The Gambian Road Safety Strategy 2020 to 2030

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Summary

This road safety strategy has been prepared to tackle a problem which is causing significant human misery and significant economic losses in The Gambia.

Our vision: Zero road fatalities or serious injuries in The Gambia

Too many people are being killed and injured on the road. We do not accept this as a by-product of increased population, wealth and motor vehicle traffic. We need to stop the safety situation from worsening further, and then we need to start eliminating this trauma from our society.

Safe System Principles

Eliminating fatal and serious injury on the road will take some time, and require some fundamental change to how the road traffic system is managed. This will be challenging.

We shall to rely on the following principles to assist in our decision-making and actions over the life of the strategy:

- All deaths and serious injuries on the road are preventable, and are not an acceptable price of economic progress
- People make mistakes while using the road and should not pay for a mistake with death or serious injury
- Some crashes are inevitable, but we must reduce the impact speed to ensure that people do not suffer death or serious injury as a result
- Government, business, and communities have a responsibility to create a safe road traffic system, free of death or serious injury

Targets

Interim targets to 2030 will drive us forward and allow us to track progress as we reach for our vision. Eight safety performance outcomes have been identified to support achievement of a 50% reduction in fatal and serious injuries to 2030.

- Number of fatalities   < 100
- Rate of fatalities per 100,000 population   - 50%
- Number of serious injuries   < 330
- Number of pedestrian fatalities   < 40
- Vehicles exceeding the posted speed limit   - 50%
- Drivers testing above the legal alcohol limit   - 50%
- Adult motor vehicle occupants correctly using seatbelts   100%
- Motorcycle riders correctly using helmets   100%
- iRAP safety star rating for national highway network   ≥ 3 star
- Travel on main roads with three-star safety ratings   ≥ 75%
- Imported motor vehicles complying with at least 7 of 8 priority UN vehicle safety standards   100%
- Time between crash and first professional emergency care   (metric to be developed)

Strategic Directions

There has been a significant deterioration in road safety in Gambia in recent years which is creating a heavy burden on Gambia's economy and its people.

A methodical approach is required to tackle this issue. Over the life of the strategy we need to put in place a series of strategic projects which:

- Build Government and community capacity to tackle the problem
- Begin to tackle high priority safety issues in a sustainable way
- Monitor and review progress, and develop an increasingly sophisticated response.

A number of strategic directions will assist in prioritising our efforts:

- Leadership and coordination
- Capacity building
- Data collection and analysis
- Safety led regulatory reform
- Infrastructure focus on pedestrian safety
- Sensitization
- Enforcement
- Post Crash

Implementation

A Gambian Road Safety Committee has been established to provide direction and oversight to the implementation of this strategy, chaired by the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Transport, Works and Infrastructure. The Committee shall be supported by a Gambian Road Safety Working Group, involving a wide set of stakeholders.

A key task of the Gambian Road Safety Committee is to develop multisectoral plans to pursue the directions set out in this strategy. An annual Road Safety Action Plan will be prepared by MoTWI in its role as the national road safety lead agency ahead of an autonomous agency being established.

The Road Fund to fund the road safety leadership and coordination functions of the lead agency and multisectoral road safety activity with at least 5 percent of the Fund dedicated for such purposes.

A review will be conducted of the implementation of the strategy within three years of the approval of the strategy. This review will assess progress against the targets and directions set out in the strategy, identify lessons learned in implementation, and make recommendations for how implementation can be improved over the remaining life of the strategy.

Introduction

Gambia faces a number of economic and social stresses following the re-establishment of a democratic government. Public debt is high, and economic growth is low. Poverty remains at high levels and is disproportionately affecting our rural communities, while gender equality and youth development remain major challenges.

Road traffic injury is an issue which disproportionately affects the poorest and the most vulnerable members of society in Gambia. It is a significant cause of death and disability, and generates economic losses of over GMD 2 Billion each year, through treatment costs, loss of productivity, and ongoing pain and suffering.

This road safety strategy has been prepared as a major step in our efforts to tackle this problem which also afflicts our neighbours throughout West Africa. The strategy sets a goal of eliminating fatal and serious injury on the road, similar to other major public health goals for control of malaria or HIV-AIDS.

Interim targets have been set for 2030, aligned with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, and are supported by a number of strategic directions we shall pursue. Implementation arrangements have already begun, and will drive us towards realisation of our goals and targets over the next decade.

Zero road fatalities or serious injuries in The Gambia

This is our vision for road safety: Zero road fatalities or serious injuries in The Gambia.

As we develop and grow, we want to value and nourish the Gambian way of life. We want material progress for our people but not at the expense of their health. We want to protect the most vulnerable users of the roads, and when something goes wrong we should look to support and assist those in need.

We must be more demanding of our own behaviour and actions, and of the organisations and institutions that we rely upon to keep us safe. We must seek to achieve the ultimate goal of zero fatalities as well as zero serious injuries on the road, due to their often devastating lifetime effect.

Too many people are being killed and injured on the road. We do not accept this as a by-product of increased population, wealth and motor vehicle traffic. As we develop, we must break the link between economic progress and human trauma on our roads.

We need to stop the safety situation from worsening further, and then we need to start eliminating this trauma from our society.

HIV AIDS: A successful elimination agenda in The Gambia

Road traffic injury is a major public health issue, leaving a trail of social and economic losses which impedes the development of our country. We shall address it in a similar way to successful public health programs such as HIV AIDS.

The Gambia's HIV AIDS goal is "To achieve zero new HIV infections, zero AIDS-related deaths and zero stigma and discrimination in The Gambia." The institutional and policy response to the problem has included the following steps:

- The National AIDS Control Programme established in 1987
- National AIDS Council and the National AIDS Secretariat established in 2001
- An HIV policy developed in 1995 (reviewed in 2007 and 2014) and three national AIDS strategic plans.

The third National Strategic Plan 2014-19 included the following targets:

- To reduce new HIV infections by 50% in the general population by 2019
- To reduce mother to child transmission of HIV at 6 weeks from 10% to 3% by 2019
- To increase the coverage of antiretroviral therapy from 21% to 90% of all persons living with HIV by 2019.

