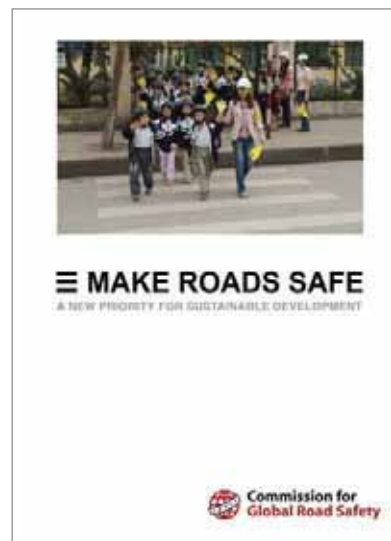


group of multinational companies that are part of GRSP. This initiative is innovative and laudable, and deserves to be highlighted in light of the fact that so little international funding is currently devoted to road safety.

## Activating international cooperation

Bilateral and multilateral funding agencies agree that the road safety crisis in developing countries is serious, although very few of them actually include road safety as a part of their development aid packages. This may be attributed to some extent to the fact that awareness about the road safety pandemic is fairly recent, even among donor organizations and governments. More effort is needed to raise awareness within this critical target group about the road safety problem in low- and middle-income countries and the actions they can take to alleviate the situation.

In this regard, it is worth mentioning one initiative in particular. The Commission for Global Road Safety's "Make roads safe" campaign, which is supported by the FIA Foundation, proposes that 10 per cent of the budget of all new roads financed by international aid should be devoted to road safety.



Here, the private sector and civil society have an especially crucial role to play, not as substitutes for the state but by reminding it of its responsibilities.

Automobile clubs, road victim associations, automobile and motorcycle manufacturers, insurance companies, research institutions, influential public personalities, the media in general and of course National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies should launch a political debate on road safety and create public awareness. They can also contribute expertise and supplement state budgets in order to implement more rapidly the necessary measures.

The **map number 3** (page 24) shows that 27 per cent of National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies lobbied for road safety in 2005: 5 per cent of National Societies took part in road safety forums in 2005, 14 per cent in mobilization activities, while 8 per cent did both. This is a positive sign and we hope this practical guide will encourage many more National Societies to promote road safety at the highest level, especially wherever more decisive action needs to be taken, and to mobilize their countries' decision-makers.

*This map and those following were drawn up on the basis of the results of a survey of National Society road safety activities. A total of 140 National Societies or three-quarters of the global Red Cross Red Crescent Movement replied to the survey. The percentages quoted on the maps reflect their replies.*



### Red Cross Red Crescent action

Remind decision-makers whenever possible that road safety action is urgently needed.

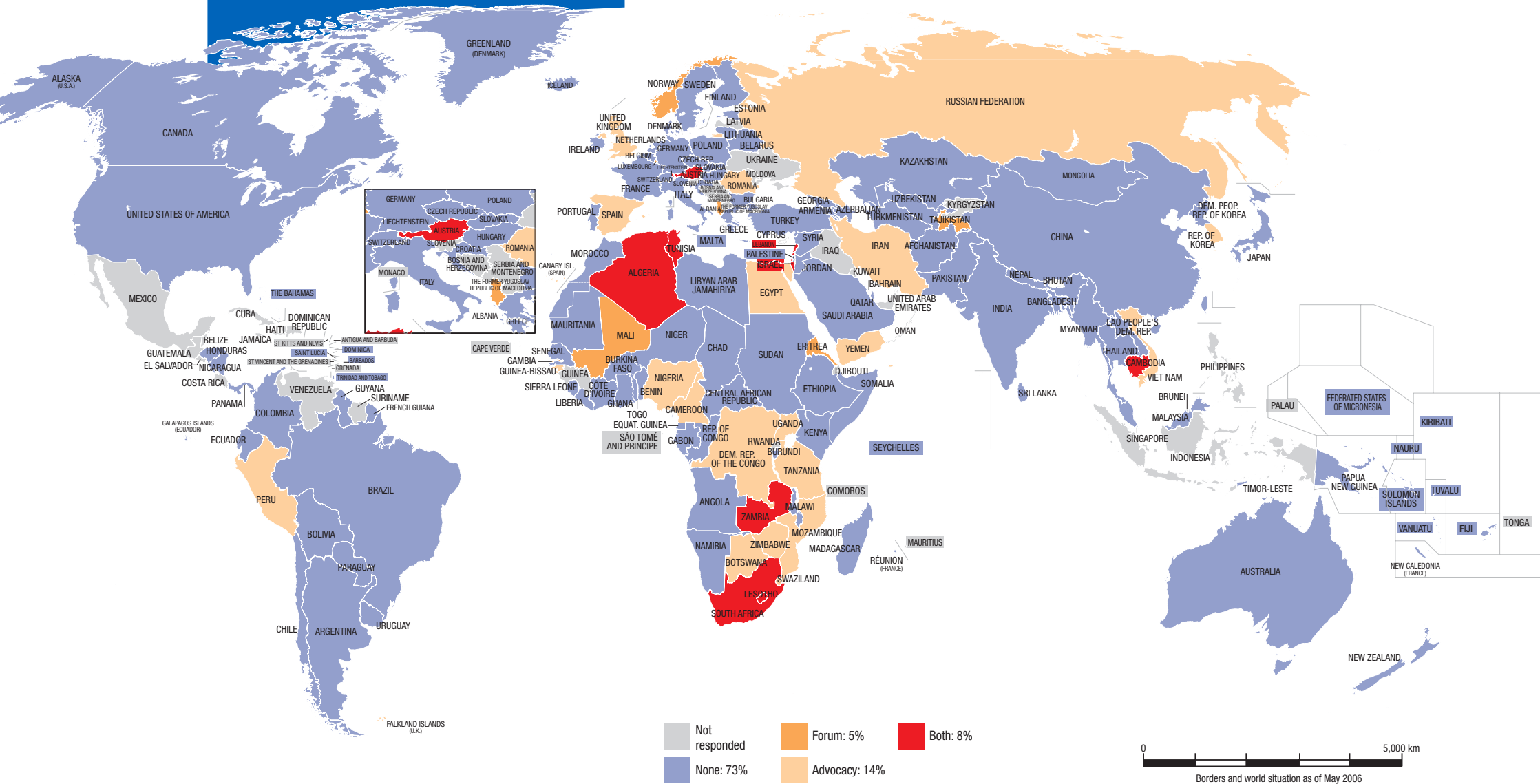
Promote the good practices recommended in the *World report on road traffic injury prevention*, particularly those relating to the major risk factors.

