

Introduction

Awareness of the challenge of deficient road safety in developing countries, more particularly in Africa, is growing. A few studies, initiated in particular for the GRSP¹ (and performed by the TRL), have contributed to this growing awareness, by publishing figures, as impressive as they are motivating, concerning the economic and financial stakes. In effect, beyond the human suffering it entails, the “cost” of deficient safety is all the greater in that young people are affected most, making the impact on national output significant. But this is not the object of this document, which is intended for practitioners and decision-makers who already know about the scope of the problem and of the “catastrophe scenarios” that would result from a merely mainstream approach, given that the risks are aggravated by such factors as population growth, spreading urbanisation, growing numbers of motor vehicle ownership, etc.

The essential thing today is to act quickly and make the “players in road safety” in these countries aware of our experience, whether it is “negative” or more “positive”. The important thing is, in effect, to move forward while avoiding previous errors and deriving all possible benefit from experience.

The originality of this program lies first of all in its being steered by a regional group of African road safety officials, and also in the option of initiating pilot actions aimed at testing, then adopting, shared methodologies and tools throughout the sub-region. It lies also in the acceptance by those involved in national co-operation as the foundation of road safety policy. Finally, it lies in the deliberately limited recourse to international expertise, leaving more scope for local involvement in the projects, to develop local skills, etc., which are the keys to lasting results.

This document begins with a few items of background information - the origin of the program, the partners involved, the principles behind our action.

A second part emphasises fundamental lessons from “pioneer” countries in these pilot experiments.

The third part describes the procedure, in 6 steps, illustrated by a few practical examples.

Finally, a few prospects are considered.

¹“Global Road Safety Partnership”, initiated by the World Bank.