

## Researchers recommend steps to improve implementation of global road safety

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(Medical Xpress) -- Road traffic crashes kill more than 1.2 million people each year, with 90 percent of those fatalities occurring in low- and middle-income countries. Yet despite a growing body of data to support effective and proven interventions, proportional funding for implementation in developing countries has not been forthcoming, leaving a gap between evidence and action.

A new study led by researchers at the Johns Hopkins International Injury Research Unit (JH-IIRU) at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health outlines steps to address the implementation gap in low- and middle-income countries. IIRU Director Adnan Hyder and doctoral student Katherine Allen, along with members of the [World Health Organization](#) (WHO), the Global [Road Safety](#) Partnership (GRSP) as well as Bloomberg Philanthropies, among others, have published, “Addressing the Implementation Gap in Global Road Safety: Exploring Features of an Effective Response and Introducing a 10-Country Program,” in the current issue of the *American Journal of Public Health*.

Using their experiences in the field of injury prevention, global road safety and health services delivery, while taking into account the WHO’s benchmark 2004 world report on road traffic injury prevention, the team of researchers recommend 10 characteristics that are necessary to effectively address this evidence-to-action gap, including a concerted effort to coordinate across multiple sectors, the need to address road safety issues on a scale that is not only commensurate with the burden but is focused where road traffic injuries are highest and, perhaps most

important, the need for adequate funding.

“We know the statistics,” said Hyder. “We know that 90 percent of road traffic deaths occur in low- and middle- income countries, despite the fact that they have less than 50 percent of the world’s registered automobiles. We know that relatively inexpensive interventions can be effective. For example, wearing a seatbelt correctly can reduce the risk of fatalities by 61 percent. So why wouldn’t you support that?”

In the paper, the team also introduces the Road Safety in 10 Countries project (RS-10), an initiative designed as a response to the implementation gap. The RS-10 project is a five-year initiative funded by Bloomberg Philanthropies and dedicated to reducing the burden of road traffic injuries in ten low- and middle-income countries by evaluating and implementing road safety solutions in places where interventions are needed the most. Composed of six consortium partners, including JH-IIRU, the World Bank Global Road Safety Facility, the Global Road Safety Partnership, the Association for Safe International Road Travel (ASIRT) and EMBARQ, the goal of the RS-10 project is simple: save lives by providing evidence for stronger road safety interventions around the world. Targeting the 10 countries that account for nearly half of all traffic deaths globally, the RS-10 project addresses many of the proposed characteristics of an effective response, including a scale and focus appropriate to the burden, coordination across multiple sectors, and training and capacity building for in-country collaborators. The project has not only provided funding for each of the participating countries to address road traffic injuries, but has also created partnerships between local, national and global experts on road safety, which in turn will support long-term sustainability.

“Bloomberg Philanthropies is proud to support improvement of road safety around the globe,” said Kelly Larson, program director at Bloomberg Philanthropies and co-author of the study.

“The RS-10 project affords us a unique opportunity to help address a sizeable portion of the world’s burden of [road traffic](#) injuries,” said Hyder. And, he notes, the RS-10 project is already making huge strides. “We’ve recently published a special issue of Traffic Injury Prevention, which includes 11 scientific papers highlighting new and aggregate data collected and analyzed in the first two years of the project. These results will extend beyond the project and serve as a foundation for future road safety work globally.”

“Addressing the Implementation Gap in Global Road Safety: Exploring Features of an Effective Response and Introducing a 10-Country Program” was written by Adnan A. Hyder, Katherine A. Allen, Gayle DiPietro, Claudia A. Adriazola, Rochelle Sobel, Kelly Larson and Margie Peden.

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