Sustained action saw HIV infections decrease by 3% and AIDS-related deaths decrease by 23% between 2010 and 2016. UN AIDS reports great potential to eliminate mother-to-child transmission of HIV and end AIDS in The Gambia by 2030.[1]

We can and must learn the lessons from the successful fight against HIV AIDS in order to eliminate road traffic fatalities and serious injuries in The Gambia.

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[1] www.unaids.org/en/regionscountries/countries/gambia

Policy and Planning Frameworks

This strategy has been prepared within The Gambia's overall policy and planning framework. Road safety is, for example, one of several key transport strategy areas under the "National Development Plan 2018-2021" (NDP).

This strategy looks further ahead to 2030, but a number of cross-cutting enablers identified within the NDP are critical to road safety:

- *A public sector that is efficient and responsive to the citizenry:* this strategy identifies the need for the public sector to work better together for road safety
- *Promoting environmental sustainability, climate resilient communities and appropriate land use:* this strategy promotes a sustainable mobility approach to road safety
- *Making The Gambia a Digital Nation and creating a modern information society:* this strategy identifies the need to establish a much safer driver and vehicle regulatory system with much better use of information technology
- *A civil society that is engaged and is a valued partner in national development:* this strategy recognizes that all parts of society must contribute to road safety
- *Strengthening evidence-based policy, planning and decision-making:* this strategy follows and promotes these public management disciplines.

This strategy aligns itself to the NDP's monitoring and evaluation approach. A robust results framework is available through well accepted guidance and practice for low and middle income countries committed to tackling their road safety problem. This is backed by well established monitoring and evaluation mechanisms focusing on the interventions and deliverables which research shows are capable of achieving the desired results.

Safety is a guiding principle of the "National Transport Policy 2018-2027" (NTP), which recognises that transport exposes people to a certain risk, but that the only acceptable safety goal (whether in aviation, maritime or road transport) is the elimination of fatalities and serious injuries. The NTP sets out Gambia's Road Safety Policy as being to:

- significantly lift the attention and effort of government agencies and the community to the major economic and social losses associated with road traffic crashes
- establish essential governance and management mechanisms to address the problem
- focus on key interventions to reduce the rate of increase of road trauma, then
- stabilize and reduce the number of fatalities and serious injuries suffered by Gambians on the road.

Five supporting policies within the NTP have guided the directions set out in this strategy:

1. Government is committed to significantly reducing road traffic fatalities and injuries
2. Strengthen road safety management systems
3. Introduce road safety engineering measures
4. Strengthen road safety laws and enforcement
5. Improve post-crash response.

This strategy brings all these elements together in the pursuit of safety on our roads.

The Sustainable Development Agenda

Along with other Member Countries of the United Nations in 2015, The Gambia has adopted "The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development", which includes 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) for 2030. The agenda, and related goals, provides a critical platform for this national road safety strategy.

Road traffic injury is a non-communicable disease which disproportionately affects the youngest, poorest and most vulnerable members of the community. The World Health Organisation estimates that 1.35 million people are killed on roads each year, and road traffic injury is the leading cause of death for children and young adults aged 5-29 years of age.

Africa has the highest per capita rate of road fatalities, where road traffic injury is the tenth highest cause of death and is projected to increase over the next decade without significant intervention. Africa also has the highest proportion of pedestrian and cyclist deaths in the world – 44% compared to 26% globally.

The Sustainable Development Agenda is significant for this strategy in two respects. It formally recognised road traffic injury as a global development issue for the first time. Road traffic injury is a gateway to poverty within households, robbing communities of breadwinners and creating a burden of care on others, and preventing road traffic injury is an important anti-poverty measure. The Agenda also located road traffic safety within a wider sustainable transport framework, where the principal concerns are issues such as urban planning, land use and mobility systems. Road traffic safety is a public health issue and, particularly in rapidly urbanizing environments, needs to be addressed as part of a wider sustainability agenda.

SDG 3 Good Health and Wellbeing included an intermediate target of halving road traffic fatalities by 2020, which was the original goal of the UN Decade of Action for Road Safety 2011-2020. Delays in mobilising political and financial resources (at both global and national levels) mean this target will not be achieved. A new global fatality target will be set, and voluntary road safety performance targets which have been prepared in the interim are applied in this Gambian road safety strategy.

The sustainable transport framework is integrated within SDG 11 Sustainable Cities and Communities. This goal includes a target of making cities & human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient & sustainable by 2030. This orientation is particularly important for Gambia – urbanization continues to grow (now around 60% of the total population) and the concentration of motor vehicles in urban areas further increases exposure to injury. Sustainable transport systems are a focus of this road safety strategy.

This strategy uses accepted good practice principles and frameworks for road safety, and applies these in a way which supports our Gambian way of life.

Safe System Principles

Eliminating fatal and serious injury on the road will take some time, and require some fundamental change to how the road traffic system is managed. This will be challenging.

We shall need to rely on some principles to assist in our decision-making and actions over the life of the strategy. The following four principles will be considered as we implement this strategy and deliver commitments through road safety action plans over the course of this strategy.

Safe mobility	All deaths and serious injuries on the road are preventable, and are not an acceptable price of economic progress
Human error	People make mistakes while using the road and should not pay for a mistake with death or serious injury
Protection	Some crashes are inevitable, but we must reduce the impact speed to ensure that people do not suffer death or serious injury as a result
Responsibility	Government, business, and communities have a responsibility to create a safe road traffic system, free of death or serious injury

We need to look elsewhere for inspiration and to inform our decisions about the most effective response to road trauma in The Gambia.

The overall philosophy being adopted internationally is described as the "safe system" approach to road safety. This approach looks well beyond individual behaviours on the road. It seeks to address the underlying environment which affects the safety of all people using the road, and is focused on the ultimate goal of eliminating serious road trauma.

