



GLOBAL STATUS REPORT ON ROAD SAFETY

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TIME FOR ACTION



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Preface

The *Global status report on road safety* reaffirms our understanding of road traffic injuries as a global health and development problem. More than 1.2 million people die on the world's roads every year, and as many as 50 million others are injured. Over 90% of the deaths occur in low-income and middle-income countries.

Beyond the enormous suffering they cause, road traffic crashes can drive a family into poverty as crash survivors and their families struggle to cope with the long-term consequences of the event, including the cost of medical care and rehabilitation and all too often funeral expenses and the loss of the family breadwinner.

Road traffic injuries also place a huge strain on national health systems, many of which suffer from woefully inadequate levels of resources.

Historically, many of the measures in place to reduce road traffic deaths and injuries are aimed at protecting car occupants. However, as this report shows, nearly half of those killed each year around the world are pedestrians, motorcyclists, cyclists and passengers in public transport; this figure is even higher in the poorer countries and communities of the world.

The *Global status report on road safety* draws our attention to the needs of all road users – including these most vulnerable groups. They too must be considered and given equal priority when policy decisions on road safety, land use and urban planning are made.

Prevention is by far the better option. We have much of the knowledge and experience and many of the tools needed to make our transport systems safe and healthy. Building safer vehicles and roads, designing infrastructure with the protection of pedestrians and cyclists in mind, enhancing public transport and improving our personal behaviour on the roads would reduce injuries and contribute to healthier populations generally.

For these approaches to be realized, there must be collaboration among the actors and agencies within each country whose policies – directly or indirectly – impact on the safety of those on its roads. These partners must use the power of the evidence in hand to encourage those implementing road safety initiatives and adopting and enforcing legislation to align their efforts with best practice from the field.



With the *Global status report on road safety*, we have for the first time an assessment on the status of road safety around the globe. This unique and comparable set of data confirms the relevance of this issue to the societal challenges of today. It identifies clear gaps and opportunities and inspires us to action. Now is the time.

Dr Margaret Chan
Director-General
World Health Organization

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