## At the national level

Convincing politicians to take action to improve road safety is certainly the first priority in most countries where, as we have already mentioned, at present road safety policy is generally lacking and the situation is becoming worse.

*Map 3.  
National Societies that undertook road safety advocacy activities and/or participated in road safety forums in 2005*

Practical guide on road safety  
A toolkit for National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies



## 10.

# Creating public awareness

### Repeated mass publicity campaigns

Regular campaigns are needed to make the general public aware of road safety. While most initiatives are undertaken by governments, civil society can also play a role in organizing campaigns. Private sector companies, such as insurance companies, often participate actively in organizing and funding road safety information campaigns.

Campaigns should preferably focus on one risk factor at a time. Campaigns attempting to cover too broad a range of topics are neither understood nor remembered by the public.

Campaigns should be organized on a large scale, if possible (though not necessarily) in different forms (using radio and TV spots, posters or leaflets) and should be carried by all the main media, including the press, radio, television and, increasingly, the Internet.

Finally, it is recommended that several (generally three or four) national campaigns be planned each year to maintain a sufficient level of awareness among the public about road safety. The messages should be repeated as frequently as possible, just like when advertising a commercial product.

### Instructive campaigns to prepare the public for new legislation

A road safety campaign should be prepared in several stages.

Take the example of seat belts. Ideally it would be useful to know prior to the information campaign how many road deaths are caused by the failure to wear seat

belts, since this is a convincing argument for users. However, as we mentioned earlier, not all countries have reliable statistics of this kind.

It is very useful to conduct a preliminary survey in order to identify what proportion of vehicle occupants wear seat belts and the reasons why some members of the public choose not to buckle up. This information could be helpful in developing the right campaign messages and identifying how long a campaign should last. The lower the public's awareness about the critical reasons for wearing a seat belt, the more time may be needed to educate them on the benefits of buckling up. Several campaigns, repeated regularly, will be required.

The campaign message should put across in simple, clear terms why seat belts should be worn, the main reason being to save lives. The help of specialized advertising or marketing agencies may be sought. There are also many examples of campaigns on the Internet. In addition to promotional messages, the testimonies of crash victims or their families are often effective.

It is very useful to connect a campaign with a slogan. Slogans like "Fastened to life" or "A click is better than a crash" are easy to remember.

The campaign needs the right dosage between posters and radio and TV spots, but most important is that it needs to be well publicized. Efforts may have been wasted and the objective lost if the campaign publicity is not well spread.

When the spontaneous use of seat belts reaches a satisfactory level (to be defined by each country), the public is then ready for the next stage, which consists of making the wearing of seat belts compulsory.

## Campaigns backed up by enforcement

Experience has shown that a truly effective road safety campaign must include enforcement and penalties. If these are lacking, the campaign will have little sustainable effect on reducing road crash fatalities and injuries, with only spontaneous users of seat belts continuing to buckle up.

Spontaneous use of seat belts describes the fraction of the population who are already convinced that seat belts are useful and who do not need police controls to make them wear them. In cases where legislation has already been passed but is not followed by enforcement, road safety campaigns have the effect of invalidating the law and discrediting the police. It may then be necessary to wait a few months or even years to begin again with a new campaign.

Working closely with the traffic police prior to the campaign can be an extremely effective means of motivating them to enforce the traffic law on wearing seat belts. Preparation work involving the traffic police is crucial, yet it is often overlooked.

The date of the campaign launch and its duration should be announced clearly to the public and sufficiently ahead of the event. Information must be provided to the public regarding fines and a date should be set for the start of police sanctioning. Experience has shown that it is worth allowing for a probationary period (of a few weeks), during which the police will carry out checks but not impose fines. This will convince the public that the measure is not to be taken lightly and that it is best to prepare for the time when penalties will be enforced. It also allows for adjusting either the intensity or the duration of the campaign should there be a general impression that things have moved too quickly. Many countries have experienced a situation where road legislation has been passed and then repealed several times under public pressure. This needs to be avoided.

In summary, the greatest impact can be made on saving lives and reducing injuries from road crashes by concentrating on a single campaign topic, making sure cam-

aign messages are clear, ensuring that a wide range of media sources are used and that the police is actively engaged in enforcing the traffic law throughout the duration of the campaign.

## Other ways of creating awareness among the public

Other approaches exist to raising the public's awareness of road safety in addition to public information campaigns. Tools that may be considered include the dissemination of leaflets on specific topics, holding events and demonstrations, and the participation of influential leaders, artists or well-known sports personalities in interviews or programmes broadcast on radio and television.

The **map number 4** (page 27) shows that every National Society that either organized or took part in road prevention campaigns in 2005. It shows that the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement is actively engaged in road safety work and has demonstrated its ability to put across prevention and public health messages to the public at large. It should continue with its efforts and compare experiences.



### Red Cross Red Crescent action

Participate in public awareness campaigns and public debates (where there are none, these should be initiated).



# 11.

## Enforcement and penalties

### Implementing a system of checks and penalties

As explained in the previous chapter, road safety rules will only be accepted if a fair proportion of the population understands them. Where this is not the case, the danger exists that the rules are flatly rejected.

The likelihood of being stopped by the traffic police for a violation of the traffic law and penalized in the event of an offence should be significant.

In addition, the penalties imposed for violating traffic law should be high enough to ensure that the risk of being caught is taken seriously.

### The key role of the police

The traffic police is responsible for ensuring the enforcement of traffic laws. They must therefore be trained to make sure that the rules of the Highway Code are applied and be given the resources to do the job properly. However, both professional development possibilities and resources are in short supply in low- and middle-income countries.

A system of road checks should be implemented as quickly as possible if road discipline is to be noticeably diminished. Whether one likes it or not, the fear of being caught is critical to changing the behaviour of road users.

Most individuals truly believe that they are good drivers capable of maintaining control of their vehicle even at high speed and that they can comfortably handle a few drinks before driving. The longing for freedom often makes us forget (or underestimate) the risk we are taking both for ourselves and for others in the



shared road space. No game of football can be played without a competent, respected and neutral referee, who can apply a set of rules that are known to all. The same applies to road safety, but it is by no means a game.