The safe system approach seeks to address every element of the road traffic system (management, road, vehicle, user, speed, medical care) to eliminate serious injuries (even though crashes may still occur) by controlling the energy impact on the human body when a crash occurs.[2]

Figure 1: Safe System Approach to Road Safety

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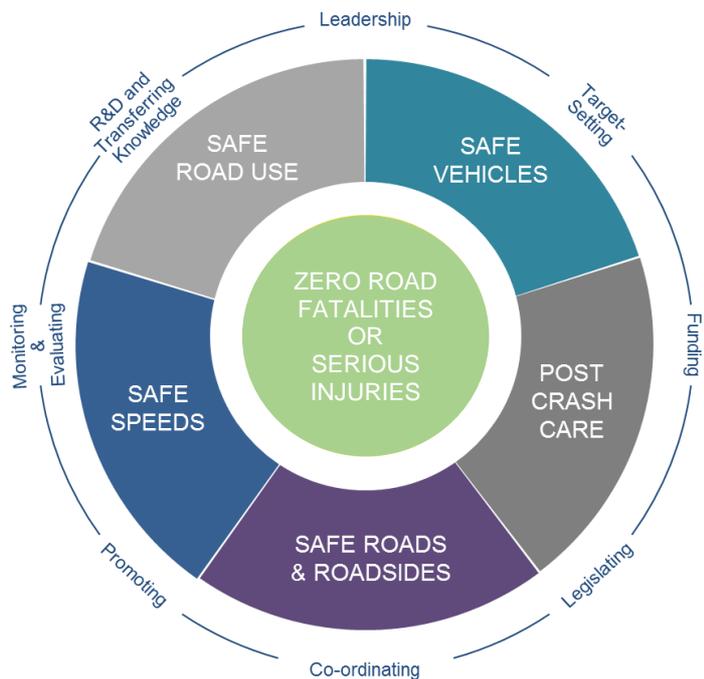
[2] See International Transport F (2016), Zero Road Deaths and Serious Injuries: Leading a Paradigm Shift to a Safe System, OECD Publishing, Paris. The diagram is adapted from the Loughborough University Design School Safe System Course, 2017.

Road Safety Targets

It will not be possible to realise our vision of zero road traffic fatalities or serious injuries by 2030. Interim targets to 2030 will drive us forward, however, and allow us to track progress as we reach for our vision. The targets we have set will be backed up by periodic action plans which assign responsibility for activity required to achieve our goal.

We have adopted an aspirational approach to targets – starting from a 50% reduction in fatal and serious injuries to 2030. From the UN voluntary road safety performance targets[3], we have identified eight intermediate safety outcomes to directly support achievement of this 50% reduction.

Table 1: Safety Outcome Targets

Safety Outcome	2030 Target
Number of fatalities	< 100
Rate of fatalities per 100,000 population	- 50%
Number of serious injuries	< 330
Number of pedestrian fatalities	< 40

Road safety targets approach

This strategy applies three levels of targets.

1. Safety Outcome Targets

Final safety outcomes are the highest level results being sought, focusing on a reduction in fatalities and serious injuries. To assist in comparison purposes across Africa a target is set for fatalities per 100,000 population. To ensure we are tackling the primary safety issues, a specific target is established for pedestrians.

2. Safety Performance Targets

Intermediate safety outcomes are needed to focus resources and monitor progress on safety critical issues. These intermediate outcomes draw upon voluntary road safety performance targets prepared within the United Nations. Research evidence suggests that if these outcomes improve, safety has improved.

3. Delivery Targets

In order to improve the intermediate safety outcomes, and achieve our final safety targets in 2030, a number of significant interventions will need to be delivered. The first set of interventions and delivery targets are set out in the first action plan, which implements this strategy.

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[3] https://www.who.int/violence_injury_prevention/road_traffic/road-safety-targets/en/ Retrieved December 2018.

Table 2: Safety Performance Targets

Safety Performance Indicator		2030 Target
	Vehicles exceeding the posted speed limit	- 50%
	Drivers testing above the legal alcohol limit	- 50%
	Adult motor vehicle occupants correctly using seatbelts	100%
	Motorcycle riders correctly using helmets	100%
	iRAP safety star rating for national highway network	At least 3 star
	Travel on main roads that meet a three-star safety ratings or better	> 75%
	Imported motor vehicles from countries regulating at least 7 of the 8 priority UN vehicle safety standards	100%
	Time between crash and first professional emergency care	metric to be developed

Further performance indicators and targets will be set as action plans are developed. These will focus on "output" or "delivery" indicators, particularly those that will support achievement of the intermediate outcomes targets.

The Gambian Road Safety Committee is responsible for overseeing development and implementation of programs to achieve these targets and monitor and report results against them.

Our Problem

The Gambia is facing a similar road safety scenario as many other low and middle-income countries in Africa and around the world.

Our population is increasing significantly, we have witnessed a significant escalation in motor vehicle traffic, and our wealth is increasing. While none of these are negative in their own right, our road traffic system is simply unable to cope with the additional demands. Figure 2 illustrates that many people have been killed or seriously injured on the roads as a result.

