



Road Safety Action Plan

An Overview

Asian Development Bank

Making Roads Safe in Asia and the Pacific

In 2010, the Asian Development Bank (ADB) established the Sustainable Transport Initiative (STI) to align its transport operations with ADB's long-term strategic framework, Strategy 2020. In addition to making its existing transport work more sustainable, ADB committed to scale up operations in four new areas: urban transport, climate change and energy efficiency, regional cooperation and integration, and road safety and social sustainability. To guide its efforts, ADB has adopted a Road Safety Action Plan. Key features are summarized below.



Cyclists and pedestrians benefiting from a safe road crossing. Republic of Korea

Road Accidents

A global problem needing urgent action

Nearly 1.3 million people are killed and as many as 50 million are injured or disabled each year due to road crashes. Low- and middle-income developing countries account for 90% of road deaths, although these countries only have 50% of the world's motorized vehicles. By 2020, road crash deaths are projected to increase by 80%. Globally, road crashes will become the fifth leading cause of death in all age groups by 2030.



Asia and the Pacific are at the forefront of a global epidemic of road traffic injuries and deaths. Thailand

Responding to calls for urgent action, the United Nations General Assembly declared 2011–2020 the “Decade of Action for Road Safety.” The goal is to stabilize, then reduce, the forecast level of road traffic fatalities around the world by increasing road safety activities at the national, regional, and global levels.

Recognizing the extent of road safety problems and the potential for supporting interventions to address these, ADB and other multilateral development banks have committed to establishing a “Shared Approach to Managing Road Safety” to help achieve the goal of the Decade of Action, established a working group on road safety to share best practices, and started to explore ways of attracting additional financing for road safety.

Impacts in Asia and the Pacific

The rapid growth in motorized vehicles, especially motorcycles, puts severe strains on existing road networks and road agencies that have no road safety features or management capacity. Between 50% and 75% of people who die in road accidents in Asia and the Pacific are vulnerable road users, such as pedestrians, cyclists, and motorcyclists.

The Real Impacts of Road Accidents

Human Impacts

- » Accidents cause over 645,000 deaths and 30 million injuries every year.
- » Accidents have caused nearly 3.5 million deaths and permanently disabled 18 million people in the last 5 years.
- » Accidents are the second leading cause of death for children 6–14 years old.
- » Road deaths exceed malaria deaths, and, by 2030, will double deaths due to HIV/AIDS and quadruple those from tuberculosis.
- » According to the World Health Organization, accidents are now one of the leading health problems facing humanity.

Poverty Impacts

- » Road deaths are concentrated among vulnerable road users.
- » Seven out of 10 victims’ families suffer decreased income.
- » Two-thirds of victims’ families take loans to cover income loss.
- » Many victims’ families are driven into poverty or debt.
- » Women and girls in victims’ families assume greater caregiving responsibility and, as a result, have fewer economic opportunities in life.
- » In the last 5 years, 22 million families had a family member killed or permanently disabled. In the next 5 years, 32 million families will be affected.

Economic Impacts

- » In ADB’s developing member countries, \$96 billion is lost annually to road accidents.
- » Economic losses are greater than annual development aid received in the region.
- » Road accidents impede economic development.



Rapid growth in private motorization in Asia and the Pacific has produced high levels of congestion, contamination, and road traffic accidents. Thailand



Preventing road casualties

Engaging in a global effort to tackle road accidents

In developed countries, a gradual rollout of road safety management systems since the 1960s has drastically reduced the rate of road fatalities. Similar investments in road safety in developing countries can be very cost-effective. Studies suggest that spending 10% of the current costs of road crashes on road safety may prevent 70% of those costs in the future.

In a joint statement in 2010, multilateral development banks recognized the relevance of the “caring roadway” or “safe system approach.” In this statement, multilateral development banks said that a successful road safety management system should ensure the safety of the human, the vehicle, and the roadway as a system. They proposed that new tools and measures allowing for the proactive prevention of crashes be used to complement traditional, reactive techniques.

Many effective road safety measures are available for implementing road safety in developing countries. For example:

- Road safety audits reduce annual fatal and injury crash frequency.
- Centerline rumble strips reduce the frequency of head-on crashes by 21%–30%.
- Energy-absorbing barriers and treatments reduce the probability of fatalities by up to 78% and injuries by up to 68%.
- Graduated licensing systems reduce fatal crashes by 7%–35%.
- Seat belt use reduces the risk of drivers and passengers being killed by 40%–50%.
- Road safety mass media campaigns reduce crashes by 8.5%–14.8%.
- Ambulances that can arrive in less than 10 minutes reduce the risk of a fatality by 50%.
- Effective enforcement of laws on speeding, drunk driving, and helmet and seat belt wearing also reduce fatalities.



Accidents cause 645,000 deaths and 30 million injuries in Asia and the Pacific every year. Cambodia



Accident prevention measures, such as improved street crossings, should become a priority across the region. Japan

Key areas for action

ADB is taking the following actions to improve road safety in Asia and the Pacific

Strengthening ADB's internal road safety capacity

Proper integration of road safety into the project cycle requires specialized road safety knowledge and experience. Road safety investments require more input from ADB staff in preparation, monitoring, review, and advisory support than do traditional ADB investments in transport operations.