A system should be put in place that ensures fines are properly paid, rather than pocketed by potentially corrupt police officials. Police officials should receive training on the impact of road crashes on society and public health in order to have a better appreciation for why their job of enforcing traffic laws is so important. Police forces must also have access to the technical equipment they need to do their jobs well (such as radars, breathalysers, as well as patrol cars). Legislation on, for example, drinking and driving, has little meaning if the traffic police do not have the power or equipment required to enforce the laws. In the interim, road crashes continue to take place and people continue to die and be injured.

Some countries have opted for deploying a **specialized traffic police force**. Such a specialized team of traffic police officers has proven particularly useful in low- and middle-income countries, where it may take time to increase the budgets allocated to the police for road safety. The police and gendarmerie also have an educational role to play by communicating through the media. This approach has been shown to be effective in communicating important messages to the public and it places the police force at the heart of the preventive system.

Experience has also shown that national and provincial road safety committees that involve the police in their policy-making and action plans have made quicker progress in reducing road crashes than in countries where they are not involved.

 **Red Cross Red Crescent action**

Encourage the government to allocate more resources to traffic law enforcement.



Thierry Prat/www.thierryprat.com

## 12.

## Educating young road users and issuing driving licences

### Training young road users

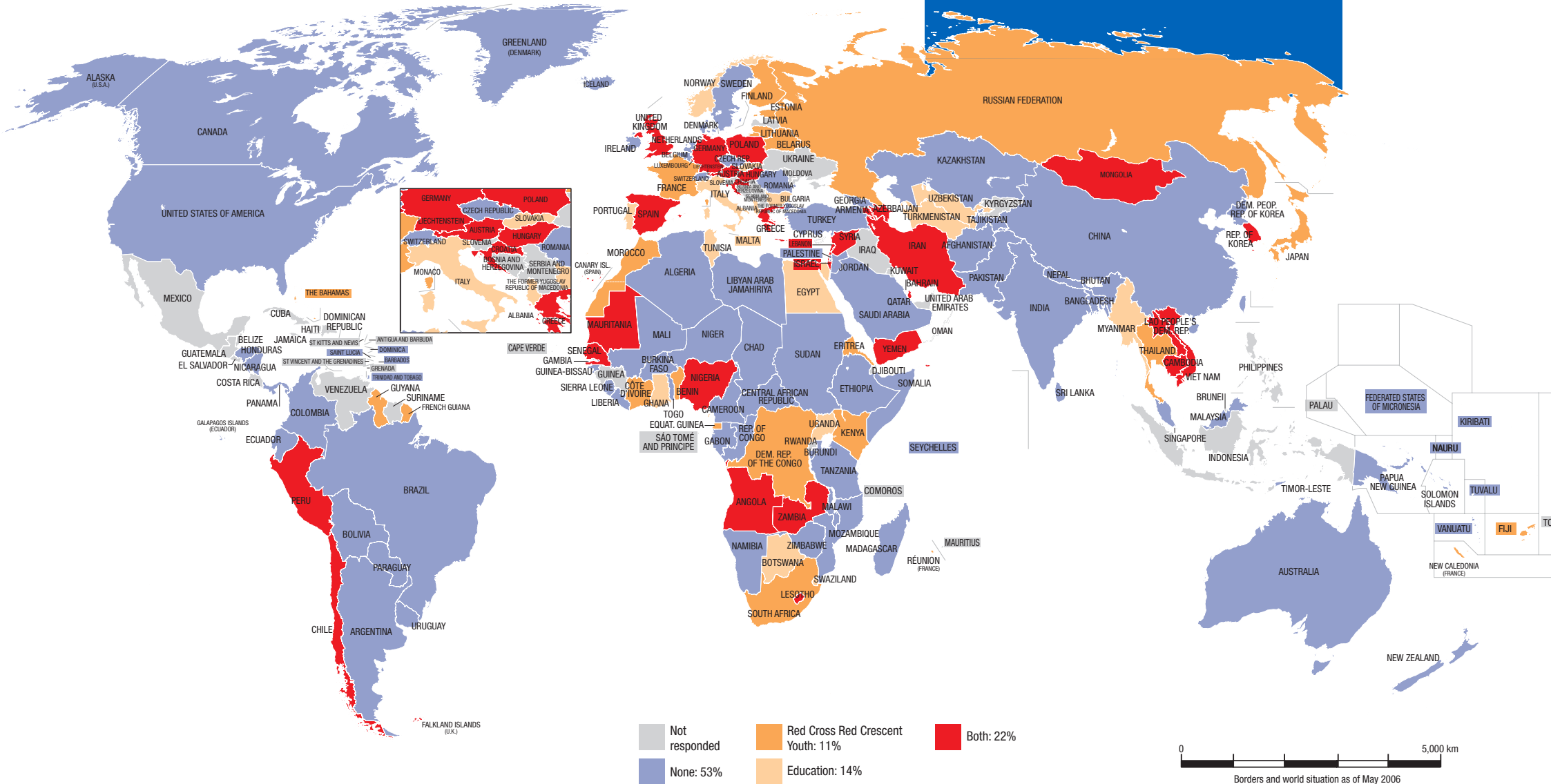
Learning road safety sense starts very young and can begin at home with their parents and also, of course, at school.

Young people pay the heaviest price on the road. Half of the world's population is under 25 years of age and most young people travel by foot or use two-wheelers. They are therefore exposed to the risk of crashes involving larger and faster-moving vehicles. In addition, young people are more prone to take risks on the road, whether as pedestrians or as drivers. An effort must be made to train young people in better road use by making available courses in the theory and practice of road user behaviour as part of the school curriculum. Becoming familiar with the main road signs, taking care when crossing the road and being aware of and anticipating risks are part of the ABC of road use they must acquire.

Numerous road safety education programmes exist and are taught in many countries and in practically all languages. There is therefore no need to invent new materials. Governments should exchange experiences on this issue. Regional and sub-regional economic communities already have a system of institutional cooperation that allows for such exchanges. As in the case of road safety campaigns for the general public, a number of Internet sites also offer examples of school programmes which can be used or which can provide a basis for starting a programme.

Experience shows that school road safety programmes are most effective when parents and traffic police forces are involved and when infrastructure and supervision measures are introduced in the environment around the schools to warn and protect pupils from the traffic (such as road signs, sleeping policemen or road bumps and adult supervision of pedestrian crossings).







## Obtaining a driving licence

An individual who passes the driving test and receives a driving licence should be able to operate his or her vehicle safely on the road and be familiar with the Traffic Code.

