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Technical assistance to countries with economies in transition

Road Safety Performance Reviews – activities and results

Note by the secretariat

I. Background

1. Road safety is an important sustainable development goal, yet relatively underappreciated and greatly underfunded. Every year, about 1.24 million people die globally and another 20 to 50 million sustain non-fatal injuries as consequences of road traffic accidents. Road accident injuries now rank as the world's eighth-leading cause of death and young adults aged between 15 and 44 years account for 59% of global road traffic deaths.

2. Approximately 90% of all road crashes currently happen in low- and middle-income countries; yet they own only half of the world's motor vehicles. Road crashes cost an estimated 1% to 5% of GDP in developing countries, undermining efforts to reduce poverty and accelerate sustainable development. More than half of global deaths are among pedestrians and operators of motorized two-wheeled vehicles. Rates are higher in the world's poorest regions. These losses are tragic and needless and these alarming findings underscore the urgent need for action to improve road safety across world regions.

3. In 2010, the United Nations General Assembly proclaimed the decade 2011-2020 as the United Nations Decade of Action for Road Safety, and set a goal to stabilize and reduce the level of global road traffic fatalities. A Global Plan for the Decade of Action for Road Safety 2011-2020¹ was developed to guide countries in taking concrete, national actions to achieve the goal to reduce global road traffic deaths and injuries by 50 per cent by 2020, and at the same time, to promote coordinated and concerted actions for better road safety.

¹ United Nations, 2011

4. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development adopted by the United Nations Sustainable Development Summit 2015, defined the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Two SDGs are related to road safety:

- SDG target 3.6 aims to reduce global road traffic deaths and injuries by 50 per cent by 2020, and
- SDG target 11.2 aims to provide access to safe, affordable, accessible and sustainable transport systems for all by 2030.

5. Regrettably, there has been limited improvement in the overall global road safety situation since the launch of the UN Decade of Action for Road Safety. Thus, much remains to be done to meet SDGs and the Decade's goal, especially in low- and middle-income countries which bear the highest rates of road traffic fatalities and injuries.

II. Road Safety Performance Review Project

6. The Road Safety Performance Review (RSPR) project, financed from 9th UNDA Tranche, aims to assist four developing countries and countries with economies in transition to strengthen road safety management capacities and effectively address and improve national road safety records. The project is under implementation by three United Nations Regional Commissions (RCs): UNECE, ECLAC and ESCAP. The UNECE Sustainable Transport Division is leading and coordinating the project.

7. Project activities are currently under implementation in four low- or middle-income countries: Albania, the Dominican Republic, Georgia and the Viet Nam. These four countries observe very high mortality and motorisation growth rates and require international assistance to improve national road safety situation and develop road safety management system.

8. The Project aims to assist countries in addressing their priority road safety needs by improving their national road safety management systems. The most critical road safety needs are to be identified and addressed in the RSPR with the aim of creating a more efficient road safety management system. By setting efficient road safety management system, countries show an understanding of their road safety problems and express their intent to reduce the number of road deaths and injuries.

III. The RSPR Project methodology

9. The **first component** of the Project is the assessment of country road safety situation and management system through the RSPR. Assessment is to identify the following: limitation in capacities, financial and human resources, necessary statistical capabilities and other pressing economic or social problems which have prevented countries from establishing or upgrading their road safety management system. Identification of gaps in national legal and regulatory framework, compliance with UN road safety instruments and coordination of road safety stakeholders are to be addressed in the RSPR as well.

10. The assessment is to cover the following activities:

- preparatory missions of an initial review team (RCs staff) in the beneficiary countries including a one-day policy dialogue to agree on the objectives, outline and timeline of the RSPR with national authorities and relevant road safety stakeholders. These two-day preparatory missions should result in an agreement between the respective RCs and governments on the most pressing road safety areas to be specially analysed in the RSPR.

- in-depth fact-finding missions in the beneficiary countries by a substantive review team (comprising relevant RCs staff and national consultants) to meet and interview national authorities and other road safety stakeholders. Missions are to include observation of different road environments (urban and rural roads). Draft RSPRs are to be prepared by consultants with identification of the most critical aspects and road safety priority needs. The draft report is to be reviewed by relevant RCs staff.

11. Based on priority areas identified by the RSPR (e.g. establishment of effective road safety management, institutional systems and legislative frameworks, collection and evaluation of accurate road safety statistics, setting and monitoring of road safety targets and better vehicle and road infrastructure safety), **second component** of the project comprising of national capacity building workshops will be prepared and implemented.

12. Two national capacity-building workshops are to be implemented to enhance national road safety management capacities. First capacity building workshop is designed to include a one-day policy dialogue on the RSPR findings and recommendations and one-day seminar on the most pressing road safety issues identified in draft RSPR. The follow-up capacity-building national workshops would take place over two days and provide further training on the relevant priority areas identified through the RSPR, including the accession and efficient implementation of United Nations road-safety related legal instruments. Each of the capacity-building national seminars is to be attended by national government officials and other relevant stakeholders from the NGOs and the private sector.

