



UN Road Safety Collaboration
Monday, 18 October 2021

Remarks of Ms. Nneka Henry, Head of the United Nations Road Safety Fund

Good afternoon Ladies and Gentlemen,

Thank you for the invitation to present a brief update on the UN Road Safety Fund (UNRSF), the secretariat for which I have been heading since May this year. The United Nations Road Safety Fund was created to finance projects that build road safety capacities in low- and middle-income countries in order to reduce the toll of road crashes and contribute to the achievement of the SDGs. To achieve this, participating UN agencies lead on delivering technical assistance in countries. And, we crowd in partners from governments, the private sector, academia and civil society to further trigger action and investments beyond UNRSF projects and grants.

The soon-to-be-launched Global Plan of Action for the Second Decade of Action for Road Safety (2021-2030), speaks about the necessity for both “**safe road infrastructure**” and “**road safety interventions**” as essential to substantially reducing road trauma. UNRSF partnerships, financing and projects delivers support to governments on both pillars.

After its establishment in 2018 by UN General Assembly Resolution; there followed a development phase where the secretariat, rules of procedure and Calls for Project Proposals were put in place. The first round (of a current total of 3 rounds) of projects were launched towards the end of 2019. We all know what followed a few months later in 2020.

Notwithstanding the COVID-19 pandemic, the Fund, which was capitalized at about \$20 million dollars:

- leveraged about \$3 dollars of private sector funding for every \$1 of ODA from donor countries;
- received over \$100 million dollars' worth of project proposals to support over 75 low- and middle-income countries;
- launched 25 projects in 30 countries; and
- was independently evaluated earlier this year, which was largely positive – confirming the Fund is successfully delivering on its mandate, albeit at a much lower level of capitalization that initially foreseen.

Most importantly, both the independent evaluators and the Fund Secretariat and participating UN agencies have already tracked results indicating that projects have contributed to increased road safety capacities and resources; and that lives are being saved and injuries prevented.

About 30% of UNRSF projects trigger action to improve the **safety of road infrastructure** through introduction of legislation and local design standards; road safety audits and star rating; and crash-risk mapping. The remaining 70% of UNRSF projects support **road safety interventions** that are proven to drastically reduce road deaths and injuries through improved vehicle safety; establishing or enforcing traffic rules and licensing requirements; speed management actions; and improving post-crash response. To learn more about our results, I invite you to read our recently published [UNRSF Results Brochure](#).

Looking ahead, we will seek to scale these results. Additionally, there are a few key strategic and operational areas which have been highlighted from extensive conversations, including with some of you, which the UN Road Safety Fund will seek to work on in the months and years ahead.

These include:

1. Strengthening **country ownership** of programming. This includes building awareness and alliances for action at national, municipal and local community levels.
2. Fostering a portfolio of **paradigm-shifting projects** and aligning resources to achieve results. This includes virtual brainstorm discussions with actors with influence, interest and experience in financing road safety. It also includes a conscious effort to package more popular priorities such as “people-friendly” urban streets and unburdening the healthcare system with road safety priorities and programming.
3. Improving **tracking and reporting of results** linked to UNRSF projects, partnerships and ability to mobilize additional financing. This includes automating our existing results-based management and impact measurement framework.
4. **Communications** on road safety financing. This includes individual citizen-facing campaigns. Next month we will launch a social media campaign aimed at raising awareness on our work and need for road safety financing in low- and middle-income countries. The social media pack is being finalized this week and will be shared through the UNRSC and UNRSF secretariats. In February next year, we will also partner with the Global Road Safety Film Festival to continue to raise awareness on our work and need for road safety financing. Information on this event will also be shared through the UNRSC and UNRSF secretariats.
5. Mobilizing **financing from innovative and sustainable sources** by crowding in new and diverse actors from beneficiary and donor countries to companies and individual citizens. For example, UNRSF is launching its new website this month and

will embed an individual donation option, opening-up opportunities for everyday citizens to donate as well as for long-term micro-payments from companies to put the UN in a stronger position to channel our support to the countries to ultimately curb the global road safety crisis.

6. **Simplifying access to Fund resources** by implementing partners. This includes information sharing on how the Fund operates and by reviewing procedures and requirements of implementing partners including NGOs, which is incredibly important in light of current lessons learnt about the value of diversifying the implementing partner pool and ensuring there are physical “boots on the ground” to ensure project continuity despite new threats.

The mechanics of these priority areas will be detailed in the Fund’s Strategic Plan 2022 – 2025 which is currently under consultations with our governing bodies and partners.