In low- and middle-income countries, this learning stage is often insufficient in both content and length. In some countries, driving licences can even be purchased. While the cost of an official driving licence should remain reasonable for future drivers, governments should place greater emphasis on ensuring that teaching standards for driving schools (for drivers of four- and two-wheeled vehicles) are high. This should especially be the case for schools educating professional drivers (passenger and goods transport).

The **map number 5** (page 31) shows that, in 2005, 11 per cent of National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies carried out road safety projects with their young volunteers, 14 per cent took part in road safety projects in schools and 22 per cent did both. The connection between youth and the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement has always been very strong. Young people are very responsive to all aspects of road use. National Societies should further develop this type of action.



### Red Cross Red Crescent action

Encourage the government to include road safety in school curricula, with an additional first-aid component.

Encourage young Red Cross Red Crescent volunteers to be more aware of road safety and to initiate projects.

Call for reforms of the driving licence issuing system where standards are too low.

## 13.

# Emergency services and first aid for road users

### Emergency services need improving

Emergency services consist of a sequence of lifesaving actions that follow a specific sequence: crash alert, first aid, transport and admission to the closest medical care. Action must be taken in the minutes following a crash. It is a race against time. This requires resources. If one of the links is missing, the sequence will be broken and emergency aid will not be correctly administered.

In the great majority of the world's countries and despite the dedication of emergency medical staff, emergency services do not work properly, due to faulty systems.

A specific emergency number should exist, which is free of charge and well known by the public, that connects the caller directly with the emergency services. An easily and rapidly accessible telephone line must also be available. This is far from the case everywhere, despite the widespread use of cell phones.

Secondly, too few people have knowledge of proper first aid. On roads all over the world, the chances of a person who is able to take immediate protective action and provide lifesaving assistance being at the site of a crash are very low.

There is a widespread shortage of emergency ambulance transport, with or without medical facilities. Either ambulances do not arrive at all or they arrive at the crash scene too late. As a result, road crash victims are generally transported to the hospital using improvised means and are often in very bad condition.

Thirdly, hospitals are desperately ill equipped and road crash victims often do not receive the necessary care. Even where proper care is available, many crash vic-



tims may not be able to have access to it for financial reasons unless friends or family can pay in advance for medical services. This situation applies to both ambulance and medical services in hospitals.

Access to basic health care for the general public depends on the existence of a social insurance system. This system does not exist in many parts of the world. Unconscious road crash victims, who are hovering between life and death as the result of a crash that may have taken place miles away from their home, are at an increased disadvantage as they may not be able to prove that they can pay for medical services. Thus, fundamentally improving the emergency rescue services and medical system are urgent components of preventing road crash deaths and long-term disabilities in the great majority of countries around the world.

One National Society in three has ambulances and intervenes when road crashes occur. The Red Cross Red Crescent Movement is, therefore, a significant player in the emergency response sequence, which gives it a stronger voice in advocating for better emergency services and emphasizes the need to strengthen road crash prevention.

## Developing first aid focusing on road crash injuries

In an ideal world, everyone would be familiar with basic first-aid techniques and take regular refresher courses to ensure that this knowledge remains current. This is the policy promoted by the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement, which offers first-aid courses to the public all over the world. The Movement is looked upon as a global leader in the provision of first aid.

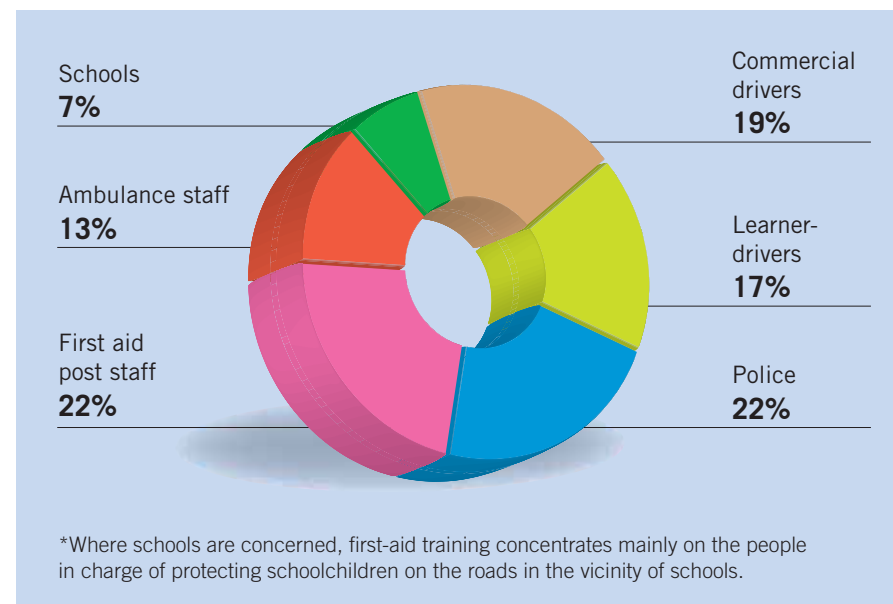
First-aid training should be offered to all individuals, who are most likely to be first at a crash scene and may need to take action to save the lives of crash victims. First-aid skills are, therefore, essential for professional drivers (of taxis, minibuses, buses and trucks), police officers, ambulance teams and the staff of roadside first-aid centres, in addition to motorcyclists and drivers in general.