Figure 2: Road deaths and serious injuries 2000-16
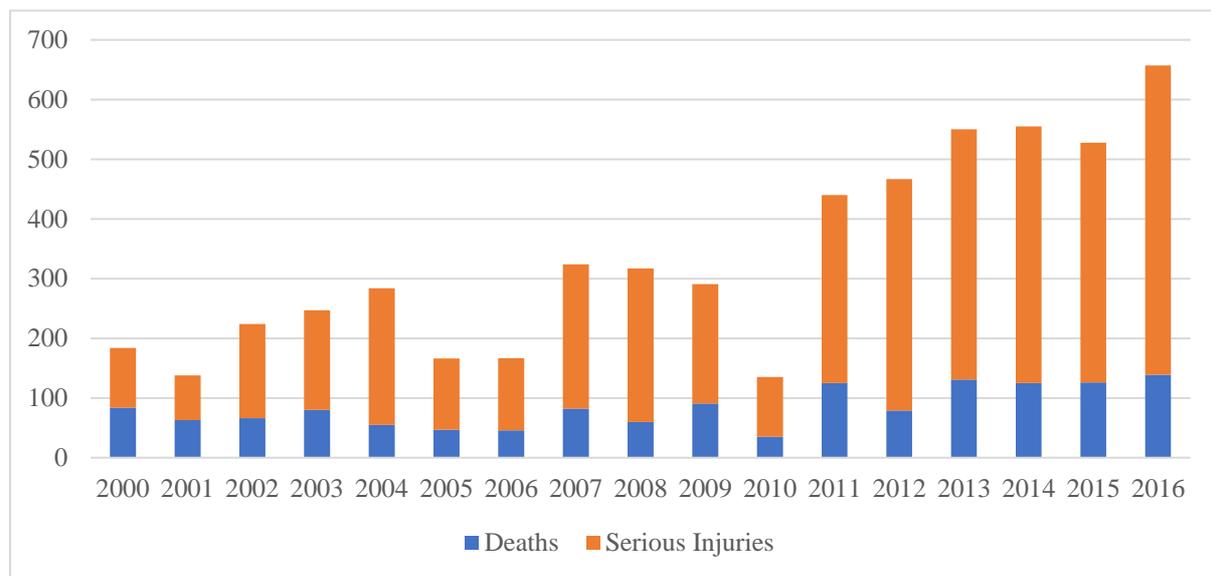
We do not have all the data we want, but this strategy seeks to use the data we have. Table 3 below illustrates the different makeup of the motor vehicle fleet. This data is based on newly registered vehicles each year which makes it difficult to accurately assess changes in the fleet over time. However, a 2013 study estimated that the motor vehicle fleet (excluding motorcycles) had been increasing at around 2.25% annually,[4] and there have been noticeable increases in motorcycle registrations.

The inadequacy of current traffic crash and injury data systems are highlighted in Table 4, which summarises the differences in the number of fatalities officially recorded in Gambia and the number of fatalities estimated by the World Health Organisation, as part of its global injury surveillance system. It suggests that we are suffering much worse safety results than official recording permits. Road fatalities may be more than four times higher than our records suggest.

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[4] National Transport Policy 2018-2027

Table 3: Registered motor vehicles (2005-2015, Cumulative)

Year	Mini-bus	Buses	Trucks	Tractors	Cars	Motorcycles
2005	615	29	320	26	2,337	2,593
2006	729	41	187	44	3,100	1,000
2007	1,650	10	140	26	1,899	1,673
2008	243	55	213	10	4,832	2,726
2009	231	11	238	29	2,090	1,130
2010	436	34	210	15	3,256	2,941
2011	979	29	93	36	2,948	1,862
2012	1,065	18	219	15	2,257	2,235
2013	618	3	71	14	3,630	3,260
2014	1,194	24	348	59	5,438	11,767
2015	1,623	35	504	49	6,724	1,820
Total	9,383	289	2,543	323	38,511	33,007

Source: Gambia Bureau of Statistics

Table 4: Recorded and estimated fatalities 2010, 2013 & 2016

	2010	2013	2016
Police Recorded Fatalities	94	115	139
WHO Estimated Fatalities	325	544	605
WHO Estimated Fatalities per 100,000 people	18.8	29.4	29.7

Source: World Health Organisation Global Status Reports on Road Safety

Another global health surveillance system, the Global Burden of Disease Study, provides estimates for all causes of death in a country. The study estimated that in 2016 road traffic injury in Gambia was the:[5]

- 7th biggest cause of death for people aged 5-14
- 7th biggest cause of death for people aged 15-49
- 12th biggest cause of Disability Adjusted Life Years lost for the whole population.

Finally, we need to recognise that road traffic injury is creating a significant burden on the Gambian economy. Using an accepted methodology for identifying the scale of the socio-economic losses of road trauma,[6] we can estimate the economic cost of crashes in The Gambia at over GMD 2 Billion in 2016 alone.

It is clear now that we are underestimating the scale of the road traffic injury problem, and the relative impact on the community, and the ongoing economic losses within The Gambia.

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[5] Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation (IHME). GBD Compare Data Visualization. Seattle, WA: IHME, University of Washington, 2016. Available from http://vizhub.healthdata.org/gbd-compare. Accessed October 2017.

[6] See Dahdah & McMahon (2008), The True Cost of Road Crashes: Valuing life and the cost of serious injury.

To further understand the problem, two studies more fully analysed crash data from Police stations, and injury data from trauma hospitals.[7] These studies confirm critical road safety issues which are also observable in other Sub Saharan countries:

- Approximately half of all fatal and serious crashes involve pedestrians
- Approximately half of all road traffic injury victims are under 25 years old
- One in five road traffic injuries occur to bicyclists and motorcyclists
- Commercial vehicles are involved in approximately 60% of crashes
- Speeding was reported as a contributing factor in approximately 80% of hospital cases
- One in three of all injured patients treated at hospitals are road traffic victims.

WHO projections show a significant deterioration in road traffic fatalities between 2015 and 2030, but improvements in two other major public health issues in Africa which have seen significant investment over time: HIV/AIDS and malaria. Gambia needs to halt the increase in trauma, and begin the long process to eliminate fatalities and serious injuries on the road.

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[7] E Sanyang, C Peek-Asa, P Bass, T Young, B Daffeh and L Fuortes (2017) "Risk Factors for Road Traffic Injuries among Different Road Users in the Gambia", *Journal of Environmental and Public Health*, Volume 2017. C Keum (2016) "Analysis of road traffic crashes and injury severity of pedestrian victims in the Gambia", A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of Master of Science (Epidemiology), University of Iowa.

Critical Issues

There are a number of management issues that need to be addressed in order to tackle the road safety problem in The Gambia.

- We have a weak road safety management system, with inadequate leadership and coordination on the problem, either within Government or wider society.
- We have not been investing enough into road safety either from the national budget, the Road Fund, insurance premiums or through prioritizing external donor or international support.
- We do not have an electronic database, or the necessary reporting systems (data collection, collation, analysis, surveillance) which would allow us to monitor fatalities and serious injuries, or target our future injury prevention efforts.
- We are caught in a cycle of weak legislation and low levels of enforcement, which is illustrated by a poor driver licensing system, and poor user behaviours such as speeding, drink driving, seatbelts, helmets and mobile phones.
- There is a basic lack of road safety knowledge amongst users (with inadequate early curriculum at schools), but also amongst professional bodies which are in a position to improve the safety of all users.

