Unit 7
Formulating and implementing road safety policies
Objectives

By the end of this unit, the trainee should be able to:

• explain the importance of developing policies for road traffic injury prevention;

• describe the process of developing a policy for road traffic injury prevention;

• discuss the role of a national lead agency in developing and implementing policies for road traffic injury prevention.
What is a national policy on road safety?

A written document that provides the basis for action to be taken jointly by the governments and nongovernmental partners.

(Schopper, Lormand, Waxweiler, 2006)
Why is a policy necessary?

- to raise awareness and create mutual understanding about a situation
- to articulate ethical and other principles to justify and guide action
- to generate a consensus vision
- to provide a framework for action
- to define responsibilities and mechanisms of coordination
- to secure or raise political commitment
- to engage a variety of partners
- to identify promising measures
- to monitor progress and effectiveness of strategies
Policy formulation is complex and continuous

1. Initiating the process
   1.1 Assess situation
   1.2 Raise awareness
   1.3 Identify leadership
   1.4 Involve stakeholders

2. Formulating the policy
   2.1 Define framework
   2.2 Set objectives
   2.3 Select interventions
   2.4 Ensure action

3. Seeking approval & endorsement
   3.1 Stakeholder approval
   3.2 Governmental approval
   3.3 State endorsement

© WHO, 2007
The figure on previous slide tells us that the policy formulation process...

- does not necessarily move in a smooth manner from one step to another
- takes time, consultation, negotiation and effort
- requires political will and commitment
- requires involvement of stakeholders
- is influenced by social, economic and political factors
It is not enough to have a policy: implement it

• Develop a plan of action
  – Objectives
  – Targets
  – Performance indicators
  – Activities
  – Set a timeframe
  – Estimate resource needs
  – Set up a monitoring mechanism

• Coordinate implementation
  – Agencies
  – Activities
  – Financial and human resources
Costa Rican example

National road safety plan aimed at reducing mortality by 19% between 2001 and 2005.

Action through:

• Traffic laws and enforcement
• Education
• Infrastructure development
• Research
Sweden: Vision Zero

Ultimate goal: no deaths or severe injuries through road traffic crashes

Based on four elements:

1. Ethics
   • Human life and health are paramount

2. Responsibility
   • Shared between providers of the road system and the road user
3. Safety philosophy
   - Human beings make errors
   - Human body is vulnerable

4. Creating mechanisms for change
   - Develop and implement appropriate measures
Aim: reduce road deaths by 50% and RTIs by 40% by 2010, compared with 1986 baseline figures

Central policy elements:

1. Considers both a safe and sustainable traffic system
   - Road infrastructure adapted to account for human limitations
   - Vehicles reduce demands of driving task and are crash-worthy
   - Road users provided with adequate information and where necessary deterred from dangerous behaviour
The Netherlands: Sustainable safety

2. Based on strategic principles
   – Road network reclassified according to road function
   – Speed limits set according to road function
   – Using appropriate design to make road function, layout and use compatible

3. Specifies necessary actions
   – Creation of national, regional and local partnerships to re-engineer road network
   – Reclassify road network
   – 30 km/h speed limit for built-up areas
Evaluate implementation of plan of action

• Plan for evaluation
• Choose evaluation methods
• Conduct evaluation
• Disseminate and use results of evaluation
A national lead agency is needed to...

- formulate policy, set goals and elaborate strategies
- guide the national road safety effort
- make decisions and control resources
- coordinate efforts by all governmental and nongovernmental agencies
- manage, coordinate and commission road safety activities
- advise all arms of the government
- compile and analyse national statistics
- ensure data and evidence are available for road safety planning
A national lead agency is needed to...

- set research priorities and fund projects
- assemble and disseminate information
- establish and fund research and teaching institutions
- establish safety standards for roads, road infrastructure and vehicles
- monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of strategies
- organize regular national conferences on road safety
- procure sufficient funds for road safety work
Sub-national and local institutions are necessary to:

• set up formal systems in each state or province or in each city
• coordinate local efforts
• translate and implement policy at the local level, taking into account local needs and priorities
• coordinate activities across all relevant agencies at the local level
Key points (1)

- Policy formulation and implementation is a continuous process.
- This process is complex and does not necessarily move in a smooth manner from one step to another.
- A functional and effective institutional framework is essential.
• A national lead agency in government is necessary to guide the national road safety effort.

• Sub-national institutional structures are required to translate and implement policy, and coordinate activities across all relevant agencies at the local level.
Learning activity

Task

Is there a national road safety policy and action plan in your country? If so, prepare a one-page summary of the aims, targets and activities that have been implemented. What are the strengths in the policy and plan? What are the weaknesses in the policy and plan? If your answer to the opening question is no, what steps do you plan to take to initiate the process of developing a national road safety policy or action plan?
Expected results

This exercise is meant to assist trainees with reviewing their national road safety policy and action plan. If possible, the trainees should be given this question in advance before the training so that they have time to gather the relevant information. If this is not possible, let them answer based on their knowledge and experience. The exercise will also make the trainees realize the importance of understanding fully the policy instruments that exist in their countries. This exercise should get trainees to think much more deeply about the road safety policies and action plans in their countries, and especially about whether or not these policies and plans are being implemented.
Questions to think about

a) What is the relationship between policy and legislation?

b) Is there a functional institutional framework for road traffic injury prevention in the sub-national administrative units in your country? What do you identify as the strengths and weaknesses in the existing framework? What practical steps do you propose to take to address the weaknesses you have identified?