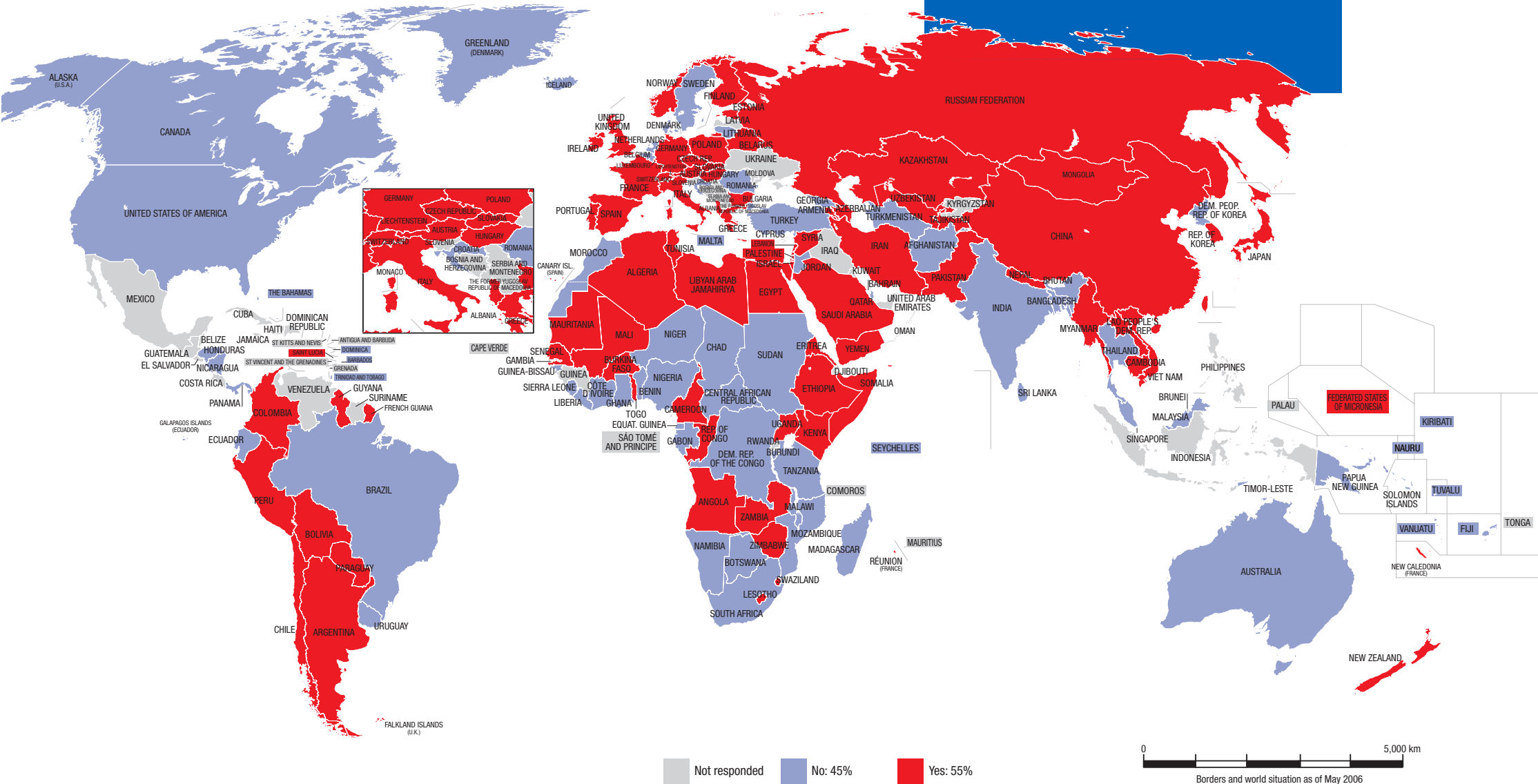
Completing a first-aid course will enable drivers to react more quickly and appropriately in the event of a crash to alleviate the physical and emotional suffering of victims. They will also behave in a more controlled and targeted manner because they are aware of the physical risks involved at a post-crash scene.

First-aid training does not need to be extensive in order to be effective. Four to eight hours are sufficient to acquire adequate knowledge and skills.

First aid is one of the prime activities of the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement. All National Societies offer first-aid courses. As can be seen from the **map number 6** (page 35), in 2005 more than half of all National Societies organized special first-aid courses on road crashes. This shows strong involvement, which places the Red Cross Red Crescent at the heart of first-aid policy for roads.

### National Societies offering first aid focusing on road crash injuries in 2005







Public and private transport companies are increasingly aware that it is in their interest to train their drivers in first-aid techniques and to set aside a budget for this purpose. This is an excellent initiative and should be encouraged. In many countries, such training is a legal requirement.

In one in six of the countries of the 140 National Societies that replied to the road safety survey, a first-aid certificate is a precondition for obtaining a driving licence. National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies are in a good position to meet this demand by offering first-aid courses for road users for a fee. This is useful and can generate funds for the Society.

The map below shows National Societies that offered first-aid courses for professional drivers and/or young drivers in 2005. They would certainly gain by exchanging methods and documentation in order to develop this income-generating activity further.

Care for the people disabled by road crashes is often forgotten. These disabled individuals, their families and other people affected by the road crash are often left in a helpless situation. The physical, psychological, social and economic rehabilitation of disabled people must also be taken into account and assisted as a part of a national programme to improve road safety.



## Red Cross Red Crescent action

Advocate for a free-of-charge, easy-to-remember emergency telephone number to be implemented quickly as possible.