Increasingly, safety is being integrated into planning and design of new roads and improvement and management of existing roads, but a new approach and focus on safety is required.

- There are not nearly enough footpaths or safe crossing points available for the number of pedestrians who need them, for example at schools, and there is insufficient lighting in urban areas.
- For those in light vehicles, trucks or buses, the shoulders of our roads are often badly eroded, and what road signage has been installed has often fallen into disrepair, or been stolen.
- The safety standards apply not just to the infrastructure itself, but to the professional requirements like the use of road safety audit or road inspection activity.
- The road infrastructure allows people to speed, and the speed limits are too high. There is inadequate speed monitoring and enforcement and people simply don't understand how dangerous speeding is.

The only import controls applied by The Gambia is an additional tax or duty on vehicle imports over ten years of age. This may encourage newer and potentially safer vehicles. However, no consideration is given to the regulations applying in the market where the vehicle was purchased, which exposes The Gambia to much lower vehicle safety standards. Aside from the quality of vehicles entering the Gambia, there are many roadworthiness issues that affect the safety of vehicle occupants and pedestrians alike. Imported vans are converted into gele gele, but without due consideration of the safety of passengers in the vehicle should a crash occur. Poor seating and restraint standards create a significant hazard for users of these vital public transport vehicles. There isn't a credible set of vehicle testing regulations and facilities, and the vehicle fleet is too old.

There is little awareness amongst users of the unsafe behaviours which contribute to fatalities and serious injuries, and little activity by law enforcement targeting these behaviours. Where enforcement activity is undertaken, our masllah culture is getting in the way. A murder may

break these bonds, but what about the dangerous driving which leads to so many more deaths and serious injuries in The Gambia each year? The relationship between the Gambia Police Force and the motor vehicle driver is not based on adherence to critical safety laws such as speeding, drink driving, and use of seatbelts and helmets. Too much notice is being taken of people who complain about traffic safety enforcement, and of who the offender is.

These problems are compounded by a lack of speed or alcohol detection devices or patrol vehicles, within the Gambian Police Force, and a lack of ongoing planning and training focused on improving road safety. Driver licensing rules administered by the Gambian Police Force are also a major issue, and compliance is an even bigger issue with some drivers simply not being tested. Road traffic safety legislation needs a major review.

There is no ambulance service in Gambia, there are only two trauma centres available in Banjul and Serrekunda, and there is not enough specialised training in emergency medicine, let alone any encouragement of bystanders to assist. This severely compromises our ability to get road crash victims to a health facility, diagnose and treat the injury and either save a life or put the victim back onto a path of good health.

Vehicle safety in West Africa

Safety is a major issue across West African vehicle markets, and the patterns observable across the region inform what we understand about Gambia. Almost all of West Africa's motor vehicle imports are used (over 85% of EU and USA used vehicle exports were destined for West Africa in 2013), and there is very little regulation on safety standards.[8]

Seven ECOWAS countries apply age restrictions for light vehicle imports, ranging from 5 years in Cote d'Ivoire to 15 years in Niger and Nigeria, but the safety quality of the vehicle is mainly determined by regulations in the market where the vehicle is first registered. Amongst ECOWAS countries, only Nigeria has begun to align itself with the UN vehicle safety standards. These standards are focused on new vehicle construction but, as vehicles have such a long life and are sold on, the standards are relevant for all used vehicle imports. Cross border issues within West Africa are also an important consideration and it is understood that a number of vehicles imported to Gambia then move to Senegal and Guinea.

A recent survey conducted by UNEP suggested that the average light and heavy vehicle in Africa is well over 15 years old. Effectively regulating vehicle safety can be complex. Poorly prepared regulation may make safer vehicles too costly, and actually inhibit improved safety standards. But the absence of regulation exposes The Gambia to a constant stream of used vehicles from markets which have never provided acceptable levels of safety.

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[8] A Baskin (2018), *Africa Used Vehicle Report*, UN Environment Programme.

Strategic Directions

There has been a significant deterioration in road safety in Gambia in recent years which is creating a heavy burden on Gambia's economy and its people.

A methodical approach is required to tackle this issue. Over the life of the strategy we need to put in place a series of strategic projects which:

- Build Government and community capacity to tackle the problem
- Begin to tackle high priority safety issues in a sustainable way
- Monitor and review progress, and develop an increasingly sophisticated response.

A number of strategic directions are set out here to assist in prioritising our efforts, developing projects, and increasing investment in road safety.

By focusing our planning and delivery efforts along these paths, we can expect to make best use of our resources, and help drive achievement of our targets, and ultimate safety goal.

1. Leadership and coordination

Important decisions over the last two years have underpinned preparation of this strategy. This includes the establishment of essential inter-agency governance and management arrangements under the Gambia Road Safety Committee, and recruitment of dedicated road safety staff within MoTWI.

The Committee reports to the Minister of Transport, Works and Infrastructure and comprises the most senior public servants with responsibility for road safety. Its role is to:

- Oversee and coordinate the delivery of road safety activity across the critical delivery arms of the Government of Gambia
- Provide a coordinated line of advice to the Minister of Transport Works and Infrastructure on critical road safety issues affecting Gambia
- Provide direction and governance to the implementation of multi-sectoral work programmes to tackle Gambia's road safety crisis
- Lead the promotion of a safe systems approach to road safety within Gambia.

MoTWI provides the secretariat function for the Committee which will also be supported by a Road Safety Working Group that includes a wider group of stakeholders outside government.

These essential steps will build towards establishment of a dedicated road safety agency, possibly in association with assuming responsibility for motor vehicle registration and driver licensing as is the case in many other African countries. A key function of the new road safety agency will be to lead and coordinate the planning, delivery and management of road safety activity across Government. Funding, legislation, promotion, monitoring and evaluation and capacity building will be critical issues to address.

2. Capacity building

As a national road safety management system is developed and strengthened, priority will be given to a sustained capacity building and professional training approach across all major government agencies. We need to develop and nurture technical and professional leadership capability in road safety within MoTWI, the National Roads Authority, Gambia Police Force, and the Ministry of Health.

