

Efforts in Road Safety by the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC)

Since 2020, the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), with the support of the United Nations Road Safety Fund (UNRSF) has been managing and assisting in the implementation of 3 road safety projects in Argentina, Brazil, and Colombia. The implementation of the complete portfolio of projects financed by the UNRSF, has contributed to the achievement of the Decade of Action Goals for Road Safety (DAG, 2021-2030).

The UNRSF has directly impacted on two Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) targets that address road safety: SDG target 3.6 on halving the number of global deaths and injuries from road traffic accidents; and SDG target 11.2 on providing access to safe, affordable, accessible, and sustainable transport systems as well as improve road safety for all. Even before the pandemic, many road safety related SDGs in Latin America and the Caribbean were off track and the current geopolitical events in Europe, have further diverted the SDGs from the targets. Besides, it is evident that such events have reduced even more the already scarce government resources in the region. For this reason, the available resources from the UNRSF are crucial to allow many countries to continue and to maintain the implementation of road safety policies.

The implementation of the project in Brazil is in its final stage, with a legacy of important results and very positive policies to be replicated not only in other municipalities of Brazil, but also in other countries. The project has stood out for its excellent performance, which has been reflected in the reduction of deaths, accidents, and victims with serious injuries in the State of Pará in Brazil (see Table 1). The focus of this project was based on the training and strengthening of the transit department of the State of Pará, increasing the number of trained inspectors, optimizing protocol inspections and revising documentation, allowing to fight key factors of infractions in specific contexts. To this end, a Data Commission was created in which all the institutions involved (police, firefighters, health centers, political and administrative authorities) participated. Subsequently, officials were trained in these new forms of control.

Table 1. Indicator related to road traffic in Brazil

Indicator 1: Road traffic death rate per 10,000 vehicles.	
Baseline: 6,98 (projected for 2019)	2020: 6,91
Target: 6,92 (projected for 2021)	2021: 6.13
	Approx projection 2022: 5.87

Indicator 2: Number of hospitals admissions due to road traffic accidents	
Baseline: 6,823 (2019)	Achieved in 2020: 6.936
Target: 6.797 (projected for 2021)	Achieved in 2021: 7.719
	Achieved in 2022: 6.238 (preliminary)

Indicator 3: Increase the number of breathalyzer tests carried out per month.	
Baseline: 1,200	Breathalyzer tests carried out in 2020: 2.136
Planned Target: 1,800	Breathalyzer tests carried out in 2021: 32.859
	Breathalyzer tests carried out in 2022: 78.221 (January - July 2022)

Source: ECLAC based on project results.

With respect to Argentina, although during the implementation we encountered some difficulties, due to the health, political and economic crisis that the country has been facing, we have already seen positive results, thanks to educational interventions in the schools of the 3 municipalities chosen (Azul, Cañuelas y Pergamino) and the studies which included a series of public policy proposals to be implemented in the routes.

Finally, in the case of Colombia, although the project is in the initial process of execution, there is already a methodology for selecting locations where tactical urban planning interventions will be executed. The project has the full involvement of the Road Safety Agency, along with the support of the Global Designing Cities Initiatives (GDCI), promoted by Bloomberg, and Vía 40 Express, concessionaire of the most important route in Colombia, which has been very active and committed to improving road safety in the country.