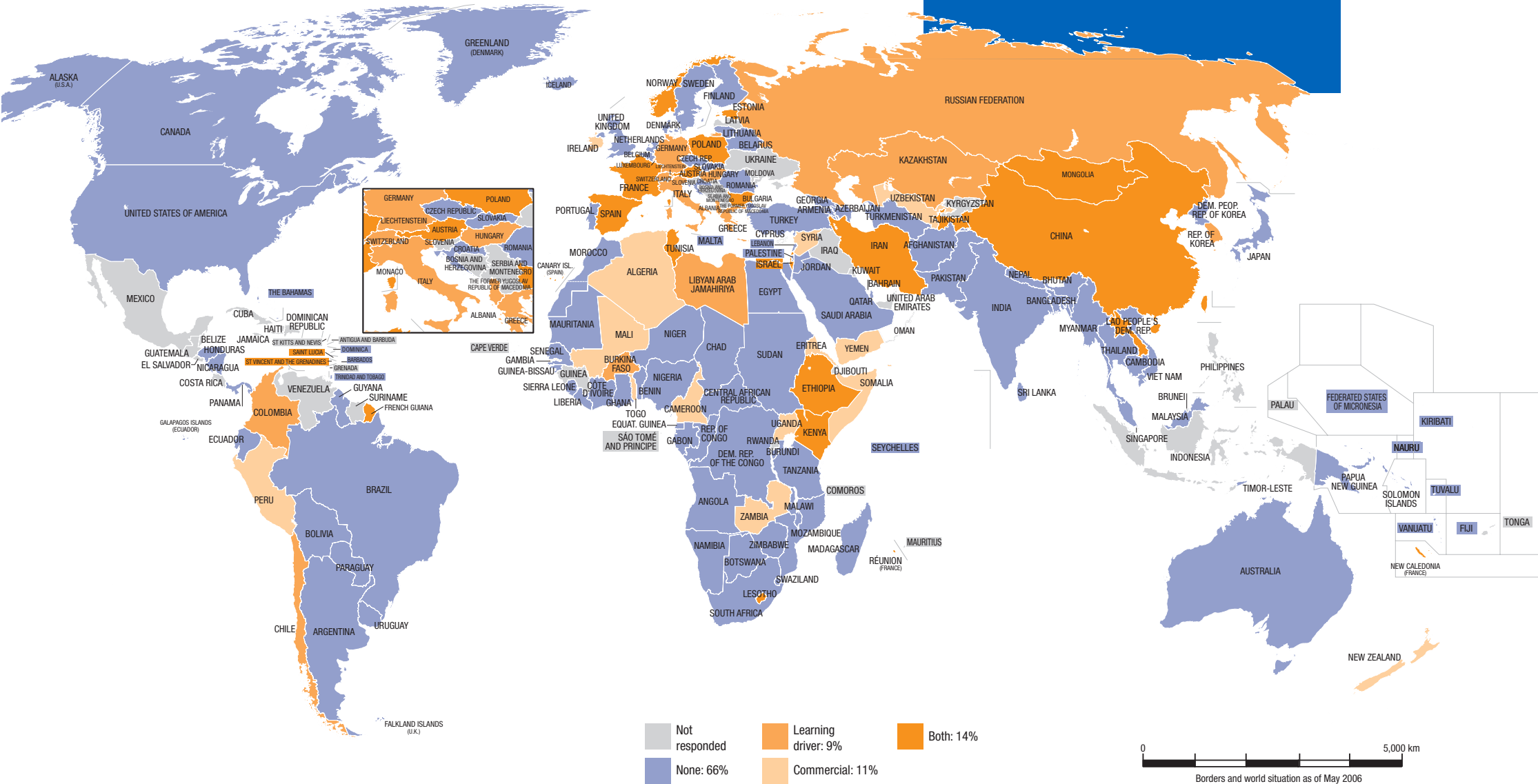
Call for the improvement and expansion of emergency transport services.

Promote better hospital care for road victims.

Advocate for greater attention to be given to those disabled in road crashes.

Offer commercial first-aid courses for drivers working with public and private transport companies.

Encourage governments to make first aid compulsory for all new and professional drivers.



## 14.

## Promoting a road safety culture within organizations



Large private transport companies have been quick to understand that establishing safety rules for drivers as a means of preventing crashes has reduced their costs and enhanced their performance and their reputation. Internal road safety rules are often stricter than the government's road traffic laws, although there is not much difference nowadays in Western countries.

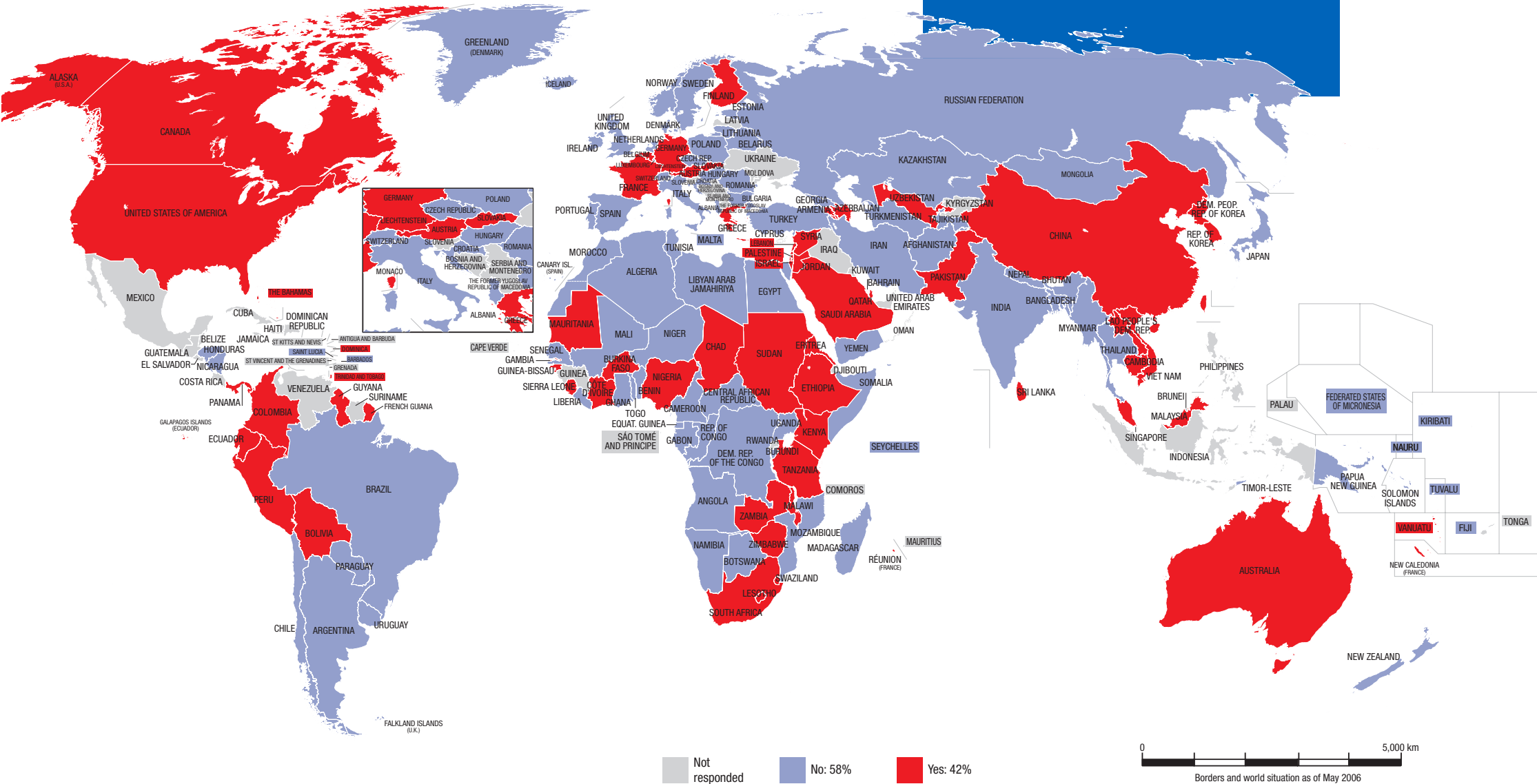
In low- and middle-income countries, large companies operating commercial vehicles (truck, bus and taxi services) are just beginning to develop a road safety culture in their companies. Fully employed drivers working with a company that has a framework for, and specific rules on, road safety are more likely to adopt safe driving habits than independent commercial drivers.