13. Following the policy dialogue, in collaboration with the national governments, substantive review teams will finalize the RSPR reports with recommendations. The report is to be published in English and the national language. In order to disseminate project results and increase visibility of the project, a dedicated web page on UNECE web site will be established. Through the publication of the RSPR in the national languages and preparation of the dedicated web page, the project is expected to raise awareness of the beneficiary countries about the critical needs to timely and adequately address road safety challenges and emphasise the importance of the accession and implementation of the key UN road-safety related legal instruments as an effective means for improving road safety management at the national level.

IV. Current stage of the Project and next steps

14. The project was launched in September 2015 and so far, the following activities were implemented:

- Albania – Two initial missions are completed (19-20 November 2015 and 18-20 December 2016) and policy dialogue with national road safety stakeholders was established - which resulted in identification of most important areas to be assessed during the RSPR preparation. In 2017, a team of national consultants was engaged and they prepared draft RSPR report, which is now under the RC revision. In addition, international capacity-building event on the topic of UN road safety legal instruments was held in Geneva on 5-7 July 2017 with more than 50 stakeholders present from Albania, Georgia, as well as Uganda and Cameroon. Beneficiary countries presented the RSPR findings and their success in efficient implementation of the UN road safety legal instruments. (More info: <http://www.unece.org/trans/themes/unda-road-safety-management-capacity-building-project.html>).
- Georgia – Assessment process including three missions to Georgia (30 November - 1 December 2015, 23-25 November 2016 and 14-15 December 2016), mobilizing national consultants' team and preparation of the draft RSPR was finalized. Based on the preliminary RSPR findings, national capacity building workshop was held in

Kachreti, Georgia on 26-27 April 2017. The workshop gathered more than 35 Georgian road safety stakeholders and provided information, best practices and training in areas identified in the RSPR as most challenging: speed management, safer vehicles and combat against drink-driving. Fifteen Georgian road safety stakeholders participated in capacity-building workshop on the topic of UN road safety legal instruments, held in Geneva on 5-7 July 2017.

- Viet Nam - Preparatory mission took place on 16-17 March 2016 and 10-12 October 2016 (both in Hanoi) and national consultants' team was hired during 2016. Based on the identified priority areas, two capacity building events were held, with substantive UNECE input: (i) "National Capacity Building Workshop on the Implementation of Road Safety Legal Instruments – Strengthening National Road Safety Management Capacities" held in Hanoi on 12-13 January 2017 and Ho Chi Minh City, 16-17 January 2017 and (ii) "Consultative meeting on the main findings of Viet Nam's Road Safety Performance Review and Capacity building workshops on road safety audits" held on 12-20 June 2017 in Hanoi and 19-27 June 2017, in Ho Chi Minh. The draft RSPR was prepared and is currently under the RC review.
- The Dominican Republic – Preparatory missions were held on 4-6 June 2016 and 26 – 28 September 2016; both in Santo Domingo. Based on the mission findings and policy dialogue with national stakeholders, the most important road safety topics were identified and national consultants have prepared draft RSPR. Capacity building workshop "National workshop on sustainable mobility, logistics and road safety in the Dominican Republic" was held on 19-20 April 2017 with sessions dedicated to UN road safety legal instruments and policy dialogue on the RSPR findings.

15. In order to improve the quality of the RSPRs and to attract additional funding, UNECE agreed to the involvement of several international road safety organizations in the Project as peer reviewers for specific topics (safe vehicles, drink driving and road infrastructure safety). Experts from the International Alliance for Responsible Drinking (IARD) prepared valuable inputs on drink-driving in all beneficiary countries, while experts from the International Road Federation (IRF Washington) reviewed safer roads component of the RSPR in Albania and Georgia.

16. It is very important that this United Nations Development Account-financed project is complemented by the Special Envoy-sponsored Road Safety Performance Reviews in Africa (Cameroon and Uganda), as part of the ongoing cooperation between UNECE, the Special Envoy and the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA). Road safety stakeholders from Cameroon and Uganda took active participation in the *Workshop on UN Transport Legal Instruments – a tool for better Road Safety Management*, held in Geneva, on 5-7 July 2017.

17. National capacity building workshop in Albania and the Dominican Republic and presentation and publishing of the Road Safety Performance Reviews in all beneficiary countries are to be finalized by November 2017 and the project is to be completed in December 2017.

18. The United Nations Development Account (UNDA) objective is to fund capacity development projects in the priority areas of the United Nations Development Agenda that benefit developing countries and countries with economies in transition. The projects serve as a natural extension to the normative and policy activities of the RCs and represent a perfect match with the Sustainable Transport Division technical assistance activities. Knowing that capacity building, technical assistance and exchange of best practices are of utmost importance for countries with economies in transition, the Sustainable Transport Division will continue to submit project proposals for future UNDA financing.