This capacity building should use a learning-by-doing approach, with training and development programs tied to practical improvements in the safety experienced by the people of The Gambia:

- Government advisors need a thorough understanding of critical safety issues and systems as part of any legislative reform process
- Road safety engineers need to be developed and properly resourced to deliver demonstration projects and safe road environments
- Traffic police training needs to flow through into a safety focused law enforcement on the road and much better data collection processes
- Developing trauma management skills within the health sector needs to be associated with improvements in trauma management processes and facilities.

We must also recognise that road safety capacity building must be a priority throughout the life of this strategy. Many professionals need to develop road safety knowledge and understanding. Those with knowledge and understanding must become technical road safety leaders, or organisational leaders. A cadre of road safety professionals is needed who can themselves lay a platform for further action in The Gambia.

3. Data collection and analysis

Preparation of this strategy itself reveals the difficulty we face in using data to understand the scale and nature of the road safety problem we face, and how best to achieve the goal of this strategy. Major project status is needed to undertake an end-to-end assessment of how crash data needs to be collected at the roadside (or in a medical centre), collated into a searchable electronic database, analysed, and used to support and monitor future safety activity.

The health information system is our best means to start this process, which will be built on a cooperative relationship between Police, Health and Transport authorities. We will continue to invest in this area until we close the gap between the trauma we currently report, and the trauma estimated by credible international sources such as the WHO.

Crash data is one major data area that needs immediate attention, but there are other wider data issues that need to be addressed during the life of the strategy, particularly:

- Exposure data, including kilometres travelled, and current numbers of registered motor vehicles and licensed drivers
- Performance data, particularly observational data to track progress in achievement of our safety performance targets.

Improved data and analysis of our road safety condition is critical. The Gambia will therefore formally join the African Road Safety Observatory, to learn more about road safety conditions and practices in Africa, and apply the lessons here in Gambia.

4. Safety led regulatory reform

Our road traffic safety legislation needs to be comprehensively overhauled, focusing on:

- Critical user behavior standards (such as speeding, drink driving, and use of safety belts and helmets), and the ease of enforcing these standards
- Strengthening the standards applying to driver licensing, and vehicle safety, and

- Strengthening the compliance systems required to effectively regulate the safety of road traffic

This will require major improvements in the way in which we approach road traffic regulation. Government advisors need to research and explain good practice regulation, and ensure the community understands why safety reform is required. Police need to ensure that their own officers understand new legal requirements and are both supported and required to enforce the law. These efforts need to be backed up by the Courts.

Given the wide range of action that is required, early attention will be given to preparing a regulatory roadmap. This will help build understanding of the need for change within the community, and commitment from legislators to deliver on safety improvements.

Progress will be made across three key areas:

- *Driver behaviour* – laws need to be changed to make it much easier for Police to take roadside action against speeding and drink driving, in accordance with good international practice
- *Driver licensing* – the licensing system needs to be completely overhauled, from the safety standards which drivers must meet to ensuring that only those drivers which meet those standards are issued a secure license and those that break the rules have their licence removed
- *Vehicle standards* – improving the construction safety standards for all vehicles entering Gambia, the modification standards for gele gele, and measures to ensure that the oldest and least safe vehicles are removed from service, are all priorities

Gele gele are the workhorse of the Gambian transport system, and their owners and operators need to assume responsibility for the safety of their customers and other users. Commercial goods carriers also have a special obligation. Every transport operator has the right to earn a living, and no transport operator has the licence to risk the life and health of others.

5. Infrastructure focus on pedestrian safety

There have been a number of major road infrastructure improvement projects in recent years, including the long-awaited Sene-Gambia Bridge, and the Upper River Region Bridges and Road Project. These and other investments must be built to an adequate safety standard, but we also need to invest in improving the infrastructure we already have, which is not supporting the safe mobility of our people.

Significant additional attention is required on lifting the safety standards on the current network over the course of this decade. Particular priority needs to be provided to the safety of pedestrians on major roads in two key ways in areas where people live:

- More footpaths alongside the road are needed to separate pedestrians from motor vehicles, and these need to be maintained so that commercial encroachment
- More speed humps or raised platforms are needed to lower motor vehicle speeds, particularly where pedestrians need to cross the road, and around transport stops to support safe use of gele gele.

These treatments are important for non-motorised users, public transport users, and people with disabilities (and they can be usefully focused initially around schools) but they will also provide benefits for motor vehicle occupants.

There is concern about the lack of traffic signs, and road markings, but the safety of the infrastructure requires more in-depth consideration. A star rating system of major highways equivalent to the International Road Assessment Program will provide a better objective assessment of the inherent safety of the road network. This can be used to direct safety investment to those parts of the network in greatest need, and support a more systematic approach to road safety engineering within the Gambia. For example,

- Road safety audit procedures are needed at all stages of road planning, design and construction
- Locations where serious crashes are occurring most frequently need to be identified and treated
- Improved periodic maintenance needs to be focused on those issues and parts of the network that are of greatest safety concern.

One issue that will be advanced will be to require reinstatement works from utility companies.

6. Sensitization

The primary sensitisation priority does not yet lie with the community. While government agencies and community organisations are coming together under new coordination arrangements, this is only the start of the road safety sensitisation required within Gambia's major institutions. A mainstreaming approach will be pursued to seek their involvement in addressing Gambia's road safety crisis, promoting the goals and targets of this strategy, and their leadership or organizational role in raising and tackling the issue is vital. Care is required to ensure that this sensitisation is extended to elected representatives and in a manner which engages all communities and regions within Gambia.

It is important that this focus is taken within the community. Where there is a general lack of knowledge about key safety behaviours being targeted within this strategy (drink driving, speeding, helmet and seatbelt use), then this needs to be addressed. However, sensitisation campaigns on these matters needs to be associated with traffic enforcement that demonstrates consequences for people who are not willing to follow key traffic rules.