As highlighted in the chapter on public awareness campaigns, the public often needs to be convinced of the benefits of adopting the behaviour demanded by road traffic laws, such as wearing seat belts or not drinking and driving, before they are willing to accept this behaviour be legislated. Professional drivers are obliged to abide by the road safety policies established by their company. Thus, although they may not voluntarily adopt safe behaviour as a vehicle occupant, they are in a good position to explain the benefits of the traffic laws to others. They often set a good example by anticipating the rules and their enforcement.

Vehicle fleet operators that maintain dedicated company road safety procedures should be commended. The practices they adopt should be extended to other operators in their profession, particularly in low- and middle-income countries where commercial road transport accounts for 50 to 70 per cent of all vehicle use. Codes of conduct for drivers and practical guides for the management of vehicle fleets do exist and can be used, eliminating the need to reinvent the wheel.

Map 8.  
National Societies that apply internal  
road safety rules for their employees

Practical guide on road safety  
A toolkit for National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies



Road safety policies and procedures for vehicle fleet operators are also relevant for publicly owned vehicles (sometimes accounting for up to 30 per cent of all vehicles in a given country) and those belonging to associations, especially those involved in social or humanitarian work, like the Red Cross Red Crescent.

As the map below shows, more than 40 per cent of National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies have adopted sets of rules for their employees who are required to drive for work purposes. These policies demonstrate the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement's interest in protecting its employees by assuming responsibility for their care and **setting a good example** as a humanitarian organization. With

this practical guide, we would like to encourage all National Societies to promote an internal road safety culture and to adopt a set of rules for their employees and volunteers who have to use the roads for work purposes.



### Red Cross Red Crescent action

Introduce a road safety culture and rules for Red Cross Red Crescent employees and volunteers.

## Examples of road safety rules for drivers

- Fasten seat belts (or in the case of motorcyclists, use helmets).
- Never use mobile phones when driving.
- Apply safety distances.
- Keep to speed limits and adapt driving speeds to weather conditions, the state of roads and the amount of traffic.
- Obey traffic lights and the Highway Code in general.
- Never take the wheel after drinking (the International Federation's secretariat has adopted a zero alcohol policy for drivers).
- Drive carefully and pay special attention to pedestrians, cyclists and, in general, to all vulnerable users.

# 15.

## Road safety partnerships

As highlighted in this toolkit, road safety is the shared responsibility of diverse disciplines and stakeholders. Making a country's roads safe for all road users requires cooperation among many relevant sectors.

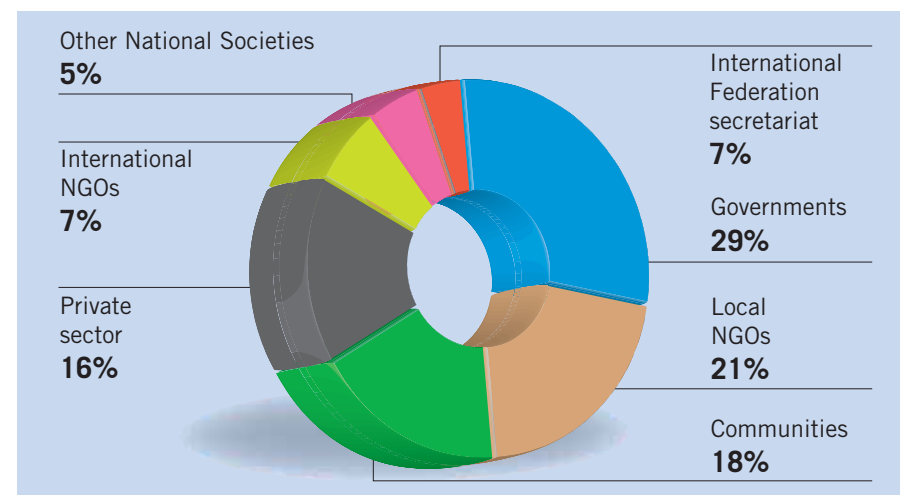
National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies occupy a strong and important position within the road safety system. As auxiliaries to the public authorities, National Societies maintain close contact and cooperate closely with the public services. Through their network of employees and volunteers spread across many countries, the National Societies also maintain close ties to local communities and associations. More and more Red Cross Red Crescent projects are financed by the private sector and by international non-governmental organizations. In addition, National Societies belonging to the International Federation are part of a global network that enables cooperation among the National Societies. The International Federation's secretariat is a source for potential technical assistance and expertise.

**The 20 road safety measures** proposed for National Societies in this practical guide all imply the notion of partnerships – with government, the private sector and civil society.

Some of the measures require more time and energy than funding to develop and implement, including mobilization work, forums or the preparation of in-house road safety policies. Other proposed measures are possible sources of income for National Societies, such as commercially-based first-aid courses for professional drivers. Others, of course, will require technical or financial resources to implement, such as public awareness campaigns and road safety courses for school-children.

As mentioned in the chapter on financing, the state budget or the private sector are potential sources for funding road safety measures. Potential partners in the private sector that might be interested in partnering on road safety initiatives include vehicle manufacturers, oil companies, insurance companies and national automobile clubs. On the international level, a number of donor governments and financing organizations have been leaders in funding road safety efforts in low- and middle-income countries, including the United Kingdom's Department for International Development (DFID) and the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida). These organizations should be commended for their work in road safety.

**National Societies and their road safety partners**



*This graph clearly illustrates the diversity of partners with which the National Societies cooperated on their road safety projects in 2005.*

This toolkit, with its brief description of the road safety activities of many National Societies, hopes to encourage National Societies to pool their experiences and resources and consider jointly establishing new bilateral road safety projects, as 12 per cent of National Societies are already doing.



## Red Cross Red Crescent action

Encourage road safety partnerships among National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies and with the private sector and civil society.



## 16.

# Conclusion and recommendations for National Societies

The aim of this practical toolkit is to offer National Society members a clear picture of the road safety crisis worldwide and a few of the solutions they can implement in their countries as Red Cross Red Crescent organizations and as auxiliaries to the public authorities.

