

Foreword

This document, intended for those involved in road safety and professionals in developing countries, provides methodological elements derived from a regional program of support in defining and implementing a road safety policy in sub-Saharan Africa. Initiated by the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 1992 and steered by Isted's transport department since 1994, this program also enjoys the support of the Ministry of Public Works, Transports, and Housing.

It is a presentation not of "miracle" recipes but rather of methodological elements identified in the course of this experience, acquired by implementing "pilot" road safety actions in the context of regional co-operation in French-speaking sub-Saharan Africa.

The actions that are implemented are aimed at the long term and the results, in terms of accident reduction, are doubtless not immediately tangible. Furthermore, the reforms instituted still require adjustments and improvements insofar as permanent adaptation to changes in the sector and in the players turns out to be a fundamental principle. However, the program is undeniably contributing to the gradual development of a "road safety culture" in Africa by setting up a network of African road safety experts and adopting new working methods, reflected by more systematic co-operation among all players in the field of road safety. A tool like the BAAC, (*Bulletin d'Analyse d'Accidents Corporels de la circulation routière* - Road traffic accident injury analysis form), accident database software created for this program, is a good symbol of what is being built up day by day: a shared base of experience and knowledge that is contributing to a growing awareness of the stakes in road safety at regional level, which strengthens regional cohesion, favours harmonisation, encourages a degree of emulation, and helps African expertise to develop more readily and more meaningfully, on a regional scale.

This document results from the work done by Béatrice Adoléhoumé (in charge of Isted's transport Department from 1994 to 2001) in the regional program. One of the main objectives of this document is to build on and make use of pilot experiments conducted in a few countries, and local initiatives, to help other countries in the sub-region and to favour synergies. It attempts finally, to contribute to developing local skills and consolidating a network of African experts, as a medium that reports and highlights a shared experience.

The contributions of the land transport directors who took the initiative by committing their countries to the first pilot actions - to date, in chronological order, Senegal, Mali, Burkina Faso, Benin, Guinea, and Ivory Coast - have been decisive. More generally, all land transport directors and road safety organisations in the sub-region, and their teams, have contributed significantly to the program through their active participation in regional joint actions.