More broadly within the community, the overall goal of this strategy to eliminate deaths and serious injuries needs to be communicated, and support for this goal promoted. This can be reinforced in many different ways such as the preparation of a road safety component within the school curriculum for children aged 5-14. It is important that this does not lapse into simply instructing children to behave on the road, but to build awareness of the key factors that determine safety such as traffic speed, safe walking and road crossing facilities, and safe vehicles.

Once a strong safe system platform to sensitisation and promotion has been established, a wider range of activities will be developed. This can include regular dialogues through social, print or broadcast media, in regional areas, and more specific materials on key safety subjects which encourages others to take further action.

7. Enforcement

Traffic Police attend major crashes on a daily basis, witnessing the extraordinary shock and horror within the community. They now need better planning and better resourcing to focus on actions which will prevent those crashes from occurring in the first place. This will

require capacity building at officer, supervisory and command levels, the preparation and implementation of well planned general deterrent focused enforcement strategies, and investment in equipment. The focus is on taking action before a crash occurs, not after a crash occurs.

Some of these actions can be taken without significant additional equipment, such as seatbelt and helmet use, or driver license checks. But significant logistics constraints which currently exist must be addressed in a sustainable way. Traffic Police need vehicles and fuel budgets to move enforcement resources to where they are most needed in national enforcement campaigns and to effectively conduct general deterrence enforcement. They also need speed and alcohol detection equipment, with supporting arrangements to ensure they are being used to best effect, and are regularly maintained.

Leadership and capability development will be critical within Police and beyond. All sectors of society must join Government in promoting the essential life-affirming role which the Gambia Police Force has on the road. Road traffic injury is hitting the most vulnerable parts of our community (children) and the most productive (working age people). We cannot hide behind customs and pretend that enforcement of well known laws regarding speeding, drink driving, seatbelts and helmets is not absolutely vital to maintaining and nurturing our way of life in the Gambia. Police commanders must value this activity, and Police officers must demonstrate their commitment to the safety of their communities.

8. Post Crash

The severity and impact of injuries arising from a motor vehicle crash can be significantly reduced by the response to the crash, and every link of the post-crash chain requires attention in The Gambia. Formally, this is the responsibility of the health sector, and there are wider societal benefits from improved emergency management (such as maternal care) but it requires attention and support from those seeking to achieve Gambia's road safety goals.

There are many options which can be considered in terms of road traffic safety support for the health system, including:

- Promoting better first aid services for victims of road crashes through the support of volunteer groups within the community
- Introducing a single emergency phone number and despatch system
- Supporting prompt transport to health facilities including a strengthened ambulance system
- Improving professional capacity and equipment at hospitals and other facilities, and
- Establishing injury rehabilitation services.

A National Health Insurance Scheme is being introduced, and a complementary response would be introducing a motor vehicle injury insurance scheme, such as Senegal has. This can assist in meeting the costs of post-crash care, and a feature of well-regulated injury insurance schemes is financial investment in road safety, as a loss reduction measure.

Implementation

Road safety depends upon the commitment of many different parts of society, making inter-agency collaboration within Government essential – from governance through to planning and funding arrangements, and monitoring and evaluation.

Governance

The Gambian Road Safety Committee has been established to:

- Oversee and coordinate the delivery of road safety activity across the critical delivery arms of the Government of Gambia
- Provide a coordinated line of advice to the Minister of Transport Works and Infrastructure on critical road safety issues affecting Gambia
- Provide direction and governance to the implementation of multi-sectoral work programmes to tackle Gambia's road safety crisis
- Lead the promotion of a safe systems approach to road safety within Gambia.

Road Safety Governance Structure

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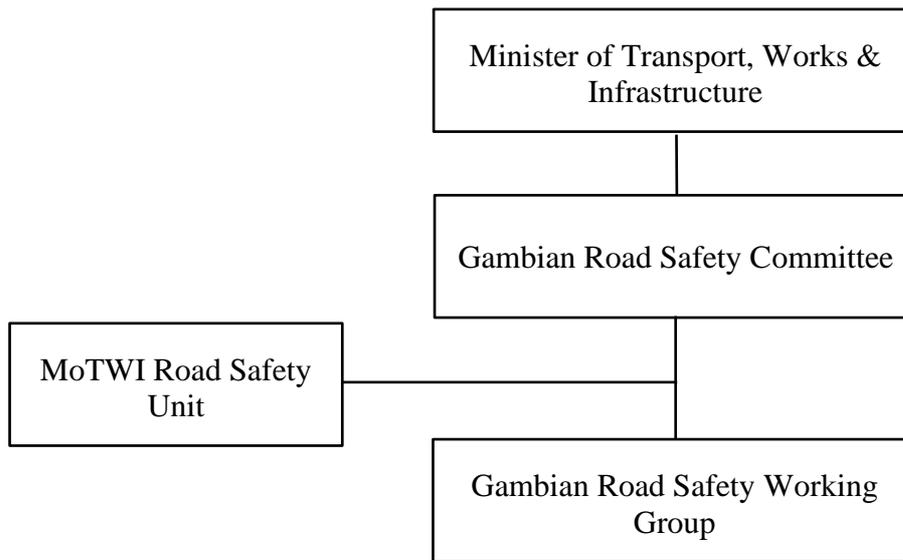
The Gambian Road Safety Committee will comprise the following members:

- Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Transport, Works and Infrastructure (Chair)
- Inspector General Police, Gambia Police Force
- Managing Director, National Roads Authority
- Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Health
- Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Women, Children and Social Welfare
- Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Education
- Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Interior
- Solicitor General, Ministry of Justice
- Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Information and Communication Technology

- Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Finance and Economic Affairs
- Executive Director, The Association of Non-Government Organisations

The Committee shall be supported by a Gambian Road Safety Working Group, comprising both government agency representatives and members of Gambian civil society and private sector. MoTWI shall chair this working group, and provide the necessary secretariat and national road safety lead agency functions.