The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, as we have seen, is already active in the field of road safety. With this toolkit and **the 20 road safety measures** it recommends, we encourage National Societies to become even more involved.

What happens on the roads is of concern to all of us. We must act without delay to prevent today's deadly trend from worsening.

The choice is ours, right now.



## Recommendations for National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies: 20 road safety measures

- 1 Encourage the government to improve the road crash injury data collection system and insist on statistical coverage of hospital victims.
- 2 Act to accelerate the identification and rectification of the more dangerous sections of roadways.
- 3 Encourage the government to set up a dedicated road safety lead agency.
- 4 Become involved as much as possible in the development of national road safety policy.
- 5 Encourage the government to establish adequate and stable financing for road safety.
- 6 Remind decision-makers whenever possible that road safety action is urgently needed.
- 7 Promote the good practices recommended in the *World report on road traffic injury prevention*, particularly those relating to the major risk factors.
- 8 Participate in public awareness campaigns and public debates (where there are none, these should be initiated).
- 9 Encourage the government to allocate more resources to traffic law enforcement.
- 10 Encourage the government to include road safety in school curricula, with an additional first-aid component.
- 11 Encourage young Red Cross Red Crescent volunteers to be more aware of road safety and to initiate projects.
- 12 Call for reforms of the driving licence issuing system where standards are too low.
- 13 Advocate for a free-of-charge, easy-to-remember emergency telephone number to be implemented quickly as possible.
- 14 Call for the improvement and expansion of emergency transport services.
- 15 Promote better hospital care for road victims.
- 16 Advocate for greater attention to be given to those disabled in road crashes.
- 17 Offer commercial first-aid courses for drivers working with public and private transport companies.
- 18 Encourage governments to make first aid compulsory for all new and professional drivers.
- 19 Introduce a road safety culture and rules for Red Cross Red Crescent employees and volunteers.
- 20 Encourage road safety partnerships among National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies and with the private sector and civil society.

## Websites and useful links

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2004 World report on road traffic injury prevention:  
[http://www.who.int/violence\\_injury\\_prevention/publications/road\\_traffic/world\\_report/en/index.html](http://www.who.int/violence_injury_prevention/publications/road_traffic/world_report/en/index.html)

UN global road safety collaboration:  
<http://www.who.int/roadsafety/en/>

Good practice guideline on Helmet:  
<http://www.who.int/roadsafety/projects/manuals/en/index.html>

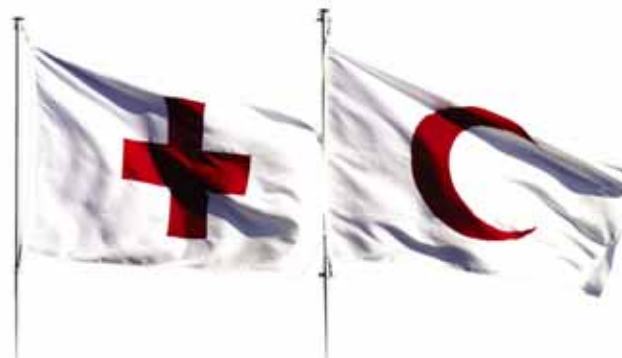
Good practice guideline on Drinking and driving:  
<http://www.grsproadsafety.org/themes/default/pdfs/Drinking%20&%20Driving%20manual.pdf>

Seat belt campaign toolkit manual – FIA Foundation:  
[http://www.fiafoundation.com/resources/documents/559466302\\_\\_toolkit.pdf](http://www.fiafoundation.com/resources/documents/559466302__toolkit.pdf)

« Make the Roads Safe » report – FIA Foundation:  
[http://www.makeroadssafe.org/documents/make\\_roads\\_safe\\_low\\_res.pdf](http://www.makeroadssafe.org/documents/make_roads_safe_low_res.pdf)

You will also find useful information on the GRSP website  
<http://www.grsproadsafety.org>

and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies website  
<http://www.ifrc.org>



## The Fundamental Principles of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement

### Humanity

The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, born of a desire to bring assistance without discrimination to the wounded on the battlefield, endeavours, in its international and national capacity, to prevent and alleviate human suffering wherever it may be found. Its purpose is to protect life and health and to ensure respect for the human being. It promotes mutual understanding, friendship, cooperation and lasting peace amongst all peoples.

### Impartiality

It makes no discrimination as to nationality, race, religious beliefs, class or political opinions. It endeavours to relieve the suffering of individuals, being guided solely by their needs, and to give priority to the most urgent cases of distress.

### Neutrality

In order to continue to enjoy the confidence of all, the Movement may not take sides in hostilities or engage at any time in controversies of a political, racial, religious or ideological nature.

### Independence

The Movement is independent. The National Societies, while auxiliaries in the humanitarian services of their governments and subject to the laws of their respective countries, must always maintain their autonomy so that they may be able at all times to act in accordance with the principles of the Movement.

### Voluntary service

It is a voluntary relief movement not prompted in any manner by desire for gain.

### Unity

There can be only one Red Cross or one Red Crescent Society in any one country. It must be open to all. It must carry on its humanitarian work throughout its territory.

### Universality

The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, in which all Societies have equal status and share equal responsibilities and duties in helping each other, is worldwide.



## International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

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The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies is the world's largest humanitarian organization, providing assistance without discrimination as to nationality, race, religious beliefs, class or political opinions.

Founded in 1919, the International Federation comprises 185 member Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies – with others in formation – a secretariat in Geneva and more than 60 delegations strategically located to support activities around the world.

The International Federation, together with the National Societies and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), make up the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement.



## GLOBAL ROAD SAFETY PARTNERSHIP

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The Global Road Safety Partnership (GRSP) brings together governments and governmental agencies, the private sector and civil society to urgently address road safety issues, especially in low and middle countries, where 80% of traffic deaths and injuries occur, and where numbers continue to increase. The GRSP is “hosted” at the Secretariat of the International Federation of Red Cross Red Crescent, in Geneva.

Traditionally, road safety has been seen as an unfortunate consequence of a transport system and as a problem for the transport sector. However, the direct costs of the growing number of crashes falls mostly on the health sector, businesses and families. Today it is widely acknowledged that many sectors have a role to play in road safety, especially in the prevention of crashes, deaths and injuries. GRSP brings together these sectors at the global, national and sometimes local government level. GRSP provides advice on good practice and facilitates projects in a growing number of developing and transition countries.