ADB has established a Road Safety Group to strengthen its road safety capacity and support road safety work across ADB projects.

The group's activities will be financed from STI funds (such as the Sustainable Transport Partnership Facility), technical assistance resources, and donor agencies supporting ADB road safety activities including, potentially, the proposed global Road Safety Incentive Fund.

Developing procedures, guidelines, and tools, and making these operational

Both ADB staff and their counterparts in developing member countries need guidance to implement road safety measures—how existing road safety tools and processes can be incorporated into the project cycle, how nonengineering aspects can be addressed, and how the road safety management needs of developing countries can be assessed and strengthened. Guidance is also needed on how to identify and develop possible road safety project components, and what interventions may be appropriate at different stages of road safety development and at different phases of the project cycle so they can be validated and adapted as needed.

There is an urgent need to establish a central road safety resource of key reference documents, terms of reference, guidance, and tools. This is one of the first tasks being addressed by the Road Safety Group.

Identifying opportunities for improving and scaling up road safety

ADB will be more proactive in stressing the importance of road safety to its developing member countries. ADB will do this by building up a pipeline of project preparatory technical assistance, policy and advisory technical assistance, and capacity development technical assistance, allowing road safety activities to be strengthened in a sustained manner. This will eventually lead to stand-alone road safety projects.

Where countries are not yet ready to move directly to stand-alone road safety projects, ADB will provide road safety components with larger transport projects. It will also help groups of countries introduce more effective road safety activities through road safety regional technical assistance.

Mainstreaming and strengthening road safety components

This will include (i) reviving and strengthening road safety components in ongoing investment projects and technical assistance by improving design, attracting additional funds, and monitoring road safety inputs better; and (ii) mainstreaming road safety components in new projects by including these in project design and increasing their importance in the design phase.

Establishing stand-alone road safety pipelines

After completing initial technical assistance and capacity development support, ADB plans to introduce stand-alone road safety investments, including components that strengthen local capacity to manage such projects. As more countries establish increased capacity in road safety, the number of stand-alone road safety projects will increase.

ADB anticipates that the first 2–3 years will be spent strengthening local capacities in road safety management, engineering, law enforcement, and other areas required for effective implementation of action plans and in preparation of road safety investment projects. This will lead to stand-alone road safety investment projects, which will include investment and non-investment components in several key sectors.



A traffic sign warns drivers of pedestrian crossing ahead. The Philippines

ADB is pursuing the following partnership opportunities to improve road safety in the region

Collaborating and coordinating to support the United Nations' "Decade of Action for Road Safety"

Since Asia contributes approximately half of global road deaths and injuries, ADB will endeavor to ensure that the region receives a commensurate share (about 50%) of global resources to address road safety, and assist with the administration of such funds as needed.

ADB is engaging in discussions with multilateral development banks on establishing a global Road Safety Incentive Fund to scale up road safety work to support the Decade of Action. This work is referred to as the Road Safety Initiative. ADB and other multilateral development banks are preparing estimates of the demand for funding and activities under the Road Safety Initiative consistent with the United Nations Global Plan for the Decade of Action; governance arrangements; and harmonized results framework.

Mobilizing international partners

ADB plans to identify and mobilize international partners to collaborate in road safety. The partnerships will lead to improved road safety across the region and will engage the private sector in solving the problems of unsafe roads.

ADB will also work with universities and research institutes in the region to encourage road safety research and introduce road safety into the training of future professionals studying for civil engineering, economics, planning, and related courses. There are several international networks of road safety professionals with an interest in road safety and injury prevention. These too can be mobilized to partner with ADB.

An electronic version of the Road Safety Action Plan is available at www.adb.org/documents/road-safety-action-plan



Segregated lanes for vulnerable road users. The Philippines



Increased wearing of helmets and reduced overloading would greatly enhance motorcycle safety in developing countries. Cambodia



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Joanna Abramo

Cover photo by Handicap International

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The Asian Development Bank (ADB) has established the Sustainable Transport Initiative to align its transport operations with ADB's long-term strategic framework, Strategy 2020. In July 2010, ADB approved the Sustainable Transport Initiative Operational Plan, which identifies road safety as one of the priority areas to be mainstreamed and scaled up in ADB's transport operations. To guide its work on mainstreaming road safety, ADB developed the Road Safety Action Plan. It provides the basis for ADB to play a more proactive role to support developing countries in Asia and the Pacific in their efforts to achieve sustainable, effective, and cost-efficient improvements in road safety.

About the Asian Development Bank

ADB's vision is an Asia and Pacific region free of poverty. Its mission is to help its developing member countries reduce poverty and improve the quality of life of their people. Despite the region's many successes, it remains home to two-thirds of the world's poor: 1.8 billion people who live on less than \$2 a day, with 903 million struggling on less than \$1.25 a day. ADB is committed to reducing poverty through inclusive economic growth, environmentally sustainable growth, and regional integration.

Based in Manila, ADB is owned by 67 members, including 48 from the region. Its main instruments for helping its developing member countries are policy dialogue, loans, equity investments, guarantees, grants, and technical assistance.

Asian Development Bank
6 ADB Avenue, Mandaluyong City
1550 Metro Manila, Philippines
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