Roles and responsibilities

The interagency governance and coordination arrangements above complement the road traffic safety roles and responsibilities held by the various organisations under their own governance and management arrangements. These are summarised below:

- Ministry of Transport, Works and Infrastructure: lead agency for road safety; road safety strategy, policy and planning, including preparation of road traffic safety legislation, safety investment planning and budgeting, safety promotion, monitoring and evaluation, research and development and capacity building.
- Gambia Police Force: road traffic law enforcement, focusing on key road safety behaviours targeted in this strategy; driver licensing (ensuring only certified competent drivers are in control of motor vehicles) and motor vehicle registration.
- National Roads Authority: safe planning, design and management of the national roads network; setting safe road infrastructure standards; building capacity in road safety engineering.
- Ministry of Health: incorporating road traffic safety in all health promotion and injury prevention planning and programs; developing emergency response services and facilities to retrieve, treat and rehabilitate road crash victims.
- Ministry of Women, Children and Social Welfare: incorporating road traffic safety in all anti-poverty planning and programs including support for injured road crash victims
- Ministry of Education: developing school road safety programs which improve the safety of children's movement to and from school; developing post-school road safety curricula for professionals with road safety responsibilities (for example in infrastructure, health and justice sectors)
- Ministry of Interior: ensuring that the Gambia Police Force has sufficient human and financial capacity to achieve the goals and targets set in this Strategy.
- Ministry of Justice: ensuring that the legal system reinforces the goals and targets set in this Strategy.
- Ministry of Information and Communication Technology: ensuring that there is adequate infrastructure and support for major improvements by government agencies in improving the quality and integrity of driver licensing, vehicle regulation and crash data systems
- Ministry of Finance and Economic Affairs: ensuring that road traffic safety is adequately addressed in agency budgets to achieve the goals and targets set in this Strategy.
- The Association of Non-Government Organisations: ensuring that NGOs are sufficiently engaged in building road safety capacity within communities.

Planning and funding

A key task of the Gambian Road Safety Committee is to develop multisectoral plans to pursue the directions set out in this strategy. For the first three to five years, an annual Road Safety Action Plan will be prepared by MoTWI in consultation with stakeholders and put to the Committee for approval. The plan shall specify the action that will be taken, the responsible organisation, any required supporting organisations, and a budget.

Member agencies of the Committee will be expected to orient their annual work programs towards implementation of this strategy, but additional funds will be available for the projects considered by the Committee to have the highest overall road safety priority for Gambia.

Funding is a major constraint to road safety in the Gambia. The Roads Authority has expressed support for making interim arrangements through the Road Fund to fund the road safety leadership and coordination functions of MoTWI, and multisectoral road safety activity through such a mechanism. Interim funding measures need to be put into place, then reinforced through amendment to the Road Fund legislation to incorporate this expense, initially at least 5 percent of the Fund.

The introduction of the fuel levy (D1/liter) in 2015 has played an important role for the long term sustainability of the Road Fund, as revenue from the fuel levy increases in line with motor vehicle traffic. Given the scale of the road safety problem and the availability of proven measures to tackle it, there is a very strong investment case for the D1/litre levy to be raised over the first half of the strategy so that a full D1/litre is being allocated to road safety.

Sustainable funding sources for road safety are critical. Alongside interim measures through the Road Fund, a more systematic investigation of ongoing funding sources, such as an additional safety component added to the fuel levy or compulsory vehicle insurance premiums needs to be considered against a longer term analysis of road safety funding needs for the Gambia. External development assistance partnerships also need to receive clear messages from the Government of Gambia about the importance of road safety as a critical anti-poverty pro-development intervention.

Monitoring and evaluation

The targets set out in this strategy provide the focus for monitoring and evaluation over the life of the strategy. Early stages need to focus on:

- ensuring that agreed projects are being delivered to a good quality
- developing a baseline against the safety performance targets.

A review will be conducted of the implementation of the strategy within three years of the approval of the strategy. This review will assess progress against the targets and directions set out in the strategy, identify lessons learned in implementation, and make recommendations for how implementation can be improved over the remaining life of the strategy.

Annex 1: Organisations involved in preparing this strategy

- Ministry of Transport, Works and Infrastructure
- Gambia Police Force
- National Roads Authority
- Ministry of Health and Social Welfare
- Ministry of Interior
- Ministry of Finance and Economic Affairs
- Ministry of Education
- Ministry of Information and Communication Technology
- Ministry of Justice
- Petrogas Gambia
- Gambia National Petroleum Company
- Gambia Red Cross Society
- Insurance Association of Gambia
- The Association of Non-Government Organisations
- Ministry of Lands & Regional Government
- Gambia Army
- Gambia Bureau of Statistics
- WHO Country Office
- National Youth Parliament

Stakeholder Workshop, July 2019

Annex 2: A Note on Targets

Major road crash data issues in Gambia make target setting difficult, but targets are an important means of ensuring continued focus on material safety improvements. The basis for the targets set in this road safety strategy are set out here.

After a period of some relative stability, 2017 and 2018 fatality numbers were unrealistically low, and were not used in the strategy analysis. 2010 numbers were also unrealistically low. It is assumed that there was considerably lower rates of recording fatal and serious injury during these years.

The reported data over 2013 to 2016 appears relatively stable. These results were compared with the previous four year period 2008 to 2012 (excluding 2010). A 50% increase was recorded. To establish a baseline for 2030 targets, it was assumed that trauma would continue to increase, at a similar rate.

	Fatalities	Serious Injuries	FSI Combined
2008-2012	89	290	379
2013-2016	130	442	572
Change	+46%	+52%	+51%
2017-2020 (+62.5%)	211	729	930
2017-2020 (+50%)	195	663	858
2017-2020 (+37.5%)	179	608	787
2030 Target	<100	<330	<430

The proposed 2030 target for fatalities is less than 100. The proposed 2030 target for serious injuries is less than 330. In the absence of reported data, it is assumed that pedestrians comprise 40% of fatalities. The proposed 2030 target for pedestrian fatalities is less than 40.

If the strategy is successful, there will be a major improvement in the recording and reporting of fatal and serious injury on the road. This needs to be considered in any monitoring or evaluation of the strategy.

Improved road crash data systems would have the effect of generating higher official records, and closing the gap between official fatality data, and WHO fatality estimates. The proposed population health target is a 50% reduction in fatalities per 100,000 population, using either official data or WHO estimates.